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# Examining the Relationship Between School Administrators' Leadership Styles and Teachers' Organizational Happiness

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### ABSTRACT

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This study aimed to examine the predicting level of the leadership styles of school administrators on the organizational happiness level of teachers. The research was designed according to the sequential explanatory method, one of the mixed methods. First, the quantitative data were analyzed, then the qualitative data were examined. For the research, quantitative data were collected by applying the School Principals Leadership Style Scale and the Teacher Organizational Happiness Scale to the teachers working in the Güngören district of Istanbul. In the quantitative data collection part of the study, 323 participants were reached. Participants were selected by simple random sampling method. Qualitative data were obtained with semi-structured interview questions developed by the researchers. Eight volunteer participants were interviewed. According to the study's quantitative findings, it was determined that the happiness level of teachers was high, and school administrators showed transformational leadership characteristics. According to the study's qualitative data, it was determined that the organizational happiness of the teachers was related to the relations with the manager, colleague relations, working conditions, and personality traits. Based on the research results, it has been proposed to increase the number of studies that address the professional happiness of teachers with different types of leadership. In addition, it is proposed to improve the economic situation of teachers. Finally, school administrators should pay attention to the school climate to increase teachers' happiness.

According to the World Happiness Report published by the United Nations in 2021, Turkey ranks 104th among 149 countries (Helliwell et al., 2021). It is seen that the level of happiness in Turkey, which was ranked 93rd in the report published the previous year, has decreased. According to the news of a human resources magazine, while 85% of the individuals working in Turkey state that they are unhappy, this situation costs 60 billion Turkish liras economically every year (HRDergi, 2019). It is known that happy employees perform higher at work than unhappy employees (Wright, 2004). Employee performance, job satisfaction, and job stress are among the reasons for leaving the job (Tekingündüz et al., 2015). This situation explains the reflection of unhappiness in the economy. It is thought that unhappy employees will cause losses in terms of realizing organizational goals as well as causing a financial loss for the organization.

Happiness, one of the basic human needs, allows individuals to live more safely and decently (Karakose et al., 2022). In most societies, being happy is seen as a goal, and individuals care about happiness. As individuals move away from this goal, happiness has begun to be studied as a research topic in many fields. Studies on happiness have been carried out in the field of organizational behavior, and this concept has been discussed with concepts such as subjective well-being (Jalali & Heidari, 2016), life satisfaction (Mert et al., 2022), and well-being (Rodríguez-Muñoz & Sanz-Vergel, 2013; Taris & Schreurs, 2009). These concepts are also used interchangeably in the literature (Arslan & Polat, 2017). Although it is accepted that the concept of happiness is important for both organizations and individuals, there is no common definition of the concept (Warr, 2007). The fact that happiness has emotional and cognitive aspects makes it difficult to make a common definition. While defining organizational happiness, Grant and Campbell (2007) and Saenghiran (2013) emphasized both the emotional and cognitive aspects and defined it as the satisfaction of an individual at work, having a positive emotional experience, having a sense of fun, as well as making the life of the individual meaningful. In the organizational literature, happiness is explained by realizing emotional and cognitive potential (Arslan & Polat, 2017). Organizational happiness is defined as the state of perception regarding the meaningfulness of the work done and how much of the individual's potential can be realized. Being happy has functional consequences in business performance as well as in personal life (Yaghoubi & Mutahhari, 2016). The fact that individuals in the organization have more positive emotions shows that their organizational happiness is higher and contributes to the organization. In addition, happy individuals contribute to productivity, creativity, an increase in organizational and financial performance, cooperation, and a decrease in absenteeism in organizations (Helliwell et al., 2017). It is thought that the high level of organizational happiness of teachers, who form the basis of educational organizations, will lead to an increase in performance in education. According to the research conducted by Sezer and Can (2019), teachers' happiness at school is at a moderate level, and to increase this level, school administrators should encourage them and implement a fair and democratic administration. In addition, it was concluded that the most important factor in increasing teachers' happiness is the support of school administrators. These results show that school administrators' organizational happiness and leadership style are related.

Despite the gradual decrease in organizational happiness, the scarcity of research on the subject draws attention. When the literature is examined, there are studies on leadership styles, but there is no study examining the relationship between school administrators' leadership styles

and organizational happiness. In addition, no study was found on the subject in the field of education. For these reasons, it is aimed to examine the relationship between school administrators' leadership styles and organizational happiness in this study. For this purpose, the leadership style of school administrators was determined, and its effect on organizational happiness was examined. The research is expected to provide information on the field of organizational happiness to educational leaders, school administrators, teachers, and field researchers, to reveal the relationship between organizational happiness and leadership, and to provide resources in the field of theory and practice to researchers working in areas such as leadership and organizational happiness.

## **Organizational Happiness**

Schopenhauer (2021) states that the wisdom of life is synonymous with happiness and that happiness, defined as eudaemonia, can teach us to live as happily as possible. Andrews and Withey (1976) state that happiness consists of three dimensions: positive emotion, negative emotion, and life satisfaction happiness. Bradburn (1969) suggested that happiness is a bifactor structure consisting of positive and negative emotions. Warr (2007) states that happiness includes elements such as positive and negative emotions, the development of personal qualities, the individual's self-reflection, and the realization of his potential. While positive emotions are evaluated as being happy, peaceful, cheerful, and in good spirits, negative emotions are evaluated as being hopeless, tense, stressed, and angry (Frey & Stutzer, 2001). Pryce-Jones (2010) talks about the dimensions of contribution, culture, conviction, commitment, and trust of happiness in business life. According to Chairpravit and Santidhiraku (2011), relationships in business life, making sense of work, shared common values, quality of work-life, and leadership also affect happiness in business life. Negative work-oriented behaviors create negative effects on organizational life (Goleman, 2006). Negative effects in business life are also reflected in organizational happiness.

