

THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP, PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CYNICISM AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the relationship among teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership, perceptions of organizational cynicism, and organizational commitment. The relational screening model was used. The sample of the study consisted of 554 teachers working in Balıkesir. As data collection tools, the "Transactional Leadership Scale", "Organizational Cynicism Scale" and "Organizational Commitment Scale" were administered. In the analysis of data, frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test, one-factor variance analysis (ANOVA) and structural equation model were used. The results showed a weak negative relationship between the teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership and organizational cynicism; organizational cynicism and organizational commitment. On the other hand, there was a weak positive relationship between teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership and organizational commitment. It was seen that teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership demonstrated a significant difference in terms of gender while there was no difference regarding educational background, professional seniority and school level being worked. Additionally, a statistically significant difference was found between the teachers' perceptions of organizational cynicism and their educational background, whereas no significant difference existed in terms of gender, professional seniority and school level. It was also concluded that the organizational commitment of teachers did not differ significantly regarding gender, educational background, professional seniority and school level.

Keywords: Transactional leadership, organizational cynicism, organizational commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions are among the pioneering organizations that promote the developments and guide society. This can be realized by working in harmony with others for the success and dynamism of the organization. Creating and maintaining harmony within the organization is possible with leadership skills. Daft (1991) defines leadership as the ability to influence people to achieve goals and states that leadership involves using dynamism and strength. Leadership skills are very important in achieving corporate goals, motivating employees and ensuring cooperation. There are many types of leadership described in the literature. One of them is transactional leadership. Bass (1997) defines transactional leadership as a type of leadership that tries to achieve limited effectiveness by using the existing resources of the institution and focusing on the basic needs of the institution's employees. Starratt (1995) describes transactional leadership as developing progressive programs, providing horizontal and vertical communication, creating strong coordination, setting specific goals and making serious efforts to solve problems. According to Gardiner (2006), there is an interaction between the leader and employees in transactional leadership and many employees represent the traditional influence model found in organizations. Transactional leaders give contingent rewards to their employees to guide schools to the determined vision and goals, and reward or punish employees according to performance or qualifications. That is, transactional leaders praise or punish their employees to achieve the organizational goals. (Oberfield, 2014; Smith, 2016).

Leaders face many problems in school management. The role of leaders, especially in dealing with employees, is very important. Leaders paying particular attention to their employees and making them feel valuable can solve the problems in a shorter time. On the contrary, leaders immediately punishing the employees in case of wrong behaviors within the organization, may harm the desire of the employee to work and may provoke the atmosphere of fear and anxiety in the organization. That kind of situation within the school can cause the emergence of perceptions of cynicism. According to Dean, Brandes and Dharwadkar (1998), organizational cynicism is an attitude that includes the belief that the organization lacks integrity. However, organizational cynicism includes negative feelings towards the organization, tendencies towards condescending and critical behavior. Andersson (1996) defines organizational cynicism as a factor that causes despair and frustration as well as humiliation and insecurity towards the institution. According to Robledo, Martinez and Merlano (2018), organizational cynicism is undesirable for organizations. Once organizational cynicism is encountered in one of the employees, it may affect the thoughts, feelings and attitudes of other people working in the organization.

Organizational cynicism has a significant negative impact on the organization. Employees may lose their motivation for both business and organizational performance. Increased cynicism in organizations causes alienation to the organization, poor performance and eventually employees to leave the institution (Margelytè-Pleskienè and Vveinhardt, 2018). Such negative attitudes of employees towards organizations will affect their commitment to their institutions, which may prevent the realization of organizational goals. Therefore, unlike organizational cynicism, the concept of organizational commitment is an important factor for organizations.

Mowday, Porter and Steers (1979) define organizational commitment as individual's effort to achieve organizational commitment and desire to work in the organization; Allen and Meyer (1990) describe it as the psychological state that connects the individual to the organization. Similarly, Firestone and Pennell (1993) define it as a strong belief in the organization's goals and values. According to their definition, employees also make much more effort than expected to achieve the goals in the desired way and show commitment for staying in the organization. Committed employees are internally motivated. As a result of the explanations mentioned above, it can be concluded that organizational commitment is important for both teachers and schools. The more satisfied teachers are with their institutions, the more their commitment will be, which will eventually increase the quality and efficiency of schools.

Educational institutions are among the most important institutions of society. Due to this important role, the service and effectiveness of educational institutions are very important for society. Keeping the employees together in educational institutions and enabling coordination around organizational goals require important leadership skills. The effectiveness of the leadership skill to be displayed will either create a positive or a negative climate within the institution. School administrators who cannot demonstrate effective leadership skills can cause an unfair, restless and unhappy environment in their schools. Such a school environment may cause employees to have negative feelings towards their institutions. These negative feelings may cause problems and conflicts among employees. This negative atmosphere will spread throughout the school and will affect school employees' perception of cynicism, which will prevent achievement of institutional goals and educational achievements. However, effective leadership skills to be demonstrated will positively affect the school environment and contribute to the increase in the commitment of employees. Transactional leadership is a type of leadership that guides its employees with reward and punishment factors in achieving organizational goals. The starting point of this study was to determine to what extent school administrators working in educational institutions exhibited their transactional leadership behaviors and the relationship between transactional leadership with organizational cynicism and organizational commitment. When the literature was analyzed, there were not enough studies investigating the relationship between transactional leadership with organizational cynicism and organizational commitment factors. Thus, this study aimed to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership with perceptions of organizational cynicism and organizational commitment. To achieve this goal, answers to the following questions were sought.

