



Tax Morale and Happiness: Evidence From Türkiye

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ABSTRACT

Psychological factors have come to the fore in tax compliance in recent years. Taxpayers' emotional states influence tax compliance. While taxpayers comply with taxes because they are happy, they are so glad because of the financial honesty they experience when paying taxes. This study examines the relationship between happiness and tax morality. Five hundred twenty-four people participated in the study, which was conducted in Istanbul, Türkiye, using non-probability convenience sampling. It was discovered that the taxpayers' level of satisfaction and tax morality was moderate in the study that employed the survey technique. According to the non-parametric test results, the tax morality of those who feel happy is higher than that of those who feel unhappy. Those with high tax morale are happier than those with low tax morale. According to this result, it can be said that increasing the practices that improve the happiness of taxpayers will increase tax compliance.

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1. Introduction

In general, tax compliance refers to people paying their taxes on time. Voluntary compliance is the payment of taxes by taxpayers with an intrinsic motivation. Compulsory compliance, on the other hand, is the payment of taxes by taxpayers to avoid paying tax penalties (Kirchler & Wahl, 2010: 1). Studies investigating taxpayers' tax compliance initially focus on the question, 'Why do people evade taxes? In the

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classical/economic model explaining individual tax compliance, taxpayer compliance depends on audit, penalty, and tax rate parameters. According to the model, there is a negative relationship between these parameters and tax evasion (Torgler, 2003a: 3). Again, according to this model, taxpayers have no intrinsic motivation to pay taxes; they only pay taxes due to the fear of being caught, and according to this model, taxes are not given, they are taken (Kitapçı, 2015: 43).

However, some criticisms of the classical model have been made later. It has been observed that in many countries, there is a high level of tax compliance despite low penalty and audit rates. Some studies have found that increasing the penalty rate has an exclusionary effect (Scholz & Lubell, 1998), and increasing audit rates and sanctions has less effect on tax compliance behavior (Kirchler, 2007). However, another criticism of the model is that taxpayers who voluntarily pay their taxes do so without any deterrent method, only with the discomfort of dishonesty, i.e., to avoid ethical/moral costs. These criticisms have brought up the question of why people pay taxes. This model, also known as the social/psychological model, added psychological costs to the classical model. The concept of tax ethics was added to the tax compliance model by Song & Yarbrough (1978: 444). The authors added all legal frameworks and situational factors together with ethics. Legal framework refers to the conformity of laws with the law, whether effectively implemented or not, and taxpayers' understanding and compliance with the laws. Situational factors are the taxpayer's income, unemployment status, and the efficiency of the tax administration.

Kirchler (2008) analyzed these two models with voluntary and compulsory tax compliance concepts in the slippery slope model. The author, who emphasized the power and trust factors among the determinants of tax compliance, stressed that increasing the control of the tax administration and using deterrent measures such as fines are practices that increase the state's power, increasing compulsory tax compliance. Similar to this, the foundation of taxpayers' voluntary compliance is trust, which is influenced by sociopsychological elements including their views on taxes, societal norms, fairness, and their level of satisfaction with the tax administration's services. On the other hand, tax ethics is the behavioral norms and attitudes governing the relationship between taxpayers and the state.

Many factors influence tax ethics. Fiscal and economic factors include tax rates, tax penalty rates, income levels, macroeconomic factors (GNP, inflation, unemployment, income distribution), love of money, and the informal economy. Social capital factors include social norms (reciprocity, guilt and shame, sense of duty, and sense of being caught), perception of tax justice, psychological contract trust, tax culture, religion, and national pride. Factors such as the political boundary of taxation, political trust, public ethics, culture of democracy, and participation in the political decision-making process can be listed as political factors. Institutional and administrative factors include centralized or decentralized government structure, tax

bureaucracy, the efficiency of tax administration, tax compliance policy, tax amnesties, the efficiency of tax auditing, and general perception of corruption. Psychological and sociological factors are objective tax burden, subjective tax burden, net subjective tax burden, tax fraud, and tax sociology. Demographic factors that affect tax ethics are age, gender, marital status, occupation, and education (Kitapçı, 2015: 201). As can be seen, many factors influence tax ethics. Tax payment behavior and cognitive psychology are closely related. Behavioral economics is the nexus of psychology and economics, and research in this area has accelerated recently. Behavioral economics argues that people cannot act rationally when making economic decisions. Accordingly, when making an economic decision, people may be influenced by culture, morality, customs, and traditions accepted as social norms, beliefs, administrative and legal structure, and sociological and psychological factors. According to a study by Corzo et al. (2024), happiness is among the top ten most used keywords in behavioral economics/finance studies. Many studies highlight the importance of emotions in compliance decisions (Hopfensitz & Reuben, 2009; Khadjavi, 2015).