Harris (2018) states that it is difficult but attractive to define organizational happiness and that the preference for unhappiness in organizations does not match society's expectations because happiness is an important goal for individuals as well as an important goal for societies (Diener, 2000). Fredrickson (2003) states that happiness increases the potential for using knowledge and psychological capacity and reflects positively on social relations. In addition to having an important place in the lives of individuals, work-life has the function of providing economic, emotional, and social satisfaction (Harter et al., 2003). Happiness is a concept that has organizational characteristics as well as being an individual concept, and unhappiness in the workplace can be enough on its own to make individuals unhappy in their daily lives (Arslan, 2018). Weiss (2002) defines organizational happiness as a state in which positive emotions eliminate negative emotions. Boehm and Lyubomirsky (2008) define organizational happiness as job satisfaction, being cheerful in the workplace, and intense feelings of devotion and happiness. The ability of individuals to fulfill their expectations and be productive is related to the level of organizational happiness (Korkut, 2019). Fisher (2010) states that organizational happiness is a broad concept that cannot be limited to job satisfaction. Organizational happiness is one of the important variables that affect the happiness of individuals (Frey & Stutzer, 2001). Happy organizations are needed for happy individuals, but organizations are not designed based

on happy employees. Therefore, it is important to know the reasons to improve organizational happiness.

School administrators should be able to direct the spirit of the school and the performance of teachers because schools without love and happiness are misleading (Hoyle & Slater, 2001). Happy and healthy employees tend to do their best and are more productive (Gavin & Mason, 2004). Hsieh (2010) states that the problem-solving skills of individuals who work in a happy school and have a positive character increase. Wesarat et al. (2015) emphasize employees' satisfaction with their work in their definition of organizational happiness. Chiumento (2007) examined the organizational happiness factors in his research. According to the results of the research, individuals are happier in small organizations. As the organizational level rises, the level of happiness also increases. However, as the duration of stay in the organization increases, the level of happiness decreases. Uyaroğlu (2019) states that organizational happiness is related to management processes and professional dedication. Since school administrators implement management processes, leadership styles are also expected to affect organizational happiness.

## Leadership

There are more than 60,000 books written on leadership (Owen, 2019) and more than 499 million web pages with the word leadership only in the title of the study in the well-known search engine Google (McShane & Von Glinow, 2016). In these sources and the literature, it is seen that various definitions of leadership have been made, and lots of different types of leadership have been studied. According to Kocabaş (2007), research on leadership has also transformed in parallel with the changes and developments in the world. Rost (1991) grouped leadership into ten-year periods by conducting a comprehensive study from 1900 to 1990. In this study, he revealed the transformation of leadership over time (Northouse, 2019). In this study, a theoretical framework was tried to be drawn with the sub-dimensions of the scale in which the research data were collected, namely, transformational leadership, laissez-faire leadership, and transactional leadership. It is seen that Hoy and Miskel's (2015) leadership classification was taken as a reference while creating the scale.

According to Bass (1990), transformational leadership is the broader form of transactional leadership, and transformational leaders are very active (Hoy & Miskel, 2015). Transformational leadership is defined as the type of leadership that recognizes the needs of the followers and motivates them accordingly (Burns, 1978). The leader determines the vision and mission to ensure that the individuals in the organization are directed toward the goal (Karip, 1998). Transformational leaders inspire and motivate individuals in the organization, create energy, and lead them to the goal by providing intellectual stimulation and creating vision and mission awareness in the group (Bass, 1990). Thus, they ensure that the goals of the organization come before individual goals. The transformational leader gains the respect and loyalty of individuals by ensuring that individuals in the organization comply with certain rules with his persuasion ability (Norris et al., 1996). The success of transformational leaders depends on situational conditions and relationship styles (Podsakoff et al., 1996). It is expected that the followers will be happier because transformational leaders act by taking into account the needs of the individuals.

## **Laisses-faire Leadership**

Laisses-faire leaders are leaders who avoid responsibility, do not give feedback, and are unwilling to meet individuals' needs (Northouse, 2016). They are happy when others perform their duties (Bass & Avolio, 2002). These leaders are not expected to strive for the development of the organization and individuals. Laisses-faire leaders avoid taking action, and expressing their opinions, especially on important issues. Therefore, they are far from taking responsibility, making decisions, and implementing the decisions taken. In this context, it can be said that it is the most ineffective and the most unsuccessful type of leadership (Hoy & Miskel, 2015). Assigned managers who generally do not have leadership characteristics (Karip, 1998) show laisses-faire leadership characteristics. Since these leaders do not take into account the needs of their followers, it is expected to cause unhappiness in individuals.

## **Transactional Leadership**

Leithwood (1992) states that transactional leadership is based on the exchange of services and rewards under leaders' control. Transactional leadership has three dimensions: leadership with contingent reward, active management with expectation, and passive management with expectation (Hoy & Miskel, 2015). In leadership with a contingent reward dimension, success is appreciated, and performance is rewarded. In the dimension of active management dimension, management is carried out by complying with the criteria and rules. There is no criterion in passive management with an expectation dimension, and when a problem arises, it is tried to be solved (Metcalf & Metcalf, 2000). Employees try to be motivated externally and financially (Ingram, 1997). Transactional leaders are expected to try to motivate individuals financially and affect their happiness by increasing their job satisfaction.

In summary, it is seen in the literature that organizational happiness is an important factor in increasing employee performance. It can be said that the happiness of teachers in schools with educational organizations is of critical importance as it will affect the achievement of the goals of the organization. It seems possible to say that a happy teacher at school will benefit the student and the institution more. In this direction, the relationship between school administrators' leadership styles and teachers' organizational happiness was examined in this study. For this purpose, answers to the following questions were sought in the study:

- Are leadership styles a predictor of organizational happiness?
- Do the leadership styles of school administrators have a significant determinant effect on the organizational happiness level of teachers?
- What is the level of predicting the organizational happiness level of the leadership style?
- Which type of leaders do employees prefer to work with? How does it explain why this is so?