1. What are the teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership?
2. What are the teachers' perceptions of organizational cynicism?
3. What is the level of organizational commitment of teachers?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the gender of teachers with their transactional leadership perceptions, organizational cynicism perceptions, and organizational commitment?

5. Is there a significant relationship between the educational background of teachers with their transactional leadership perceptions, organizational cynicism perceptions, and organizational commitment?
6. Is there a significant relationship between the professional seniority of teachers with their transactional leadership perceptions, organizational cynicism perceptions, and organizational commitment?
7. Is there a significant relationship between the school levels being worked with their transactional leadership perceptions, organizational cynicism perceptions, and organizational commitment?
8. Is there a significant relationship among teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership, perceptions of organizational cynicism, and their organizational commitment?

METHOD

Research Design

In this study, the relationship among teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership, perceptions of organizational cynicism and their organizational commitment was tried to be revealed by using the relational screening model, one of the descriptive research models. In screening models, the individual, case or object being studied are defined in their own conditions as they are. However, if the purpose is to determine the relationship between two or more variables in terms of the presence and/or degree of change, relational screening model is used (Karasar, 2012).

Sample and Population

The universe of the study consisted of 15196 teachers working in 1108 state schools in Balıkesir in the 2018-2019 academic year. The sample of the study included 25 schools selected with the convenience sampling method from the schools in Balıkesir and among 554 teachers working in these schools. When the demographic information of the teachers was examined, it was seen that 37% of the teachers were males while 63% were females; 4.3% were 21-30 years old, 33.4% were 31-40 years old, 38.3% were 41-50 years old and 24% were 51 years and older; 5.6% had an associate degree, 86.6% had an undergraduate degree and 7.8% had a graduate degree; 12.6% of them worked for 1-10 years, 37.7% for 11-20 years and 49.6% for 21 or more years; 35.7% of them were working in primary schools, 28.5% in secondary schools and 35.7% in high schools. Additionally, 32.3% of the teachers were classroom teachers and 67.7% were branch teachers.

Data Collection Tools

To determine the effect of school administrators' transactional leadership behaviors on organizational cynicism and organizational commitment, the Transactional Leadership Scale developed by Bass and Avolio (1995), the Organizational Cynicism Scale developed by Brandes, Dharwadkar and Dean (1999) and the Organizational Commitment Scale developed by Meyer, Allen and Smith (1993) were used.

The Transactional Leadership Questionnaire

The Turkish version of the Transactional Leadership Scale developed by Bass and Avolio (1995) was used to determine the transactional leadership behaviors of school administrators. It is a 5-point Likert type scale and consists of 16 questions and 4 sub-dimensions. The scale was administered by the researcher to a group of 130 teachers apart from the sample group for validity and reliability. Regarding the scale, KMO and Bartlett Tests were then conducted to determine whether the items were suitable for analysis. According to the results, the KMO value was found to be .85; Bartlett test was 1058.805; df: 120 and $p = .000$. The cumulative percentage of variance of the Transactional Leadership Scale, which consists of four sub-dimensions and a total of 16 items, was found to be 62,520. According to the results of the reliability test within the scope of the implementation, the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient for the whole 16-item scale was found to be .85. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients of the scale according to the sub-dimensions are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Cronbach Alpha Coefficients Regarding the Sub-Dimensions of the Transactional Leadership Scale

	Dimensions	Cronbach Alpha
Transactional Leadership Scale	Contingent Reward	.79
	Management-by-Exception (Active)	.85
	Management-by-Exception (Passive)	.79
	Laissez-Faire	.92

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to test the construct validity of the "Transactional Leadership Scale" after the reliability analysis. When the CFA results were analyzed, it was seen that the Chi-square fit index was significant ($\chi^2 = 169.381$, $df = 94$, $\chi^2/df = 1.80$). Considering other fit index values, RMSEA was found to be = .07, CFI=.93, NFI= .86, GFI= .87 and AGFI= .81. When the results of the model were evaluated in general, it was seen that the model had an acceptable fit.

