

# International Journal of Educational Studies and Policy (IJESP)

Volume: 1, Issue: 1, November 2020

## Comparison of the Predictive Level of Transformational, Transactional and Laissez-Faire Leadership Styles on School Happiness\*

Bülent Şahin<sup>1</sup> Mustafa Özgenel<sup>2</sup>

### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to investigate the comparison of the predictive value of school administrators' leadership styles on school happiness. In this context, the relational survey method is used in the research. The population of the research consists of teachers working in public and private schools in Çekmeköy and Üsküdar districts of Istanbul. The sample of the study consisted of 576 teachers. "School Principals Leadership Styles" and "School Happiness Scale" are used to collect data. Normality and reliability values are calculated before proceeding to analyze the data. Correlation and regression analyze are performed in the study. According to the findings, teachers' perceptions of school happiness are at the "high" level, while their transformational leadership style perceptions are also at the "high" level and their laissez-faire leadership style perceptions are at the "low" level and the transactional leadership style perceptions are at the "middle" level. A high level of positive correlation was found between school principals' transformational leadership style and school happiness. However, there is a medium level of a negative relationship between laissez-faire leadership style and transactional leadership style and school happiness. In the research, it is concluded that the transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles significantly predict school happiness.

**Keywords:** Leadership, leadership styles, organizational happiness, school happiness

**Article History:** Received 02.09.2020

Accepted 06.11.2020

**Cite as:** Şahin, B & Özgenel, M. (2020). Comparison of the predictive level of transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles on school happiness, *International Journal of Educational Studies and Policy*, 1(1), 55-73

<sup>1</sup>Corresponding Author: Bülent Şahin, MBA Schools, E-posta: [bulentsahin@mbaokullari.com](mailto:bulentsahin@mbaokullari.com), ORCID: 0000-0001-7978-3842

<sup>2</sup>Assoc. Prof. Mustafa Özgenel, Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, Faculty of Education, İstanbul. E posta: [mustafa.ozgenel@izu.edu.tr](mailto:mustafa.ozgenel@izu.edu.tr), ORCID: 0000-0002-7276-4865

•This paper was produced from the master's thesis of Bülent Şahin conducted under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Mustafa Özgenel

## Introduction

Since the beginning of history, people have always aimed to reach happiness individually or as a society. Therefore, the genuine meaning of happiness and how to achieve it is considered as an issue (Acaboğa, 2007). The concept of happiness in the Turkish language is defined as “Honor situation, happiness, honesty, kut, happiness, well-being, feelings of happiness, heard from reaching all the aspirations completely and continuously” (Turkish Language Association [TDK], 2019). The concept of happiness is suggested that the individual will be happy as a result of an effort for a virtuous life philosophically (Bulut, 2015). However, happiness is used as the main theme of positive psychology (Diener 1984) and is often used instead of subjective well-being (Eryılmaz and Ercan, 2011; Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012). In other words, happiness is a state of well-being. It is the degree to which an individual evaluates the overall quality of their own life as a whole positively (Buragohain and Mukut Hazarika, 2015).

Happiness is associated with living conditions (Chen, 2012). For this reason, Veenhoven (1984) defined happiness as a positive or the degree of enjoyment of life. This definition of the author points out that it is a broader concept than the concept of life satisfaction. Because it is an emotional and cognitive component structure that includes happiness, pleasure (hedonic levels), and satisfaction, it is the degree of the positive judgment of the individual's overall quality of life as a whole or the level of how well he loves life. Happiness is a cognitive structure that the individual brings together from various experiences. 'Happiness' refers to the individual's own life as a whole. Thus, it includes the expected experiences of the past, present, and future. The term of happiness emerges as an attitude towards one's own life in relation to the evaluation of one's own life. People value happiness as an integral part of life such as health, friends, and family (Chorro, Fernández, and Corbi, 2017). Therefore, it can be characterized by positive emotional states such as happiness, optimism, positive thinking, and personal well-being perception (Talebzadeh and Samkan, 2011). In this context, happiness that starts in the inner world of the person can affect the environment to which the person is connected and its dialogue with the environment. Along with these, the pleasure and satisfaction of the person from the dialogues in the social organization to which he is affiliated can be another expression of the concept of happiness (Cenkseven and Akbaş, 2007). Considering happiness at the organizational level, the concept of organizational happiness has emerged.