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

The research was designed according to the sequential explanatory design, one of the mixed methods. Creswell (2005) defines studies in which quantitative and qualitative data are validated together as mixed research. Relational design was used in the quantitative dimension of the study. The relational design aims to determine the existence or degree of covariance between two or more variables (Karasar, 2017). In studies conducted by the relational design,

besides the relationship between the variables, the level of prediction of one variable for the other can also be examined (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In the qualitative dimension, content analysis was used. In content analysis, similar data are combined with some concepts and themes and interpreted in a way that the reader can understand (Creswell, 2012). Qualitative data were collected to explain quantitative data.

### **Population and Sample**

The population of the research consists of teachers working in the Güngören district of Istanbul. A simple random sampling method was used to determine the sample of the study. In the simple random sampling method, every population unit is likely to participate in the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Neuman, 2006). In this research, the principle taken into consideration in determining the participants of the research is that the population is represented. There are 1932 teachers in the Güngören district (Güngören District Directorate of National Education, 2021). Considering Yamane's (2006) sampling method, the number of participants to be included in the sample for this population should not be less than 321. In the quantitative data collection part of the study, 323 participants were reached. At the end of the implementation, the participants were asked whether they would like to volunteer for qualitative interviews. Eight volunteer participants were interviewed. Five of the eight participants were female, and three were male. Each participant is actively engaged in teaching. The average age of the participants is 38 years. It aimed to increase the transferability of the study by determining the participants by the purposive sampling method.

To quantitatively ensure the sufficiency of the participants to represent the population, the formula used to determine the number of participants in random samples was used, and the number of teachers to be included in the sample was determined accordingly (Yamane, 2006);

$$Z \text{ (Standard normal variable = 95\% confidence level)} = 1.96$$

$$N \text{ (Size of the Universe)} = 1932$$

$$P \text{ (Main mass ratio) = (50\%) 0.5 deviation (Taken as the maximum error),}$$

$$n = \frac{z^2 PQ}{E^2 + \frac{z^2 PQ}{N}} = \frac{1,96^2 * 0,5 * 0,5}{0,05^2 + \frac{1,96^2 * 0,5 * 0,5}{1932}} = 321$$

As a result of the sampling calculation based on the 95% confidence interval and 0.05% margin of error, as Yamane (2006) suggested, it was determined that it would be sufficient to select 321 participants. At the same time, the volunteering of the participants of the research was considered important in terms of reflecting the reliability of the research data. On a completely random and voluntary basis, 323 participants were willing to participate in the research.

### **Data Instruments and Procedures**

The research data were collected quantitatively through the "School Principals Leadership Style Scale" developed by Akan et al. (2014) and the "Teacher Organizational Happiness Scale" developed by Korkut (2019). After the quantitative data were collected and analyzed, qualitative interview questions were prepared to explain the quantitative data. In the qualitative dimension, data were obtained via semi-structured interview questions developed by the researchers. The prepared questions were shared with four experts, and their opinions were

asked. Pilot interviews were conducted via the interview questions prepared from the selected questions, and the final questions were determined by removing the unclear questions.

The organizational happiness scale consists of six sub-dimensions and the leadership styles scale consists of three sub-dimensions. According to the confirmatory factor analysis of the organizational happiness scale, the GFI and RMSEA values (.86 and .05) show the scale has values that confirm the construct validity (Korkut, 2019). According to the confirmatory factor analysis of the leadership styles scale, the GFI and RMSEA values (.87 and .05) show that the scale confirms the construct validity (Akan et al., 2014). Both scales used in the research are in the 5-Likert structure. The teaching profession sub-dimension consists of 7 items, the administrator attitudes and behaviours sub-dimension consists of 6 items, the colleague relations sub-dimension consists of 7 items, the working conditions sub-dimension consists of 5 items, the classroom management sub-dimension consists of 5 items and the positive personality sub-dimension consists of 3 items. The transformational leadership sub-dimension of the leadership styles scale consists of 20 items, the permissive leadership sub-dimension consists of 8 items, and the transactional leadership sub-dimension consists of 7 items.

Quantitative data were collected through online tools, and interviews were conducted with the participants who volunteered in the qualitative dimension. The data were recorded during the interview and then deciphered to confirm the participant. It aims to increase the research's credibility with participant checking (Holloway & Wheeler, 1996). The interviews were analyzed after the consent of the participants.

## Data analysis

First of all, the normality test of the data obtained from the scales was performed in data analysis. Table 1 indicates skewness and kurtosis values range from +2 to -2, excluding working conditions and classroom management sub-dimensions. These values are among the values accepted for the assumption of normal distribution (George & Mallery, 2017). It is seen that the sub-dimensions of working conditions and classroom management are also normally distributed because Kline (2005) states that the data are normally distributed when the kurtosis value is also in the range of  $\pm 10$ . The predictive analyzes to be made with the normality test of the data were determined.

**Table 1**

*Skewness and Kurtosis Values (Test of Normality)*

Variables	Skewness	Kurtosis
<b>Organizational Happiness</b>		
Teaching Profession	-0.83	-0.25
Manager Attitudes and Behaviors	-1.10	0.37
Colleague Relations	-1.44	2.00
Working Conditions	-1.63	3.36
Classroom Management	-1.93	6.32
Positive Personality	-1.06	1.00
<b>Leadership Styles</b>		
Transformational Leadership	-1.01	0.34
Laissez Faire Leadership	1.06	0.87
Transactional Leadership	0.36	0.06

Since the data showed a normal distribution, simple linear regression analysis was used to determine the level of predicting the organizational happiness level of teachers by leadership styles. Regression analysis is the mathematical explanation of the relationship between the

variables that are related to each other after defining them as a predictor and predicted (Büyüköztürk, 2005 as cited in Can, 2018). Within the scope of the research, leadership styles were evaluated as the predictor variable, and the sub-dimensions of the organizational happiness level were evaluated as the predicted variable.