The Organizational Cynicism Scale

Organizational cynicism scale was developed by Brandes et al., (1999) and adapted to Turkish by Kalağan (2009). It is a 5-point Likert type scale and consists of 13 questions and 3 sub-dimensions. The scale was administered to a group of 130 teachers different from the sample group within the scope of validity and reliability. Regarding the scale, KMO and Bartlett Tests were conducted in the next step to determine whether the items were suitable for analysis. As a result of the analysis, the KMO value was found to be .91; Bartlett test was 1503.599; df: 78 and $p = .000$. The cumulative percentage of variance of the Organizational Cynicism Scale, consisting of three sub-dimensions and a total of 13 items, was found to be 78.479. According to the results of the reliability analysis, the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the 13-item scale was found to be .94. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients of the scale according to the sub-dimensions are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Cronbach Alpha Coefficients Regarding the Sub-Dimensions of the Organizational Cynicism Scale

	Dimensions	Cronbach Alpha
Organizational Cynicism Scale	Cognitive	.92
	Affective	.96
	Behavioral	.83

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the construct validity of the "Organizational Cynicism Scale" after the reliability analysis. When the CFA results were examined, it was observed that the chi-square fit index was significant ($\chi^2 = 101.656$, $df = 56$, $\chi^2/df = 1.815$). Considering other fit index values, RMSEA= .07, CFI=.97, NFI= .94, GFI= .90 and AGFI= .83. When the results of the model were evaluated in general, it was seen that the model had an acceptable fit.

The Organizational Commitment Scale

Organizational Commitment Scale was developed by Meyer et al., (1993) and adapted to Turkish by Dağlı, Elçiçek and Han (2018). It is a 5-point Likert type scale and includes 18 questions and 3 sub-dimensions. The scale was administered to a group of 130 teachers apart from the sample group for validity and reliability. Regarding the scale, KMO and Barlett Tests were conducted to investigate whether the items were suitable for analysis. The results showed that the KMO value was .88; Bartlett test 1484.165; $df: 153$ and $p = .000$. The cumulative percentage of variance of the Organizational Commitment Scale, consisting of three sub-dimensions and a total of 18 items, was found to be 62,052. According to the results of the reliability analysis, the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the 18-item scale was found to be .92. Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients of the scale according to the sub-dimensions are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Cronbach Alpha Coefficients of Sub-Dimensions of Organizational Commitment Scale

	Dimensions	Cronbach Alpha
Organizational Commitment Scale	Emotional	.91
	Continuance	.80
	Normative	.81

After the reliability analysis, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to test the construct validity of the "Organizational Commitment Scale". When the CFA results were analyzed, it was seen that the Chi-square fit index was significant ($\chi^2 = 223.168$, $df = 116$, $\chi^2/df = 1.93$). Considering other fit index values, RMSEA = .07, CFI = .92, NFI = .84, GFI = .88 and AGFI = .82. When the results of the model were evaluated in general, it was seen that the model had an acceptable fit.

Data Analysis

Whether the data showed normal distribution was tested with Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk Tests. When the Skewness and Kurtosis values of the data obtained with the Transactional Leadership Scale, Organizational Cynicism Scale and Organizational Commitment Scale were examined, it was observed that the data were normally distributed. Therefore, frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, t-test, one-factor variance analysis (ANOVA) and structural equation model were used to analyze descriptive statistics regarding the variables.

FINDINGS

The answers given by the teachers to the Transactional Leadership Scale in the first sub-problem were analyzed and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. The Means and Standard Deviations Regarding the Transactional Leadership Scale

Dimensions	n	\bar{x}	s
Contingent Reward	554	3.95	.79
Management-by-Exception (Active)	554	2.86	.95
Management-by-Exception (Passive)	554	2.96	.60
Laissez-Faire	554	2.45	.56
Total	554	3.10	.40

When the data presented in Table 4 were examined, it was seen that the school administrators demonstrated their transactional leadership behaviors at the level of “sometimes” ($\bar{x} = 3.10$, $s = .40$) according to the teachers' perceptions. When the perceptions of the teachers towards the dimensions that constitute the transactional leadership were examined, the highest mean was in the contingent reward ($\bar{x} = 3.95$, $s = .79$) dimension at the level of “frequently”, whereas the lowest mean was in the Laissez-Faire ($\bar{x} = 2.45$, $s = .56$) dimension at the level of “rarely”. The teachers stated that school administrators had the dimensions of Management-by-Exception (Passive) ($\bar{x} = 2.96$, $s = .60$) Management-by-Exception (Active) ($\bar{x} = 2.86$, $s = .95$) at the level of “partially agree”.

In the second sub-problem of the study, teachers' responses to the Organizational Cynicism Scale were analyzed and the results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. The Means and Standard Deviations Regarding the Organizational Cynicism Scale

Dimensions	n	\bar{x}	s
Cognitive	554	2.20	.84
Affective	554	1.70	.89
Behavioral	554	2.24	.83
Total	554	2.10	.75

When the data in Table 5 were analyzed, it was seen that the teachers answered the items in the scale at the level of "disagree" ($\bar{x}=2.10$, $s=.75$). When teachers' perceptions of the dimensions that constitute organizational cynicism were examined, teachers had behavioral ($\bar{x}=2.24$, $s=.83$) and cognitive dimensions ($\bar{x}=2.20$, $s=.84$) at the level of "disagree"; and they had the affective dimension ($\bar{x} = 1.70$, $s = .89$) at the level of "totally disagree".