Organizational happiness, in other words, happiness in the workplace refers to the happiness of the organization rather than expressing the individual happiness of the individual. This happiness is an important variable that affects the total happiness of the members of the organization. Because organizational happiness increases productivity, financial performance, creativity, cognitive flexibility, collaboration, income, and organizational performance in organizations and reduces employee absenteeism (Arslan and Polat, 2017). Another research showed that teachers' happiness and subjective well-being levels, job performance (Jalali and Heidari, 2016), and university students' happiness levels are the strongest predictors of their academic performance (Langevin, 2013). School happiness is a broader concept of well-being and expresses more than just loving school (Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012). In other words, although school happiness is expressed as happiness or job satisfaction in school, it is actually more than these (Fisher, 2010). For example, school happiness is expressed as emotional prosperity/well-being, which is the result of the harmony between school expectations and the personal needs of students, teachers, school administrators, and other employees, depending on certain environmental factors (Engels, Alterman, Petegem, and Schepens, 2004).

According to Döş (2013), a happy school is a situation that occurs when the teacher and the administrator take care of the student closely, provide guidance, and that the students comply with the rules of the school. In a happy school, the student follows the rules of the school, studies his lessons, does his homework, knows what is expected from him, his responsibilities, and acts accordingly. In a happy school, the teacher treats the students close and warm, listens to their problems, and helps to solve their problems. In a happy school, the lessons are taught with pleasure, students' attention is attracted by different methods and techniques, and students participate in the lessons. In addition, a school that has a relationship between school happiness and subjective happiness, having a good time in school, given motivating tasks, and having enough friends, contributes to the general (global) happiness of students (Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2012). According to the study conducted by Buragohain and Hazarika (2015), a happy teacher has high job satisfaction and a teacher with high job satisfaction would be happier in a school climate. In this context, it can be said that it is very crucial to reveal the potential of all employees in the school and to realize a quality learning-teaching activity (Talebzadeh and Samkan, 2011). Because, according to Bullough and Pinnegar (2009), when teachers are encouraged to develop and realize themselves in schools and feel happy as a result of supporting, they will increase the quality of education, student learning and the effectiveness of the school. Also, high job satisfaction of teachers affects their performance positively and high performing teachers contribute positively to the effectiveness of their schools (Özgenel and Mert, 2019).

The purpose of the existence of schools is students. All investments and activities in the field of education are made in order to make them individuals that are beneficial to society and self-sufficient. Achieving these goals can be attained more comfortably and easily through happy schools (Döş, 2013). Therefore, factors that affect school happiness must be determined in order to create a happy school. Many internal and external factors can be mentioned that affect school happiness. However, one of these factors, perhaps the most vital one, is the school principal. Because school principals are the administrators who are accepted as the natural and legal leaders of the school and who are responsible for all the administrative processes of my school. The task of the school principal is to sustain the school according to its goals by using all the human and non-human resources of the school in the most successful way (Taymaz, 1995). A school principal is the person who communicates with his employees in his school organization, motivates them, and tries to bring the school organization to a quality and successful point (Başar, 1995). In other words, school principals are leaders who are expected to bring schools to their main goals.

Glasser (1999) emphasized that leaders have a moderate, systematic, and workable approach in order to provide quality education at school and that leaders are very important for the school. In this sense, leadership can be defined as the relationship between a group that wants to achieve a certain goal and people who will achieve this goal (Kouzes and Posner, 2010). Although human beings do not always actively engage in leadership, they passively maintain their leadership feature until they are passively inherent, responding to their interlocutor according to the situation, or reacting as leaders. In the process of explaining the concept of leadership, various approaches were observed (Aydın, 2007). These approaches are features theory, behavioral theory, and contingency theory. The theory of features assumes that people are leaders because of inherent abilities and qualities. While behavioral theory suggests that people are leaders thanks to their choices and movements based on them, recently developed contingency theories state that the conditions are the most important factors that bring a leader as a leader (Güney, 1992). Researchers, who think that they are incomplete in explaining the concept of leadership, have

suggested new leadership approaches and models (Yukl, 2018). In this study, transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles are discussed.