## Results

In this part of the research, the findings obtained as a result of the statistical analyzes related to the research problem are included. First, the descriptive values of the participants' scores included in the study from the organizational happiness and leadership styles scales were analyzed. The descriptive values of the data obtained from the scales are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Descriptive Values of Organizational Happiness and Leadership Styles Scales*

Scale	N	The Lowest Value	The Highest Value	$\bar{X}$	SS	Level
<b>Organizational Happiness Scale</b>	323	43	165	4.20	0.68	
Teaching Profession	323	7	35	3.89	1.08	I agree
Manager Attitudes and Behaviors	323	6	30	4.01	1.08	I agree
Colleague Relations	323	7	35	4.31	0.82	I completely agree
Working Conditions	323	5	25	4.28	0.71	I completely agree
Classroom Management	323	5	25	4.48	0.60	I completely agree
Positive Personality	323	3	15	4.17	0.83	I completely agree
<b>Leadership Styles</b>	323	35	175	3.31	0.50	
Transformational Leadership	323	20	100	3.95	0.99	I agree
Laissez Faire Leadership	323	8	40	2.01	0.88	I don't agree
Transactional Leadership	323	7	35	2.80	0.78	Neutral

All of the 323 participants in the study chose the most appropriate statement from the organizational happiness and leadership styles scale. When the results obtained from the analysis of the data were examined, the lowest value obtained from the whole organizational happiness scale was determined as 43, and the highest value as 165. Looking at the arithmetic mean of the overall organizational happiness scale, it was determined that the level of organizational happiness was at the level of I completely agree ( $X = 4.20$ ). The determined level seems quite high. Organizational happiness level; It was determined that “I agree” in the sub-dimensions of the teaching profession and managerial attitudes and behaviors, and “I completely agree” in the dimensions of colleague relations, working conditions, classroom management, and positive personality. The dimension with the highest organizational happiness level of the participants is classroom management. The arithmetic mean of the leadership styles scale is 3.31. When the sub-dimensions were examined, it was determined that the transformational leadership dimension was at the level of I agree, the dimension of laissez-faire leadership was at the level of I disagree, and the dimension of transactional leadership was at the level of neutral.

## **Findings on the Relationship between Teaching Profession and Leadership Styles**

Leadership style is thought to affect the teaching profession, which is a sub-dimension of organizational happiness. As presented in Table 3, simple linear regression analysis revealed how leadership styles predict organizational happiness. As a result, the sub-dimensions of



leadership styles, transformational, laissez faire, and transactional leadership variables, together showed a significant relationship with the teaching profession ( $R = .40$ ,  $R^2 = .16$ ) ( $F_{(4-435)} = 21.28$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Together, these three variables explain 16% of the change in the level of organizational happiness.

**Table 3**

*The Level of Prediction of Leadership Styles on the Dimension of the Teaching Profession*

Independent Variable	The Dependent Variable	B	Standard Error	$\beta$	$t$	$p$	Binary $r$	Partial $r$
Fixed	Teaching Profession	1.35	.41		3.26	.00		
Transformational Leadership		0.45	.06	.41	6.71	.00	.36	.35
Laissez Faire Leadership		-0.06	0.09	-.05	-0.69	.48	-.14	-.03
Transactional Leadership		0.31	.09	.22	3.34	.00	.03	.18
$R = .40$		$R^2 = .16$						
$F_{(4-435)} = 21.28$		$p = .000$						

According to the standardized regression coefficients, the relative importance of the predictor variables on the level of the teaching profession dimension of organizational happiness is transformational leadership ( $B = .45$ ), transactional leadership ( $B = .31$ ), and laissez faire leadership ( $B = -.06$ ). While transformational and transactional leadership styles increase the level of organizational happiness in the teaching profession dimension, the laissez faire leadership style decreases it. According to the results of the regression analysis, the regression equation predicting the teaching profession is as follows:

Teaching Profession = (.456x Transformational Leadership) + (.311x Transactional Leadership) - (.065x Laissez faire Leadership)

### **Findings on the Relationship between Managerial Attitudes and Behaviours and Leadership Styles**

A simple linear regression analysis revealed how leadership styles, which are thought to affect managerial attitudes and behaviors, which are the sub-dimensions of organizational happiness, predict organizational happiness. As shown in Table 4, the sub-dimensions of leadership styles, transformational, laissez-faire, and transactional leadership variables, together showed a significant relationship with managerial attitudes and behaviors ( $R = .85$ ,  $R^2 = .72$ ) ( $F_{(4-435)} = 275.76$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Together, these three variables explain 72% of the change in managerial attitudes and behaviors. It is seen that there are other reasons affecting organizational happiness in the dimension of managerial attitudes and behaviors.

**Table 4**

*The Level of Prediction of Leadership Styles on the Dimension of Managerial Attitudes and Behaviors*

Independent Variable	The Dependent Variable	B	Standard Error	$\beta$	$t$	$p$	Binary $r$	Partial $r$
Fixed	Manager Attitudes and Behaviors	.69	.23		2.90	.00		
Transformational Leadership		.87	.03	.81	22.47	.00	.84	.78
Laissez Faire Leadership		-.08	.05	-.06	-1.53	.12	-.53	-.08
Transactional Leadership		.00	.05	.00	0.14	.88	-.35	.00
$R = .85$		$R^2 = .72$						
$F_{(4-435)} = 275.76$		$p = .00$						

According to the standardized regression coefficients, the relative importance of the predictive variables on the level of managerial attitudes and behaviors of organizational

happiness is transformational leadership ( $B = .87$ ), laissez faire leadership ( $B = -.08$ ), and transactional leadership ( $\beta = .007$ ). While the transformational and transactional leadership styles increase the level of organizational happiness in the dimension of managerial attitudes and behaviors, the laissez-faire leadership style decreases it. According to the results of the regression analysis, the regression equation predicting managerial attitudes and behaviors is as follows:

$$\text{Managerial Attitudes and Behaviors} = (.877x \text{ Transformational Leadership}) + (.007x \text{ Transactional Leadership}) - (.082x \text{ Laissez faire Leadership})$$

### **Findings on the Relationship between Colleague Relationships and Leadership Styles**

A simple linear regression analysis revealed how leadership styles, which are thought to have an impact on the sub-dimension of organizational happiness, predict organizational happiness. As presented in Table 5, the sub-dimensions of leadership styles, transformational, laissez faire, and transactional leadership variables, together showed a significant relationship with peer relations ( $R = .64$ ,  $R^2 = .41$ ) ( $F_{(4-435)} = 75.50$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Together, these three variables explain 41% of the change in the level of colleague relations.