In the third sub-problem of the study, teachers' responses to the Organizational Commitment Scale were analyzed and the results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. The Means and Standard Deviations Regarding the Organizational Commitment Scale

Dimensions	n	\bar{x}	s
Emotional	554	3.79	.80
Continuance	554	3.40	.76
Normative	554	3.09	.78
Total	554	3.43	.65

When the data shown in Table 6 were analyzed, it was found that the teachers responded to the statements in the scale at the level of "agree" ($\bar{x}=3.43$, $s=.65$). Teachers had the emotional ($\bar{x}=3.79$, $s=.80$) and continuance ($\bar{x}=3.40$, $s=.76$) dimensions at the level of "agree", and normative ($\bar{x}=3.09$, $s=.78$) dimension at the level of "partially agree".

In the fourth sub-problem of the research, whether the teachers' transactional leadership perceptions, organizational cynicism perceptions and organizational commitment differ according to gender variable was examined with the t-test and the results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. The T-Test Results to Determine the Differences Among Teachers' Transactional Leadership Perceptions, Organizational Cynicism Perceptions and Organizational Commitment in Terms of Gender

	Gender	n	x	Sd	t	df	p
Transactional leadership	Female	349	2.99	.41	-4.268	552	.000
	Male	205	3.14	.37			
Organizational cynicism	Female	349	2.02	.71	-1.288	552	.198
	Male	205	2.10	.78			
Organizational commitment	Female	349	3.39	.68	-1.328	552	.185
	Male	205	3.47	.59			

$p < .05$

When the data presented in Table 7 were analyzed, it was seen that there was a significant difference between teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership ($t=-4.268$; $p = .00$) and gender, which was in favor of male teachers. In the study, there was no significant difference between teachers' perceptions of organizational cynicism ($t= -1.288$; $p> .05$) and organizational commitment ($t= -1.328$; $p> .05$) in terms of gender.

In the fifth sub-problem of the research, whether the teachers' transactional leadership perceptions, organizational cynicism perceptions and organizational commitment differ according to the educational background was examined with the one-way ANOVA test and the results are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. One-Way ANOVA Results to Determine the Differences of Teachers' Transactional Leadership Perceptions, Organizational Cynicism Perceptions and Organizational Commitment by Educational Background

	Educational background	n	x	Sd	F	p	Significance
Transactional leadership	Associate	31	3.04	.505	.374	.688	-
	Undergraduate	480	3.04	.394			
	Graduate	43	3.09	.418			
Organizational cynicism	Associate	31	2.00	.621	5.486	.004	3 /1-2
	Undergraduate	480	2.02	.695			
	Graduate	43	2.41	1.149			
Organizational commitment	Associate	31	3.44	.56	1.008	.366	-
	Undergraduate	480	3.43	.648			
	Graduate	43	3.28	.758			

p < .05

When the data given in Table 8 were analyzed, it was found that there was no significant difference between teachers' transactional leadership perceptions ($F = .374$; $p > .05$) and organizational commitment ($F = 1.008$; $p > .05$) with their educational background. However, a statistically significant difference was found between teachers' perceptions of organizational cynicism ($F = 5.486$; $p < .05$) and educational background. According to the Tukey Test conducted to determine which groups the difference was between, it was concluded that the significant difference was in favor of teachers with a graduate degree.

In the sixth sub-problem of the study, whether the teachers' transactional leadership perceptions, organizational cynicism perceptions and organizational commitment differ according to the professional seniority was examined with the one-way ANOVA test and the results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. One-Way ANOVA Results to Determine the Differences Between Teachers' Transactional Leadership Perceptions, Organizational Cynicism Perceptions and Organizational Commitment in Terms of Professional Seniority

	Professional Seniority	n	x	Sd	F	p	Significance
Transactional leadership	1-10 years	70	3.05	.370	.994	.371	-
	11-20 years	209	3.01	.371			
	21 years and over	275	3.06	.432			
Organizational cynicism	1-10 years	70	2.01	.816	.136	.873	-
	11-20 years	209	2.05	.761			
	21 years and over	275	2.06	.710			
Organizational commitment	1-10 years	70	3.42	.796	1.309	.362	-
	11-20 years	209	3.37	.602			
	21 years and over	275	3.46	.650			

p < .05

When the data in Table 9 were examined, there was no significant difference between teachers' transactional leadership perceptions ($F = .994$; $p > .05$), organizational cynicism perceptions ($F = .136$; $p > .05$) and organizational commitment ($F = 1.309$; $p > .05$) with their professional seniority.

In the seventh sub-problem of the study, whether the teachers' transactional leadership perceptions, organizational cynicism perceptions and organizational commitment differ according to the school level variable was examined with the one-way ANOVA test and the results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10. One-Way ANOVA Results to Determine the Differences Between Teachers' Transactional Leadership Perceptions, Organizational Cynicism Perceptions and Organizational Commitment by the School Level

	School level	n	x	Sd	F	p	Significance
Transactional leadership	Primary	198	3.03	.415	2.569	.077	-
	Secondary	158	3.00	.391			
	High	198	3.09	.394			
Organizational cynicism	Primary	198	2.01	.791	1.545	.214	-
	Secondary	158	2.01	.678			
	High	198	2.12	.738			
Organizational commitment	Primary	198	3.42	.666	.356	.701	-
	Secondary	158	3.39	.574			
	High	198	3.44	.698			

When the data seen in Table 10 were examined, it was found that there was no significant difference between teachers' transactional leadership perceptions ($F = 2.569$; $p > .05$), organizational cynicism perceptions ($F = 1.545$; $p > .05$) and organizational commitment ($F = .356$; $p > .05$) with their school levels.