Transformational leaders help to reorganize their organization's values and norms and adapt and encourage both internal and external change as needed, making dramatic organizational changes, including the development and implementation of a vision (Avolio, Waldman, and Yammarino, 1991). Transformational leaders raise the motivation and morality of their followers, increase follower awareness, inspire, intellectually encourage and respect them individually (Antonakis, Avolio, and Sivasubramaniam, 2003; Avolio and Bass, 2002; Bass, 1999). Besides, they expect to get more than what they should be (Yusof, 1998). Transformational leadership has four sub-dimensions: (i) Idealized influence (including the idealized attribution and idealized behavior): leaders are admired, respected, and trusted. (ii) Inspirational motivation: leaders motivate their employees by providing meanings and challenges at work. (iii) Intellectual stimulation: leaders encourage their employees to turn to innovation by solving traditional problems in new ways. (iv) Individualized consideration: reflects leaders who act as coaches or mentors to increase the level of success and personal development of employees (Avolio, Waldman, and Yammarino, 1991).

The transactional leaders turn to daily activities, determine the goals for their employees, and follow up on the negativities encountered while reaching these goals through their audit mechanism. Business is central to these leaders. They protect their positions with strategies, procedures, and personal dialogues (Tomey, 2008). Transactional leadership adopts a management approach that preserves its old-style traditional structure, unlike transformative leadership's ability to adapt to innovations. In this leadership style, an agreement appears between the audience and the leader. The leader promises a reward or punishment/bargain as a result of their success, achievement, or enhancement of their performance. Makes a performance evaluation by observing the leader employees. However, at the same time, it gets the chance to correct the problems by immediately intervening with its employees who fall below a certain level. The progress of the works as intended is important for the sustainer leader (Bass, Avolio, Jung, and Berson, 2003). While the transactional leader motivates its viewers to behave as they should, the transformational leader often encourages and inspires his viewers to do more than the beginning (Hartog, Muijen, and Koopman, 1997).

In a laissez-faire leadership style, leaders leave a wide range of activities to their audience. It disrupts or does not care about their duties in controlling and managing. In groups with these leaders, decisions, and practices are in the hands of leaders, but everyone is free to do whatever they want (Türkmen, 1996). In a laissez-faire leadership style, the leader prefers to impose responsibility on those who watch rather than take responsibility and delay their decisions. He remains indifferent to his needs and wishes (Hoy and Miskel, 2010). The weakest aspect of laissez-faire leadership is that the leader plays a full liberating role. Giving full freedom, the leader prepares the ground for the turmoil that may occur among subordinates. In such an environment, the leader cannot show himself/herself, his/her movements remain limited and he loses his authority (Tengilimoğlu, 2005a).

When the literature is examined, leadership styles emerge as a factor affecting the performance of teams and individuals, and organizational processes and outcomes. For instance, leadership styles were investigated by different researchers as a factor affecting such topics: Transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles affects narcissism (Onay, 2018), organizational cynicism (Özgenel and Hıdıroğlu, 2019), teamwork (Özgenel and Karsantik, 2020),