**Table 5**

*The Level of Predicting the Colleague Relations Dimension of Leadership Styles*

Independent Variable	The Dependent Variable	B	Standard Error	$\beta$	$t$	$p$	Binary $r$	Partial $r$
Fixed	Colleague Relations	2.11	.26		8.05	.00		
Transformational Leadership		0.50	.04	.61	11.80	.00	.63	.55
Laissez Faire Leadership		-0.11	.05	-.12	-1.95	.05	-.38	-.10
Transactional Leadership		0.14	.05	.14	2.51	.01	-.17	.13
$R = .64$	$R^2 = .41$							
$F_{(4-435)} = 75.50$	$p = .00$							

According to the standardized regression coefficients, the relative importance of the predictor variables on the level of colleague relations dimension of organizational happiness is transformational leadership ( $B = .50$ ), transactional leadership ( $B = .14$ ), and laissez-faire leadership ( $B = -.11$ ). While transformational and transactional leadership styles increase the level of organizational happiness in the dimension of colleague relations, the laissez-faire leadership style decreases it. According to the results of the regression analysis, the regression equation predicting peer relations is as follows:

$$\text{Colleague Relations} = (.509x \text{ Transformational Leadership}) + (.149x \text{ Transactional Leadership}) - (.116x \text{ Laissez faire Leadership})$$

### **Findings on the Relationship between Working Conditions and Leadership Styles**

A simple linear regression analysis revealed how leadership styles, which are thought to affect working conditions, which is a sub-dimension of organizational happiness, predict organizational happiness. As indicated in Table 6, the sub-dimensions of leadership styles, transformational, laissez-faire, and transactional leadership variables, together showed a significant relationship with working conditions ( $R = .64$ ,  $R^2 = .41$ ) ( $F_{(4-435)} = 73.95$ ,  $p <$

.01). Together, these three variables explain 41% of the variation in the level of working conditions.

**Table 6**

*The Level of Prediction of Leadership Styles on the Dimension of Working Conditions*

Independent Variable	The Dependent Variable	B	Standard Error	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Binary <i>r</i>	Partial <i>r</i>
Fixed	Working Conditions	2.32	.23		10.09	.00		
Transformational Leadership		0.47	.03	.66	12.59	.00	.63	.57
Laissez Faire Leadership		-0.01	.05	-.02	-0.33	.73	-.33	-.01
Transactional Leadership		0.09	.05	.10	1.82	.06	-.16	.10
<i>R</i> = .64		<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> = .41						
<i>F</i> (4-435) = 73.95		<i>p</i> = .000						

According to the standardized regression coefficients, the relative importance of the predictor variables on the level of working conditions dimension of organizational happiness is transformational leadership (B = .47), transactional leadership (B = .09), and laissez faire leadership (B = -.01). While transformational and transactional leadership styles increase the level of organizational happiness in terms of working conditions, the laissez-faire leadership style decreases it. According to the results of the regression analysis, the regression equation predicting the working conditions is as follows:

$$\text{Working Conditions} = (.475x \text{ Transformational Leadership}) + (.094x \text{ Transactional Leadership}) - (.017x \text{ Laissez faire Leadership})$$

### **Findings on the Relationship between Classroom Management and Leadership Styles**

According to the standardized regression coefficients presented in Table 7, the relative importance of the predictor variables on the level of classroom management dimension of organizational happiness is transformational leadership (B = .27), transactional leadership (B = .11), and laissez faire leadership (B = -.009). While transformational and transactional leadership styles increase classroom management, the laissez faire leadership style decreases the level of organizational happiness in classroom management. According to the results of the regression analysis, the regression equation predicting classroom management is as follows:

$$\text{Classroom Management} = (.275x \text{ Transformational Leadership}) + (.111x \text{ Transactional Leadership}) - (0.009x \text{ Laissez faire Leadership})$$

**Table 7**

*The Level of Prediction of the Classroom Management Dimension of Leadership Styles*

Independent Variable	The Dependent Variable	B	Standard Error	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Binary <i>r</i>	Partial <i>r</i>
Fixed	Classroom Management	3.10	.22		13.59	.00		
Transformational Leadership		0.27	.03	.45	7.34	.00	.40	.38
Laissez Faire Leadership		-0.00	.05	-.01	-0.17	.86	-.18	-.01
Transactional Leadership		0.11	.05	.14	2.17	.03	-.03	.12
<i>R</i> = .42		<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> = .18						
<i>F</i> (4-435) = 23.61		<i>p</i> = .000						

## Findings on the Relationship between Working Conditions and Leadership Styles

A simple linear regression analysis indicated how leadership styles, which are thought to affect working conditions, which is a sub-dimension of organizational happiness, predict organizational happiness. As presented in Table 8, the sub-dimensions of leadership styles, transformational, laissez faire, and transactional leadership variables, together showed a significant relationship with working conditions ( $R = .64$ ,  $R^2 = .41$ ) ( $F_{(4-435)} = 73.95$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Together, these three variables explain 41% of the variation in the level of working conditions.