Finally, the relationship between teachers' transactional leadership perceptions, their organizational cynicism perceptions, and organizational commitment was examined using the structural equation model and the path diagram of the model is shown in Figure 1.

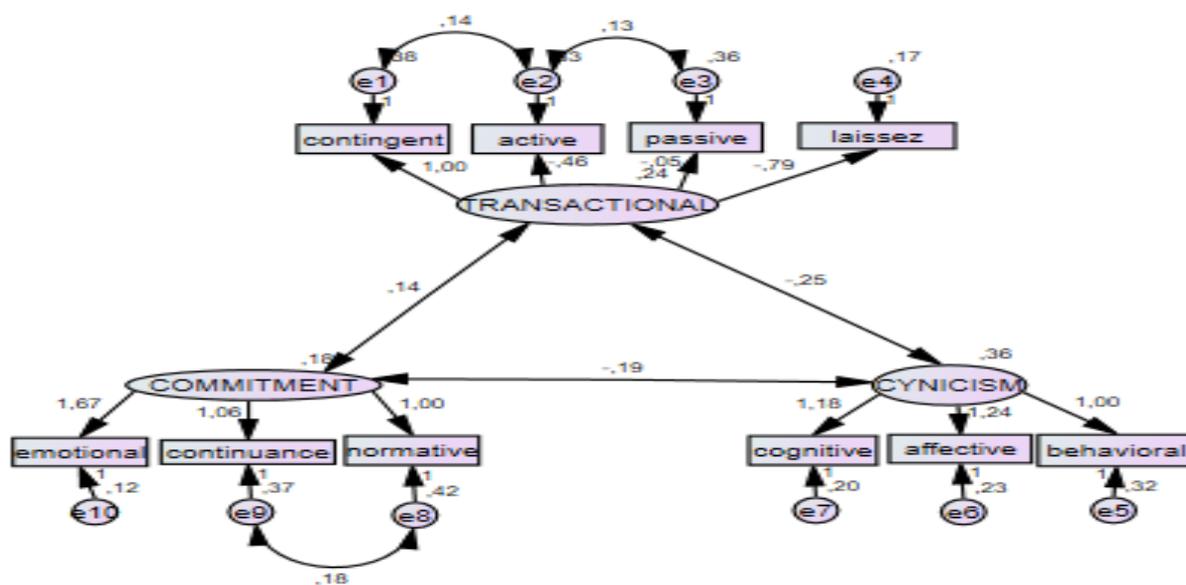


Figure 1. Structural Equation Model Including a Mutual Relationship Between Teachers' Transactional Leadership Perceptions, Organizational Cynicism Perceptions and Organizational Commitment.

When the model in Figure 1 was examined, it was observed that there was a weak negative relationship between transactional leadership perceptions and organizational cynicism perceptions ($\gamma = -0.25$); there was a weak positive relationship between organizational cynicism perceptions and organizational commitment ($\gamma = -0.19$) and there was a weak positive relationship between transactional leadership perceptions and organizational commitment ($\gamma = 0.14$).

The structural equation model results of teachers' transactional leadership perceptions, organizational cynicism perceptions, and organizational commitment are shown in Table 11.

Table 11. The Structural Equation Model Results of Teachers' Transactional Leadership Perceptions, Organizational Cynicism Perceptions and Organizational Commitment

	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	RMSEA	CFI	GFI	AGFI	NFI
Structural Equation Modeling	111.172	29	3.83	0.07	0.96	0.96	0.93	0.95

According to the path analysis results of the conceptual model seen in Table 11, the Chi-square fit index of the model was found to be significant ($\chi^2 = 111.172$, $df = 29$, $\chi^2/df = 3.83$). Other fit indices were found as RMSEA = .07, CFI = .96, GFI = .96, AGFI = .93 and NFI = .95. It was seen that the model was at a good level in terms of fit values.

CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION

In the first sub-problem of the study, according to the teachers' perceptions, it was concluded that school administrators exhibited their transactional leadership behaviors at the "sometimes" level. When the Transactional Leadership Scale was examined in terms of dimensions, the highest mean was in the contingent reward dimension while the lowest was in the laissez-faire dimension. Motivating and guiding teachers for the benefit of the school is an important and difficult task. If enough efficiency is not obtained or employees are not directed in a coordinated manner during this process, there may be difficulties in achieving educational goals. Kuhnert and Lewis (1987) state that there are moral values such as respect and trust in transactional leadership and the success of it depends on the extent to which the leader can meet the changing needs of the employees. The fact that the laissez faire sub-dimension was found to be low in the study is important as laissez faire leadership style includes leadership behaviors such as avoiding getting involved when important problems arise, not being there when needed, avoiding decision making, and delaying intervention to urgent problems. This may decrease teachers' commitment to their institutions or prevent the institution from achieving its goals. Thus, this result is remarkable for school administrators. When studies were examined, it was seen that teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership were low in the study of Demirçelik (2017), were moderate in the studies of Yeşilyurt (2015), Sayadi (2016), Güçlü, Kalkan and Dağlı (2017), Eratlı Şirin, Aydın and Bilir (2018) and Obbo, Olema and Atibuni (2018), and were found to be high in the study of Saç (2019).