conflict management strategies (Maral, 2016; Yaylalı, 2017), school culture (Dalgıç, 2015), employees' organizational commitment (Beşiroğlu, 2013; Zeren, 2007), job satisfaction (Tura, 2012), self-efficacy (Riggs, 2017), employee engagement (Abbott, 2017), academic performance (Tekbulut, 2017) and motivation (Eboka, 2016). At the same time, human resources leadership, political, symbolic and structural leadership orientations learning organization (Bilir, 2014); authentic leadership style school climate (Garza, 2018); democratic leadership style work efficiency (Shamaki, 2015); paternalist leadership style, bureaucratic culture (Özgenel and Dursun, 2020), teacher performance (Mert and Özgenel, 2020) and organizational happiness (Özgenel and Canuyulası, 2020); ethical leadership style, school climate, commitment to school (Özgenel and Yayık, 2019), organizational health (Özgenel and Aksu, 2020) and organizational dissent (Özgenel, Baydar, and Baydar, 2019); technological leadership style learning school (Özgenel and Demirci, 2019); spiritual (Özgenel and Ankaralıoğlu, 2020) and charismatic leadership styles, cultures of success, mission and support (Özgenel, 2020a); task and staff oriented leadership behaviors reflect the learning culture at school (Özgenel, 2020b); collaborative and democratic leadership styles teacher performance (Özgenel and Aktaş, 2020); instructional leadership style, motivation of teachers (Özgenel and Dil, 2020); destructive leadership style, organizational stress (Özgenel and Canuyulası, 2020), leadership qualities affect teacher performance (Özgenel, Mert, and Parlar, 2020) positively / negatively at different levels. When all these studies are evaluated together, it can be said that school principals affect almost all variables at school level.

Researches on the concept of happiness are mostly focused on the factors affecting the psychological state of happiness of individuals (Aypay and Eryılmaz, 2011; Demiriz and Ulutaş, 2016; Özdemir and Korkulu, 2011; Özgenel and Bozkurt, 2019; Özgenel and Çetiner, 2019; Telef, 2014; Uusitalo-Malmivaara and Lehto, 2013; Ünüvar, Çalışandemir, Tagay and Amini, 2015). In addition, teachers stated that effective schools have effective leaders (Helvacı and Aydoğan, 2011) and that school administration is the most important factor affecting organizational happiness (Bulut, 2015). In other words, school principals can have a huge impact on creating a happy school (Döş, 2013). In this sense, it is wondered whether the leadership styles exhibited by school principals affect school happiness. Because happy people are more effective, productive, and solution-oriented in their work. When the teachers feel happy and comfortable enough with the physical conditions of the school, the school management, and the school administrator's leadership style then they can affect school outcomes positively and develop their students' abilities better (Buragohain and Hazarika, 2015). From this point of view, it can be said that determining the effect of leadership styles on school happiness is important in terms of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of schools and teachers, comparing how teachers are affected by the leadership styles displayed by school principals and how they are reflected in school happiness. Therefore, comparing the effects of school principals' leadership styles perceived by teachers on school happiness will contribute to practitioners and researchers in the field of school education administration. Because one of the problems in education systems is the existence of happy schools. Although this is a really old problem, it has not been seriously studied so far (Talebzahed and Samkan, 2011).

According to the literature review, it is seen that many studies have been done to determine the relationships between leadership styles and different variables. However, it has been observed that there are a limited number of studies dealing with the two between leadership styles and school happiness, and in this study, it was aimed to compare the effect of school principals' leadership styles according to teachers' perceptions of school happiness. For this purpose, answers were sought for the following sub-goals. According to the perceptions of teachers;

- What are the levels of leadership styles and school happiness of school principals?
- Is there a significant relationship between school principals' leadership styles and school happiness?
- Do the principals' leadership styles affect/predict school happiness?

## **Method**

### **Research Model**

The aim of this research is to investigate the comparison of the predictive value of school administrators' leadership styles on school happiness according to their perceptions of teachers. A relational survey model was used in the study. The relational survey method provides a better understanding of current situations by examining the relationship between two or more variables (Büyüköztürk, Akgün, Demirel, Karadeniz, and Çakmak, 2015; Creswell, 2017).

### **Population and Sample**

The population of the study consists of teachers working in public and private schools in Üsküdar and Çekmeköy districts of Istanbul in the 2019-2020 academic year. In Üsküdar and Çekmeköy Districts, research is carried out at two schools of each school type selected by the stratified sampling method. The stratified sampling method can be identified as the sampling method that aims to show the values of the groups studied in the universe size in proportion to the size of each layer in order to reveal the subpopulation that the universe has (Büyüköztürk, Akgün, Demirel, Karadeniz, and Çakmak, 2015).