**Table 8**

*The Level of Predicting the Working Conditions Dimension of the Leadership Styles*

Independent Variable	The Dependent Variable	B	Standard Error	$\beta$	$t$	$p$	Binary $r$	Partial $r$
Fixed	Working Conditions	2.32	.23		10.09	.00		
Transformational Leadership		0.47	.03	.66	12.59	.00	.63	.57
Laissez Faire Leadership		-0.01	.05	-.02	-0.33	.73	-.33	-.01
Transactional Leadership		0.09	.05	.10	1.82	.06	-.16	.10
$R = .64$		$R^2 = .41$						
$F(4-435) = 73.95$		$p = .000$						

According to the standardized regression coefficients, the relative importance of the predictor variables on the level of working conditions dimension of organizational happiness is transformational leadership ( $B = .47$ ), transactional leadership ( $B = .09$ ), and laissez-faire leadership ( $B = -.017$ ). While transformational and transactional leadership styles increase the level of organizational happiness in terms of working conditions, the laissez-faire leadership style decreases it. According to the results of the regression analysis, the regression equation predicting the working conditions is as follows:

Working Conditions = (.475x Transformational Leadership) + (.094x Transactional Leadership) - (.017x Laissez faire Leadership)

## Findings on the Relationship between Positive Personality and Leadership Styles

Simple linear regression analysis revealed how leadership styles, which are thought to affect positive personality, which is the sub-dimension of organizational happiness, predict organizational happiness. As demonstrated in Table 9, the sub-dimensions of leadership styles, transformational, laissez faire, and transactional leadership variables, together showed a significant relationship with positive personality ( $R = .46$ ,  $R^2 = .220$ ) ( $F_{(4-435)} = 26.96$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Together, these three variables explain 22% of the change in positive personality levels.

**Table 9**

*The Level of Leadership Styles to Predict the Positive Personality Dimension*

Independent Variable	The Dependent Variable	B	Standard Error	$\beta$	$t$	$p$	Binary $r$	Partial $r$
Fixed	Positive Personality	2.11	.30		6.90	.00		
Transformational Leadership		0.43	.05	.52	8.69	.00	.45	.43
Laissez Faire Leadership		0.07	.06	.07	1.08	.28	-.18	.06
Transactional Leadership		0.06	.06	.06	0.92	.35	-.09	.05
$R = .46$		$R^2 = .22$						
$F(4-435) = 26.96$		$p = .000$						

According to the standardized regression coefficients, the relative importance of the predictive variables on the level of positive personality dimension of organizational happiness is transformational leadership ( $B = .52$ ), laissez faire leadership ( $B = .07$ ), and transactional leadership ( $B = .06$ ). Transformational, laissez-faire and transactional leadership styles increase the level of organizational happiness in the positive personality dimension. According to the results of the regression analysis, the regression equation predicting positive personality is as follows:

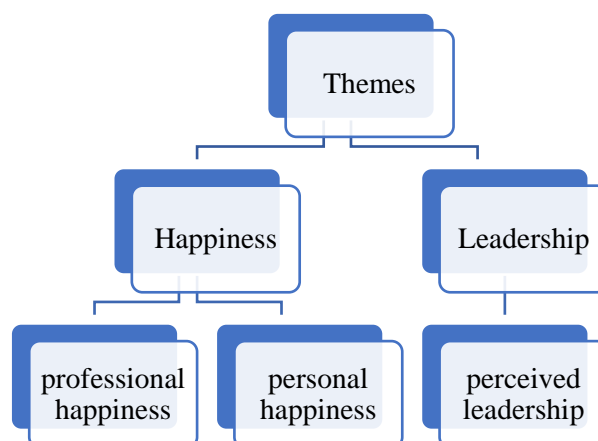
$$\text{Positive Personality} = (.437x \text{ Transformational Leadership}) + (.074x \text{ Laissez faire Leadership}) + (.063x \text{ Transactional Leadership})$$

## Descriptive Findings on the Prediction of Leadership Styles on the Level of Organizational Happiness

Figure 1 shows the themes and sub-themes extracted from qualitative data.

**Figure 1**

*Theme and Sub-Themes*



### *Theme 1. Happiness*

Professional happiness and individual happiness sub-themes were determined under the theme of happiness. In the sub-theme of professional happiness, data describing the relationship between the sub-dimensions of the organizational happiness scale, teaching profession, colleague relations, working conditions, and leadership style are included.

**Professional Happiness.** The professional happiness perceptions of the research participants are similar. The participants' opinions are generally concentrated in the category of enjoying the profession. Participants 6, 5, and 4 define professional happiness as being productive and enjoying. K5, one of the participants, defined professional happiness, especially as spiritual enjoyment, and states that this is achieved by doing things that "make a difference" to him:

"When I think about professional happiness, it means enjoying my work, especially getting spiritual satisfaction. If I am helpful to the students, if I can contribute to the school and my colleagues if the parents say God bless you, it is okay for me. Also, if I can change the lives, especially the students who have disadvantages, this makes me happy professionally. So, to sum up, "making a difference" is the key phrase for me. I don't want to be an ordinary teacher." (K5)

According to K4, change in students is the key to professional happiness. He expresses his happiness in achieving this as follows:

“When I think about professional happiness, I think of how well/right I did my job. It makes me happy when I feel productive when I contribute something to students and see the change in them. It feels good to think that I am doing my job well.”

On the other hand, K6 said that teaching something to students gives her great pleasure, and her professional happiness depends on it:

“To me, professional happiness is the joy I get while working. While working, I have a lot of fun, and I am very happy. Of course, it is related to where I am. It's fun to teach people, especially to children.”

It was found that the participants chose their profession by heart and provided moral satisfaction, but the working conditions were not sufficient for them. In addition, it has been determined that their relationships with their colleagues also affect their professional happiness. K7 conveys that he loves the teaching profession regardless of the conditions as follows:

“Generally, I'm definitely happy, I say I'm glad I chose this profession, and I couldn't have done it if I didn't like it. On the other hand, sometimes I'm very unhappy, I can't deny it, but I never regret choosing this job.”