In the second sub-problem of the study, it was concluded that teachers' perceptions of organizational cynicism were low. When the organizational cynicism scale was considered in terms of dimensions, it was concluded that the behavioral and cognitive dimensions were at a low level, while the affective dimension was at a very high level. The presence of cynicism is undesirable for schools. The fact that there are many studies on cynicism can be considered as one of the most important indicators of the presence and spread of this factor. As Thomas and Gupta (2018) state, when employees make a negative comment or observation about the institution, the attitudes of others in this context may be affected, which may also affect the behavior of the employees. According to the results of this study, teachers reported a low level of cynicism in schools. Terzi and Derin (2016); Güçlü et al., (2017) Rayan, Aly and Abdelgalel (2018); Smithikrai, (2018); Jiang, Chen, Sun and Li (2019); Özgenel and Hıdıroğlu (2019); Pfrombeck, Doden, Grote and Feierabend (2020) obtained similar results in their studies. However, Kökalan and Anaş (2016); Yavuz and Bedük (2016); Gün and Atanur Başkan (2017); Gedik and Üstüner (2019); Kras, Dmello, Meyer, Butterfield and Rudes (2019) and Kwantes and Bond (2019) found that teachers' perceptions of organizational cynicism were at a moderate level; Özdemir and Tekin (2018) concluded that teachers' perceptions of organizational cynicism were at a high level.

In the third sub-problem of the study, it was concluded that teachers' perceptions of organizational commitment were at the level of "agree". When the organizational commitment scale was considered in terms of dimensions, it was found that the highest mean was in the "emotional" dimension whereas the lowest was

in the “normative” dimension. The commitment of employees to their institutions is extremely important for schools to perform the roles expected of them. Employees with high commitment to their institutions are both more motivated and love their jobs, which will eventually affect the school climate in a positive way. Terzi and Kurt (2005) stated that in order for the schools to be successful in the training and transformation of people, teachers should endeavor more than their job descriptions and this can only be achieved thanks to teachers with high commitment. In this study, employees showed a high level of commitment to their institutions. Collie, Shapka and Perry (2011); Serin and Buluç (2012); Bozkurt and Yurt (2013); Okçu, Şahin and Şahin (2015); Bae and Yang (2017); Moon and Choi (2017); Sheikh (2017); Yousef (2017); Peretomode and Bello (2018); Aslamiah (2019) and Surat and Polat (2020) found similar results in their studies. However, Dee, Henkin and Singleton (2006); Gören and Yengin Sarpkaya (2014); Yavuz and Bedük (2016); Çalışkan and Ekici (2017); Bulut and Hovardaoğlu (2018); Bilgili and Tekin (2019); Kras et al., (2019) and Tadesse (2019) reported moderate organizational commitment while Doğan and Çelik (2019) found a low level of organizational commitment for teachers.

In the fourth sub-problem of the study, it was concluded that there was no significant difference between teachers' perceptions of organizational cynicism and their organizational commitment in terms of their gender, while there was a significant difference between the transactional leadership perceptions and gender, which was in favor of male teachers. When this significant difference was evaluated in terms of the transactional leadership, it was observed that most of the administrators in the schools were males. Therefore, it is thought that such a result emerged as male teachers evaluated the rewards or punishments given by the school administrations and the fairness in giving them, and whether the administrators intervened in the events occurring in the school in more detail as they were fellows. When studies investigating the relationship between transactional leadership and gender were examined, Yeşilyurt (2015) and Gcaza, Garande and Echezona (2018) did not find a significant relationship between transactional leadership and gender, while Eratlı Şirin et al., (2018) concluded that the relationship between transactional leadership and gender was in favor of male teachers.

In the study, it was concluded that there was no significant difference between teachers' perceptions of organizational cynicism and organizational commitment in terms of gender. According to this result, it can be said that gender is a determining factor neither in the perception of organizational cynicism nor in ensuring organizational commitment. When studies investigating the relationship between organizational commitment and gender were examined, Çalışkan and Ekici (2017); Gcaza et al., (2018); Kahveci, Bahadır and Karagül Kandemir (2019); Kras et al., (2019) and Tadesse (2019) reported no significant relationship between organizational commitment and gender. However, Collie et al., (2011); Yavuz and Bedük (2016); Sheikh (2017) and Özdem and Sezer (2019) found a relationship between organizational commitment and gender in favor of female teachers; whereas, Yeşilyurt (2015); Yaşar and Özdemir (2016); Tulunay Ateş and Buluç (2018) and Akan and Kılıç (2019) discovered a relationship between organizational commitment and gender in favor of male

teachers. When the studies on the relationship between organizational cynicism and gender were examined, it was seen that Korkut and Arslan (2016); Çalışkan and Ekici (2017); Demirçelik (2017); Smithikrai (2018); Jiang, Hu, Wang and Jiang (2019); Kim, Jung, Noh and Kang, (2019) and Özgenel and Hıdıroğlu (2019) did not find a significant relationship between organizational cynicism and gender; however, Çelikten and Çanak (2014); Robledo et al., (2018) and Gedik and Üstüner (2019) reported a relationship between organizational cynicism and gender in favor of female teachers; Mahmood and Sak (2019), on the other hand, found a relationship between organizational cynicism and gender in favor of male teachers.