In order to reach the teachers working in different types of public and private schools (primary school, secondary school and high school) determined for the sample of the study, the necessary permissions are obtained from the Istanbul Provincial Directorate of National Education. A total of 700 scales are distributed, 684 scales back, empty, faulty, or missing 108 scales are eliminated, and the remaining 576 scales are evaluated and formed the sample.

57.5% (331) of the 576 teachers participating in the research are female and 42.5% (245) are male teachers. 26% (150) of teachers less than 5 years, 26% (150) 6-10 years, 19.4% (112) 11-15 years, 13.7% (79) 16-20 year and 14.8% (85) have been working for more than 21 years. 51.4% (296) of the teachers participating in the research work in private schools and 48.6% (280) work in public schools. 51.4% (296) of the teachers participating in the research work in private schools and 48.6% (280) work in public schools. It is determined that of the teachers participating in the research working in 25.9% (149) Primary School, 27.8% (160) Secondary School, 21.5% (124) Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School, 14.6% (84), and 10.2% (59) of the Imam Hatip High School.

### **Data Collection Tool**

The data were collected with the permission of the Istanbul Provincial Directorate of National Education and the Istanbul Governorship (No. 59090411 / 10-01-E.13334749 and dated 11/07/2019).

In the collection of research data, a scale consisting of three parts, namely the Personal Information Form, School Happiness Scale, and School Principals Leadership Styles Scale is used. The permissions of the scales were taken in advance. While applying the scales, it was stated that

the data would be kept confidential and help was obtained from selected teachers on a voluntary basis.

*Personal Information Form:* In the personal information form, the teachers participating in the research are asked about their gender, professional seniority, school types, and the levels of the school they served.

*School Happiness Scale:* The “School Happiness Scale” used in the research was developed by Sezer and Can (2019), and validity and reliability studies were applied by the researchers. The School Happiness Scale, which has 26 items, has 5 sub-factors. These sub-dimensions are stated in the order below; "Physical Equipment (1-2-3-4)", "Learning Environment (5-6-7-8-9-10-11-)", "Cooperation (12-13-14-15-16-17 -18-19)", “Activities (20-21-22)”. And “School Management (23-24-25-26)”. The scale has a five-point Likert type and the scoring type is determined as "Never (1), Rarely (2), Sometimes (3), Mostly (4), Always (5)".

*The School Principals Leadership Styles Scale,* which was developed by Akan, Yıldırım, and Yalçın (2014) and has thirty-five (35) items, has three sub-dimensions. The sub-dimension items of Transformational leadership, which are considered as the first dimension, are as follows; 1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 30, 32, 34, and 35. Sub-items of laissez-faire leadership, considered as the second dimension, are 2, 9, 12, 13, 17, 26, 31, and 33. Sub-items belonging to the transactional leadership, which are considered as the third sub-dimension, are 3, 5, 7, 18, 21, 28, and 29. Each dimension of the scale with a 5-point Likert type is calculated separately.

## Data Analyses

The data collected within the scope of the study are converted into Excel spreadsheets in the computer environment and analyzed using SPSS 22.0 package program. With the help of the SPSS 22.0 package program, firstly, skewness, kurtosis, and reliability tests are carried out to check the normal distribution of the data. The results are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Skewness, kurtosis, and reliability values of the scales

	N	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach $\alpha$
School Happiness	575	-.339	0.35	.936
Transformational Leadership Style	575	-.584	.344	.954
Laissez-faire Leadership Style	575	.397	-.140	.861
Transactional Leadership Style	575	-.034	.002	.641

Obtained from the scales used in the study, the flatness and skewness coefficients of whether the data are normally distributed are examined, and it is decided that the data showed a normal distribution because of the kurtosis and skewness coefficients are between +1 and -1. Parametric tests are performed on the normal distribution of the data. In this context, arithmetic mean and standard deviation values are calculated to determine the leadership styles and school happiness levels perceived by teachers. "Pearson Correlation" analyses are conducted to determine the relationship between school principals' leadership styles and school happiness, and finally "Simple Regression" analyzes are conducted to determine whether school principals' leadership styles predict school happiness.