K8, on the other hand, explained that although she loves teaching very much, the lack of today's professional reputation and the inadequate value given to the teacher makes her unhappy:

“I love this profession very much, but I feel unhappy because I am working as a teacher nowadays. I wish I had done this job 20 years ago. Then I think the teachers were respected more then. I can't say that I am one hundred percent unhappy because in terms of administration at school, I am not that happy but when I think about my students, I feel very happy. Despite all the difficulties, I say “thanks to God, I became a teacher many times.” (F8)

K3 states that she could not earn enough from the teaching profession financially, so she had to think about how to earn more income from time to time:

“I am very happy to be a teacher. Especially because I love my branch. Unfortunately, I don't think I get paid for my work. I don't think I got it financially, but when my student achieves something, this gives me happiness. In other words, there is spiritual happiness, not material happiness. I am not demoralized because I love my profession, but of course, I feel resentful inevitably. I mean, I'm thinking about what I could do if I was more comfortable financially.” (K3)

K6, on the other hand, expresses that her professional happiness depends on more than one factor with the following words:

“It is for sure that colleagues are one of the most important things that make me happy at work and working conditions, as well. Being close to my house is another positive side, I can say physical factors are more important to me. Of course, both my manager, assistant managers, and other colleagues, but the administrative department people value us a lot, so I am very happy. This is why I stay here because they generally always develop a positive attitude when I interact with them.” (K6)

K2, on the other hand, states that she is unhappy in the institution she works for and explains the reason for this as follows:

“I don't feel happy in the institution. The reason for this is the lack of cooperation among teachers. Because being a teacher is regarded just as a task to do at my school and teachers are not role models, and in teachers' room my colleagues are chatting about other things rather than education.”

K3 explains the relationship between her colleagues, school management and financial conditions, and her professional happiness as follows:

“Relationships with colleagues and administrators affect one hundred percent. For example, when I went to a principal and said I would take my children to the garden and have them paint, they would say no. This used to affect me very badly. There are bad times when we are struggling financially. That's why we are a little unhappy because the financial situation is very important.

When our level of well-being is high, when we live a better life, we reflect happiness to our family and ourselves. But when our level of well-being drops, what happens is stress.” (K3)

Participants state that professional happiness generally relates to working conditions and colleague relationships. It has been found that poor management and working conditions, insufficient financial gain, and negative colleague relations make them unhappy professionally.

**Personal Happiness.** In this sub-theme, there are findings that will reveal the relationship between the positive personalities of teachers and the leadership styles of school administrators. The participants describe themselves as happy individuals and explained the contribution of their happiness to them as a positive personality below:

“I would describe myself as a happy individual. I think this affects my school positively as well. Since I am a very happy and cheerful, I reflect this happiness at school and in my social life.” (K1)

“Yes, I am generally a happy person. It may not look like that, but I am happy. Little things can make me happy.” (K5)

“I can say that I am happy because I am a person who loves to learn because I am someone who always tries to learn something, I am preparing for an exam, and at the same time, I can say that I am happy when I learn something.

Although I am a very happy person in business life and a positive person, it can be the opposite in my life due to some special reasons. It affects my life, but the positive atmosphere in business life is not one hundred percent. I would say 60 percent.” (K6)

“I can say that I am generally a cheerful character. Work and private life both affect each other; for example, when I look around, I can see that people who are normally sullen or angry are the same in the classroom. I don't think anyone becomes different when they put on a mask and enter the classroom. You know, sometimes something bothers us, we leave it behind, but in general, if a person's character is that way, it definitely reflects it.” (F7)

“Normally, I am a very positive person. People remember me for my positive nature. If a teacher comes to school, he first meets me. I am very positive and sociable, but sometimes I am unhappy at school, especially when the administration is very authoritarian. It also affects my private life, but in general, I am a happy person. This also affects my work; I don't want to do the things I did in the previous years or the things that I used to not get tired of doing now make me tired.” (F8)

It has been found that the positive personality of individuals affects professional happiness and relations with administrators. It has been determined that individuals who define themselves as positive tend to be happy professionally as well.

### *Theme 2. Leadership*

This theme includes data on how the participants perceive the leader in the organization and findings on leadership styles, managerial attitudes, and behaviors, which are the sub-dimensions of organizational happiness and classroom management.

***Perceived Leadership.*** K8, one of the participants, explained how the school principals being too authoritarian and giving importance to paperwork affected them as follows:

“Our principal is very authoritarian; sometimes, he cares about paperwork even more than the teacher. Inevitably, this wears us out. There is a problem in communication, he behaves like the boss of the company, and he gives the message, “I am the boss.” Normally, the title of the principal is teacher, but some pretend to forget that they are teachers. The “I want you to do” attitude toward the teachers also alienates the teachers from the working environment.” (F8)

“The principal is a very important factor so that we don't clash with other colleagues; the administration ensures that the programs are done fairly. He shouldn't leave his affairs out to the assistant principals or us. We have too much workload. I have friends at other schools, and none of them do the paperwork we do. I do two or three pieces of paperwork a week, day and night, but this is not done in most places. Managers who focus on excessive document work are tiring. Sometimes I feel like he cares more about the paper than the work we do.” (P8)

K4, on the other hand, explained the importance of strong communication skills of school administrators as leaders as follows:

“I remember that I was much happier with all my managers with whom I could communicate and develop a dialogue. But I remember that I was not very happy with my managers, whom I could not communicate with and whose communication channels were not open. Because we also had administrators who passed by without saying hello or good morning. I don't think that the administrators who do not leave their rooms, do not know their teachers and school closely, just do the paperwork and say this is my job description and do not interfere with the school, and sometimes the administrators who do not breathe the air of the school make the teachers very happy.” (K4)

K2 states that the school administrator's attitudes and behaviors affect her negatively as being controlling and despotic:

“Despotic, authoritarian, stubborn people, undemocratic things affect me. His controlling behavior affects me negatively because when I am controlled, I feel under pressure, and when I work under pressure, I see less benefit from the product or course that will emerge, both for myself and for the student. I feel happier when I am free. I am happier and more successful when I am given a long-term task rather than a short-term task, and I plan it myself.” (K2)

According to K5, the school administrator should adopt an understanding management style that contributes to the professional development of the teacher:

“..I expect a management style to pave the way for me and support my personal development. I would also like an active, hardworking, planning, and not self-isolating management style



rather than sitting in the school administration's office. I don't like a superior view, a distant management approach.” (K5)

K6, on the other hand, thinks that it is right for the school principal to adopt a balanced management approach:

“Neither too tight nor too loose is, of course, not right in any area. There should be rules, and we know what to do and what not to do.” (K6)

Participants state that they will be happier if school administrators show transformational leadership characteristics instead of being *laissez faire* and transactional leaders. It was found that the participants preferred managers who were open to communication, fair, and able to solve problems. However, it was found that the participants saw the sharing of authority with them negatively. K2, K6, K7, and K8 expressed this as follows:

“I don't want him to share his authority with me anyway, but I would be happier if he offered me suggestions and options and said “let's do these things together”. I go into my job wholeheartedly. Principals guidance makes me feel more comfortable.” (K2)

“Since there are so many responsibilities, an extra responsibility probably wouldn't make me very happy because I feel tired enough at school.” (K6)

“It depends on the authority. For example, collecting money is a chore, it can be annoying that they share the chore more, but apart from that, I don't know, I can't think of... For example, a parent needs assessment form is handed out at the meeting, and if the parents need training on any subject, they don't come with an attitude like that, it's your duty to do it anyway. They don't come with anything extra.” (F7)

“The manager's sharing of authority and responsibility affects me negatively. In fact, something like this would be nice to share in some things, but it is not given as authority, it is given as a task. We have the ball in the hard stuff, but not in the good stuff. That's why I feel that way sometimes.” (F8)

According to the research findings, depending on the situation, individuals prefer controlling or releasing leaders rather than authoritarian or *laissez-faire* leaders. As authoritarian leaders make employees unhappy, *laissez-faire* leaders also cause unhappiness in the organization.

## Discussion and Conclusion

According to the research results, it was determined that the organizational happiness levels of the teachers were at the level of strongly agree, and the highest level of organizational happiness was in the colleague relations sub-dimension. Looking at the leadership styles, it was determined that teachers perceived school administrators as transformational leaders. It has been determined that there is a significant relationship between the level of organizational happiness and leadership styles. According to the research results, teachers state that they are happier when they work with transformational leaders instead of *laissez faire* leaders and transactional leaders in schools. Bass (1990) states that transformational leaders ensure individuals are happy and satisfied in the work environment. In addition, it has been determined that teachers' organizational happiness is related to their relations with the manager, colleague relations, working conditions, and personality traits. Therefore, a positive relationship between managers and employees is expected to positively affect organisational happiness.

Çetin and Polat (2019) concluded that teachers have a high level of happiness perceptions in their study on teachers' perceptions of organizational happiness. In his master's thesis, Sarıbyık

(2022) states that the organizational happiness level of teachers is at the level of “I agree” and that the highest average is in the classroom management sub-dimension. These results are in parallel with the results of the research. Looking at the leadership styles, it was determined in this study that there is a significant relationship between the level of organizational happiness and leadership styles. Leaders in organizations have an important role in the happiness of employees. The fact that leaders increase happiness in the working environment makes not only the employees happy but also the organization more efficient (Isa et al., 2019). In a study in which Inandi and Selbi (2022) examined the relationship between teachers' professional seniority and managers' leadership styles, it was found that teachers' perceptions of leadership styles changed according to their professional seniority and that the perception of autocratic leaders of those with less professional seniority was lower than those with more professional seniority. According to the results of Akçekoca and Bilgin's (2016) study examining the effect of school principals' leadership styles on teacher performance, the leadership of the school principal increases the effectiveness of the school, and the leaders with the traits of transactional leadership are insufficient in increasing the performance of the teachers. Similarly, Özgenel and Aktaş (2020), in their study on the effect of school principals' leadership styles on teacher performance, concluded that leadership styles affect teacher performance, laissez-faire leadership style affects teacher performance negatively, autocratic leadership negatively, and democratic leadership positively affects teacher performance. Brinia et al. (2014) state that the school leader should be a strong director. In parallel with these studies, Uyaroğlu (2019) concluded that organizational happiness is related to management processes and professional dedication. In this study, the predictive level of organizational happiness of laissez-faire and transactional leadership was lower. Teachers state that the level of organizational happiness will increase more when they work with transformational leaders in the organization. Rosenberg (2010) states that one of the main features of transformational leadership is the pursuit of happiness. In this case, it is an expected result that transformational leadership predicts organizational happiness. Since there are various reasons for happiness, conducting studies that will include other leadership styles will provide a clearer demonstration of the relationship between leadership style and organizational happiness. There are studies revealing the relationship between culture and happiness. Joshanloo and Weijers (2013) discuss the relationship between happiness and culture. Therefore, it is predicted that there will be a relationship between cultural leadership and organizational happiness. Based on the result that organizational happiness levels are related to transformational leadership, it is estimated that similar leadership styles may also be related to happiness.

## **Recommendation**

In line with these results, it is recommended that researchers conduct studies that will examine the effect of other leadership styles on organizational happiness. In addition, it may be beneficial to expand the existing knowledge by conducting qualitative research on teachers' professional happiness. One limitation of this study is that it was conducted in only one district. Different samples may yield different results. According to the results of the research, it is suggested to the practitioners that they adopt the transformational leadership style, not the laissez faire or transactional leadership styles in their school management approach, and reflect these in-school practices.

In addition, it is suggested that school administrators should pay attention to the school climate, based on the finding that teachers' relationships with their colleagues and working conditions also affect their happiness. In this context, social activities that will provide positive improvements in human relations can be planned for the school. According to the research findings, one of the things that cause teachers to be unhappy professionally is seen as financially insufficient income. In this case, it is seen that teachers consider alternative solutions. It is thought that it will be insufficient for policymakers to make regulations or inspections to prevent teachers from working in other jobs through laws. Instead, it is recommended to carry out studies to improve income levels.

## Declarations

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