In the fifth sub-problem of the study, it was concluded that there was no significant difference between teachers' transactional leadership perceptions and organizational commitment perceptions with their educational background; however, there was a significant difference between the perceptions of organizational cynicism and educational background in favor of teachers with a graduate degree. When this significant difference is evaluated in terms of organizational cynicism, it is understood that the level of teachers' perceptions about cynicism increase as their educational level increases. Accordingly, teachers with graduate education may take a critical attitude even towards the slightest negative situation in their institution, or they may see the behaviors of school administrators as unfair. Such thoughts of teachers towards their institutions may affect their perception of organizational cynicism. Similarly, Grama (2017) states that if the expectations of honesty and fairness are not met, it may cause employees to develop negative emotions, which will have a negative impact on the school management, colleagues and working environment. When studies on the relationship between organizational cynicism and educational background were examined, Kalağan ve Güzeller (2010); Korkut and Arslan (2016); Robledo et al., (2018) and Kim et al., (2019) reported a significant difference in favor of teachers with graduate education; Yavuz and Bedük (2016) concluded that there was a significant difference in favor of high school graduates. However, Kras et al., (2018); Smithikrai, (2018); Gedik and Üstüner (2019); Işık and Candan (2019) and Jiang et al., (2019) reported that there was no significant difference between organizational cynicism and educational background.

In the study, it was concluded that there was no significant difference between teachers' transactional leadership perceptions and organizational commitment with their educational background. According to this result, it can be said that the educational level is a determinative factor neither in the perception of transactional leadership nor in ensuring organizational commitment. When studies investigating the relationship between transactional leadership and educational background were examined; Eratlı Şirin et al., (2018) and Gcaza et al., (2018) found that there was no significant difference between transactional leadership and educational background. When the studies investigating the relationship between organizational commitment and educational background were examined, Gören and Yengin Sarpkaya (2014); Gcaza et al., (2018); Akan and Kılıç (2019); Kras et al., (2019) and Tadesse (2019) concluded that there was no significant difference between organizational commitment and educational background. However, Tulunay Ateş and Buluç (2018) found a significant difference in favor of teachers with associate degrees; Yavuz and Bedük (2016)

reported a significant difference in favor of high school graduates and Candan and Yetim (2018) discovered a significant difference in favor of teachers with graduate degrees.

In the sixth sub-problem of the study, it was concluded that there was no significant difference between teachers' transactional leadership perceptions, organizational cynicism perceptions, and their organizational commitment with their professional seniority. This result shows that professional seniority is not important in transactional leadership perception, organizational cynicism perception and organizational commitment. When studies investigating the relationship between transactional leadership and professional seniority were examined, Yeşilyurt (2015), Eratlı Şirin et al., (2018) and Gcaza et al., (2018) did not find a significant difference between transactional leadership and professional seniority, which is contrary to the results of our study. When the relationship between organizational cynicism and professional seniority were examined, Çalışkan and Ekici (2017); Demirçelik (2017); Grama (2017); Grama and Botone (2017); Işık and Candan (2019); Mahmood and Sak (2019) and Özgenel and Hıdıroğlu (2019) concluded that there was no significant difference between organizational cynicism and professional seniority. When studies that reported a significant difference between organizational cynicism and professional seniority were investigated, Kalağan and Güzeller (2010) found that the perception of organizational cynicism was higher in senior teachers; whereas Korkut and Arslan (2016) and Terzi and Derin (2016) concluded that the perception of organizational cynicism was higher in teachers with low seniority. When studies investigating the relationship between organizational commitment and seniority were examined; Yavuz and Bedük (2016); Çalışkan and Ekici (2017); Gcaza et al., (2018); Kras et al., (2018); Kahveci et al., (2019) and Yalçınsoy and Aksoy (2019) concluded that there was no significant difference between organizational commitment and professional seniority. When studies reporting a significant difference between organizational commitment and professional seniority were considered, Karadağ, Atalay and Yücel (2013); Atik and Üstüner (2014); Gören and Yengin Sarpkaya (2014); Ahmadi (2014); Yeşilyurt (2015) and Tulunay Ateş and Buluç (2018) found that the perception of organizational commitment was higher in senior teachers; whereas Sheikh (2017) and Tadesse (2019) reported that the perception of organizational commitment was higher among teachers with low seniority.