## Results

The leadership styles perceived by teachers and the average and standard deviation values of school happiness are given in Table 2.

Table 2: Leadership styles and school happiness average and standard deviation values

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Evaluation
School Happiness	576	3.95	.55	High
Transformational Leadership Style	576	3.71	.71	High
Laissez-faire Leadership Style	576	2.32	.80	Low
Transactional Leadership Style	576	2.86	.62	Medium

As can be seen in Table 2, teachers' perceptions of school happiness are at “high” level (M=3.95; SD=.55), transformational leadership style perceptions are at “high” level (M=3.71; SD=.71), laissez-faire leadership style perceptions are at “low” level (M=2.32; SD=.80), and transactional leadership style perceptions are at the "medium" level (M=2.86; SD=.62).

The results of the Pearson Correlation analysis applied to reveal the relationship between school principals' perceived leadership styles and school happiness levels are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation analysis results between school leaders' perceptions and school happiness perceived

Variables	School Happiness
Transformational Leadership Style	.601**
Laissez-faire Leadership Style	-.387**
Transactional Leadership Style	-.332**

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$ ;  $N = 576$

According to the findings in Table 3, a significant relationship is discovered among the school happiness perceived by teachers and the transformational leadership of school principals ( $r = .601$ ;  $p < .05$ ), laissez-faire leadership ( $r = -.387$ ;  $p < .05$ ), and transactional leadership ( $r = -.332$ ;  $p < .05$ ) styles (Büyüköztürk, 2012; Ural and Kılıç, 2013). While there is a positive and high-level significant relationship between transformational leadership style and school happiness, which is one of the leadership styles of school principals, there is a negative and medium level significant relationship between laissez-faire and transactional leadership styles and school happiness.

The results regarding the predicting level of the transformational leadership style of school principals on school happiness are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Simple regression analysis results regarding school principals' transformative leadership style's predicting school happiness

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	B	Std. Error	( $\beta$ )	t	p
Constant		.222	.098		22,618	.000
Transformational Leadership Style	School Happiness	.467	.026	.601	17,991	.000

$R = .601$ ;  $R^2 = .361$ ;  $F = 323.692$ ;  $p < .000$

When the findings given in Table 4 are analyzed, it is seen that the transformational leadership style significantly predicts school happiness ( $\beta = .601$ ;  $r^2 = .36$ ;  $p < .05$ ). Accordingly, the transformational leadership style of school principals explains 36% of the total variance in school happiness. In other words, the transformational leadership style positively and significantly affects school happiness.

The results regarding the predicting level of the laissez-faire leadership style of school principals on school happiness are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Simple regression analysis results of school principals' laissez-faire leadership prediction of school happiness

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	B	Std. Error	( $\beta$ )	t	p
Constant		4,578	,065		70,102	,000
Laissez-Faire Leadership Style	School Happiness	-,266	,027	-,387	-10,048	,000

R=.387; R<sup>2</sup>=.150; F=100.963; p<.000

When the findings given in Table 5 are examined, it is seen that the school principals' laissez-faire leadership style significantly predicts school happiness ( $\beta$ =-. 387;  $r^2$ =.15;  $p$ <.05). Accordingly, the laissez-faire leadership style of school principals explains 15% of the total variance in school happiness. In other words, the laissez-faire leadership style negatively affects school happiness.

The results regarding the predicting level of the transactional leadership style of school principals on school happiness are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Simple regression analysis results of school principals' transactional leadership prediction of school happiness

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	B	Std. Error	( $\beta$ )	t	p
Constant		4,794	,101		47,271	,000
Transactional Leadership Style	School Happiness	-,292	,035	-,332	-8,445	,000

R=.332; R<sup>2</sup>=.109; F=71.316; p<.000

When the findings given in Table 6 are analyzed, it is seen that the transactional leadership style significantly predicts school happiness ( $\beta$ =-. 332;  $r^2$ =.109;  $p$ <.05). The transactional leadership of school principals predicts 10% of school happiness. In other words, the transactional leadership of school principals' is explained by 10% of the total variance in the school happiness. The transactional leadership style negatively affects school happiness.

### Discussion, Conclusion and Suggestions

In this study, it was aimed to investigate the relationship between school principals' leadership styles and teachers' perceived school happiness level. According to the findings of the research, it can be stated that teachers' perceptions of school happiness and transformational leadership style are at a "high" level, their laissez-faire leadership style perceptions are at "low" level, and their transactional leadership style perceptions are at "medium" level. Similar to the outcomes of this research, Özgenel and Bozkurt (2019) and Tosten, Avcı, and Şahin (2017) stated that teachers' perceptions of school happiness are at "high" level. Concordantly, Özgenel and Hıdıroğlu (2019) and Özgenel and Nair (2020) determined the transformational leadership style at "high" level, the laissez-faire leadership style at "low" level, and the transactional leadership style at "medium" level. In the study conducted by Beşiroğlu (2013), the determination of the transformational leadership style at the "high" level and the transactional leadership style at the "medium" level supports the findings of this research. In general, teachers perceive school happiness at a high level and teachers overwhelmingly state that they prefer school principals with

the transformational leadership style. Findings of the study are actually valuable and promising in terms of the effectiveness of the school and the achievements of the students. Because the transformational leadership style and high level of school happiness in schools can give a clue that the effectiveness of the school and the students are successful and positive results by supporting them.

A significant relationship was found among school principals' transformational leadership, laissez-faire leadership, and transactional leadership styles and school happiness. The transformational leadership style of school principals is high level and positive in terms of school happiness, a medium level and negative correlation was found between laissez-faire and transactional leadership styles and school happiness. In addition, it is concluded that the transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles significantly predict school happiness. According to the findings, while school principals' transformational leadership style predicted the level of school happiness positively, on the other hand, laissez-faire and transactional leadership styles predicted the level of school happiness negatively. In other words, the more school principals demonstrate the transformational leadership style, the higher the level of school happiness is evenly increasing. However, when school administrators prefer transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles, the level of school happiness is affected negatively, and the level of the school happiness decrease. When the literature review is examined, it is reported that transformational leadership has a direct effect on workplace happiness and emotional commitment in research conducted by Abdullah, Ling, and Ping (2017). Besides, while happiness in the workplace is a factor that directly affects emotional commitment; It has proven that happiness in the workplace can act as a meaningful mediator between transformational leadership and emotional commitment. In the research conducted by Tsai, Chen, and Cheng (2009), transformational leadership has shown that both directly affect the performance of the employees, helps the behavior of their colleagues, and have an indirect effect through the positive moods of the employees. The study by McColl-Kennedy and Anderson (2002) shows that transformational leadership has a significant and direct effect on frustration and optimism, and the negative impact of frustration has a stronger effect on performance than the positive effect of optimism. Frustration and optimism have a direct impact on performance. Feeling disappointed and optimistic fully mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and performance. Finally, in the research conducted by Renehan (2007) on primary school principals, transformational leaders stated that they were generally happier. The main reason that the transformational leadership style affects school happiness positively and significantly may be the transformational leadership practices of school principals. For example, as a transformational leader, school principals may have made practices such as including teachers in decision-making, monitoring teachers' performance, appreciating their achievements, increasing motivations, inspiring, guiding their personal development, innovating and supporting their professional development. Thus, teachers are aware that they live in an emotionally and cognitively happy school environment as their expectations and needs are met by the principals.

In the research, it was found that the transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles exhibited by school principals negatively affect school happiness. In the same vein, Renehan (2007) demonstrated that school principals using a transactional leadership style are not happy in the school environment. According to the teachers, they may have thought that school principals, as the transactional leader, have an administration approach that preserves their old-style traditional structure and that they adversely affect school happiness because of their success, achievement, or performance enhancement. When the findings are evaluated together, school

principals may have negatively predicted school happiness, as they exhibited releasing leadership practices that avoided taking responsibility and delayed decision-making and remained indifferent to teachers' needs and wishes. The findings from this study clarified the predictive value of transformational, laissez-faire, transactional leadership styles, and the relationship between teachers' perceptions of school happiness. In particular, the transformational leadership style can be a sign for school administrators who want to positively increase school happiness.