In the seventh sub-problem of the study, it was concluded that there was no significant difference between teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership, perceptions of organizational cynicism and their organizational commitment with school levels being worked. This result shows that the level of school is not important in the perception of transactional leadership, organizational cynicism and organizational commitment. When studies investigating the relationship between transactional leadership and school level were examined; Yeşilyurt (2015) and Eratlı Şirin et al., (2018) concluded that there was no significant difference between transactional leadership and school level. When the studies on the relationship between organizational cynicism and school level were examined, Kalağan and Güzeller (2010) reported a significant difference at girls' vocational high school level; Gökkyer and Türkoğlu (2018) at science high school level; Mahmood and Sak (2019) at kindergarten level; Özgenel and Hıdıroğlu (2019) at the secondary level. However,

when studies on the relationship between organizational commitment and school level were examined, Dirikan (2009); Çoban and Demirtaş (2011); Gülle (2013); Yeşilyurt (2015) and Kahrıman (2019) concluded that there was no significant difference between school level and organizational commitment. When the relationship between organizational cynicism and school level were considered; Eratlı Şirin et al., (2018) and Kahrıman (2019) concluded that there was no significant relationship between organizational cynicism and school level.

Finally, it was concluded in this study that there was a weak negative relationship between teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership and organizational cynicism. Transactional leaders monitor the performance of employees and know when they do not reach their goals. Transactional leaders associate employees' performance with rewards to address any target conflict (Taylor, 2016). This process can sometimes cause pressure, anxiety, or unpleasant situations. Leadership skills that transactional leaders display in their schools are one of the most determining factors of cynicism perception. A teacher with a perception of cynicism due to leadership behaviors may experience various problems in reaching the institutional goals and getting a proper perspective on schools. When the studies were analyzed, Gövez (2013) found a negative relationship between the organizational cynicism and transactional leadership perceptions of private sector employees. Güçlü et al., (2017) found a negative relationship between the transactional leadership style and the cognitive cynicism and affective cynicism dimensions of organizational cynicism, but a positive relationship between the transactional leadership style and behavioral cynicism dimension. Mülayim (2019), on the other hand, investigated the relationship between the transactional leadership and organizational cynicism perceptions in bank employees and found no relationship between behavioral and cognitive cynicism dimensions, but a negative relationship with emotional cynicism. Sezgin (2019) investigated the relationship between the dimensions of transactional leadership and organizational cynicism and reported no relationship between affective and behavioral dimensions, but a weak positive relationship with cognitive cynicism. Demirçelik (2017) and Özgenel and Hıdıroğlu (2019) found a positive relationship between organizational cynicism and transactional leadership.

It was concluded that there was a weak negative relationship between teachers' perceptions of organizational cynicism and their organizational commitment. Institutions should increase organizational commitment and find solutions to reduce the perception of cynicism to increase performances and ensure institutional success. The right way to do this is not to perceive the importance of organizational commitment, but to identify the factors that can cause cynicism (Margelytè-Pleskienè and Vveinhardt, 2018). In this way, the absence of cynicism in institutions will increase the commitment of employees to their organizations. Thus, it is concluded in this study that the commitment will increase when the perception of cynicism decreases. When the studies were examined, Nafei and Kaifi (2013); Okçu et al., (2015); Yavuz and Bedük (2016); Çalışkan and Ekici (2017); Demirçelik (2017); Durrani, Yang, Dilawar and Khurshid (2017); Candan and Yetim (2018) and Gedik and Üstüner (2019) obtained similar results in their studies. However, Yıldız (2013) found a strong negative relationship between organizational cynicism and organizational commitment; Kahrıman (2019) concluded that

there was a positive relationship. Erarslan, Kaya, Altındağ (2018) and Kras et al., (2019) reported no relationship between organizational cynicism and organizational commitment.

It was concluded that there was a weak positive relationship between teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership and organizational commitment. Due to its dynamic and ever-changing nature, leadership in schools has a major impact on both teacher satisfaction and the learning environment. Teachers who enjoy their work will increase their organizational commitment, which is a great benefit for students. Leaders who truly depend on the benefits of their employees will have the greatest impact on the positive culture in their school (Smith (2016). Transactional leaders are those who place importance on using rewards and punishments to achieve institutional goals or motivate employees. Failure to adequately deal with events that occur in schools or to intervene in time can cause problems in the school environment and among employees. This type of leadership skill may negatively affect the commitment factor in the organization and decrease it. Therefore, it is concluded in this study that organizational commitment will increase in a slightly positive way when interaction leadership behaviors are exhibited. When the studies were examined, Khan, Khan, Umber, Ahmad and Shan (2016); Mehmood (2016); Suranga Silva and Mendis (2017); Gcaza et al., (2018); Saç (2019) and Toh, Liew, Rahim and Stephen (2019) obtained similar results in their studies. Yeşilyurt (2015) and Obbo et al., (2018), on the other hand, concluded that there was no relationship between transactional leadership and organizational commitment. Demirçelik (2017) found a negative relationship between transactional leadership and organizational commitment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In this study, it was concluded that teachers with a graduate education had higher perception levels of cynicism. In the studies to be carried out, interviews may be held to determine which types of events or behaviors increase the perception of cynicism in teachers with graduate education. This study was carried out only in state schools. In other studies, comparisons of those variables may be made in private and public schools.

ETHICAL TEXT

In the article entitled "The relationship among teachers' perceptions of transactional leadership, perceptions of organizational cynicism and organizational commitment", journal writing rules, publication principles, research and publication ethics rules, journal ethics rules were followed. The responsibility belongs to the author for any violations related to the article.

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