According to the literature review, it has been reported that teachers who perceive school principals as transformational leaders had high levels of life satisfaction (Şahin and Sarıdemir, 2017), and the transactional leadership style directly affects well-being (Sudha, Shahnawaz, and Farhat, 2016). Moreover, it is found that different leadership styles affect employees' job satisfaction (Aydın, Sarier, and Uysal, 2013; Tengilimoğlu, 2005b; Yang, 2014), happiness (Tanwar and Priyanka, 2018), motivations (Tiryaki, 2008), emotional commitment (Abdullah, Ling, and Ping, 2017), mobbing levels (Cemaloğlu and Daşcı, 2015), subjective well-being (Sudha, Shahnawaz, and Farhat, 2016), psychological well-being (Fidan and Koç, 2020), and their performances (Akçakoca and Bilgin, 2016). In addition, different leadership styles at an organizational level is a factor that affects school climate (Gültekin, 2012), school culture (Özgenel, 2020), professional learning (Işık and Çetin, 2020), school outcomes (Sarier, 2013), organizational justice (Arslantaş and Pekdemir, 2007), organizational commitment (Zeren, 2007), psychological empowerment (Arslantaş and Dursun, 2008), organizational citizenship behaviors (Arslantaş and Pekdemir, 2007; Oğuz, 2011), and organizational health (Korkmaz, 2007). In these researches, it is also observed that leadership styles affect many factors in the organizational and individual sense as additional evidence that school happiness affects them. With these results, it can be concluded that leaders are very effective and vital to schools and employees in a special sense of organization in general.

When the findings obtained from this research and other research findings are evaluated together, it can be concluded that the leadership styles preferred by school principals and applied in school management processes are an important factor in determining school happiness. It can be stated that the transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles significantly predict school happiness, and that leadership styles are an important variable in influencing school happiness. In other words, it can be interpreted that the leadership styles adopted by school principals affect their happiness levels in their schools to a greater extent. In addition to increasing school happiness, school principals with a transformational leadership style can also enhance their sense of trust, organizational commitment, organizational health, job and life satisfaction and organizational commitment. School happiness means the happiness of every individual in school. Therefore, school principals with a transformational leadership style can fulfill their expected roles in improving the quality of education by enriching school happiness. In other words, it can be said that school principals should apply the transformational leadership style in the entire administration process in order to improve school happiness positively. School principals' transformational leadership style affects school happiness both positively and highly than the transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles. For this reason, principals should take into account and adopt the transformational leadership style characteristics especially in terms of school happiness.

Harmony, peace, and happiness in an organization can affect all members of the organization. Hence, the leadership styles that school principals prefer and implement in their schools can increase school happiness by influencing all employees in their schools and creating a positive climate. As teacher happiness increases with increasing school happiness, this emotional

and cognitive positive emotion will indirectly affect students' learning and school effectiveness. School happiness does not only affect the teacher. It also affects school principals. For example, it has been determined that there is a high and positive relationship between the happiness of school principals and effective teaching management and effective management components (Mehdinezhad, 2011). Therefore, the impact of school principals on school happiness can be investigated by the self-evaluation of leadership styles.

The study focused on the effects of school principals' leadership styles perceived by teachers on school happiness. However, no opinions were expressed about how school principals will especially develop transformational leadership styles and how to correct their negative perceptions. Future studies may address what needs to be done to develop transformational leadership styles of school principals.

This research is limited to the responses given by the teachers to the scales, as it was conducted with the quantitative research method. If the qualitative research method is preferred with semi-structured data tools in the next studies, a more comprehensive result can be revealed. It can also be done on whether different leadership styles such as charismatic, democratic, and paternalistic leadership styles affect school happiness. The transformational leadership style of school principals positively and significantly affects school happiness. In this sense, school principals should acquire transformational leadership behaviors and skills and reflect this potential to school management processes and the school community.

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