Tax compliance behavior is also an economic decision. A person's mood, i.e., the psychological state he/she is in, can be effective in any economic decision. Mental processes and emotional states of taxpayers influence the decision to pay taxes. At the same time, the emotional state after paying taxes is one of the important determinants of tax compliance. In this case, if the taxpayer is happy, it may increase tax compliance, i.e., the happiness positively affects the intrinsic motivation to pay taxes, or if the taxpayer is unhappy, it may increase tax evasion. At the same time, the pleasure/happiness individuals feel after paying taxes may increase their tax compliance (Lubian & Zari, 2011). Happiness is perceiving one's life as full, meaningful, and peaceful according to one's values. Bruni & Stanca (2008) found a positive relationship between honesty and happiness. Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) suggested a relationship between happiness and social behavior. Following the frequent positive influence model, the authors argued that happy people exhibit positive traits such as sociability, cooperation, and altruism compared to their unhappy peers. These are associated with successful outcomes in life. Magen & Aharoni (1991) found that happier high school students were likelier to participate in voluntary community service. It is possible to find similar results in studies conducted in the community. Tov & Diener (2009) found that citizens of countries with high levels of wealth are more cooperative with each other and more respectful of social goods. Frey & Stutzer (2002) argue that happiness affects economic decisions, including consumption, work behavior, investment decisions, and political behavior.

In the field known as happiness economics, it is argued that measuring individuals' happiness will guide public policy (Şeker, 2009). The areas where public expenditure is made, and the satisfaction/happiness of taxpayers with this situation are also viral in the tax ethics literature. The general view on happiness and individual financial behavior is that a successful tax evader will be happy because he/she evades

taxes for free and benefits from public services simultaneously. However, some studies show that there are individuals who are uncomfortable with the idea of tax evasion, and taxpayers enjoy being honest (Andreoni et al., 1998; Verme, 2009).

This study aims to determine whether there is a relationship between individual happiness and tax ethics. Are individuals with higher tax ethics happier? Is the state of being happy effective in having higher tax ethics?

2. Literature Review

The literature included keywords such as tax evasion and morality, subjective well-being and happiness, life satisfaction, and individual satisfaction in the studies examining the relationship between tax morality and happiness.

Torgler (2004; 2005) found that happiness and individual satisfaction positively affect tax morality in Asian and Latin American countries. In his study of Asian countries, he measured the tax morale and happiness variables with a single question. He used data from the World Value Survey (WVS). In his study for Latin America, he used two datasets, namely Latinobarometro and World Values Survey data. Harbaugh et al. (2007) show that mandatory tax-like transfers activate brain regions associated with reward processing. They interpret their findings in line with the 'pure altruism'² hypothesis, which states that even mandatory transfers to finance public goods (such as taxes) increase the welfare of individuals. The authors argue that the reason for this positive effect is that compulsory transfers are used to secure the provision of the public good, and the availability of this good becomes more important for individual welfare than the form of financing. In his study, Weisbach (2007) emphasized that adding the happiness variable to tax models changes the results, but it would be better to include the status competition variable in the model. He claimed that modeling status is not easy, that there are many ways to add the status variable to the model, and that the results will change with each different way choice. The author emphasized how happiness is measured, stating that the literature on happiness and taxation are not yet compatible and that this gap should be filled. Using data from the World Values Survey, Verme (2009) found that people who tolerate tax evasion are more unhappy. Lubian & Zari (2011) used the Italian Household Income and Wealth Survey in their study for Italy. According to the study, financial honesty is happier than cheating. According to the authors, tax evasion or avoidance produces a lower level of welfare than fiscal honesty. While measuring the welfare variable with a single question, they identified two types of scales to measure tax morality. In the model used in this article, the happiness variable is the dependent variable, while the tax morality variables are independent.

² Altruism: It is the state of being concerned for the welfare of others, putting aside one's own interests.

In a study conducted in Germany, Akay et al. (2012) found a positive relationship between taxes and individuals' subjective well-being. In other words, the effect of taxes on subjective happiness is significant and positive for income after taxes. A single question measured the happiness variable.

Albanese et al. (2015) analyzed the relationship between social benefits, seen as the percentage of taxes returned to the population, and happiness. The authors conducted a panel data study, analyzing ten European countries, and found a strong positive relationship between the share of social benefits in taxes (social tax rate) and happiness. The authors found that happiness is determined by the impact of social benefits, which are considered taxes reinvested by the government.

In Portugal, Sa et al. (2015) found that political and psychological factors strongly influence tax morality. Using data from the European Values Survey, they found that individual satisfaction, religiosity, and trust in others influence tax morality. In a study conducted in Indonesia, Tjondro (2018) argued that individual life satisfaction and democracy positively affect tax ethics. It was found that the factor that affects individual life satisfaction is religiosity. It was argued that religiosity increases the individual life satisfaction of taxpayers because it satisfies the expected need to belong. The author adapted the model used in the study by Sa et al. (2015) to his own country and used the survey technique.

Nadirov et al. (2021) measured the relationship between life satisfaction and tax ethics in Azerbaijan. They argue that life satisfaction positively affects tax ethics through fiscal satisfaction and institutional trust. They collected data using a direct survey technique. A 5-item life satisfaction scale was used. They used an employee's behavior in the face of a 5% income tax and the change in the labor supply curve for the tax morale variable.

The study conducted by Doğan & Seçilmiş (2020) for Türkiye using the World Values Survey data for 1990, 2007, and 2012 concluded that those with higher life satisfaction are more likely to have higher tax morality. The regression method was used. It is worth noting that the study is a dynamic analysis that allows for a comparison between years.

Ciziceno & Pizzuto (2022), using data from the World Values Survey for Italy, find evidence that interventions to improve people's life satisfaction improve tax morality. They find that trust in government and people's cultural orientation (individualism and collectivism)³ are essential in shaping the relationship between life satisfaction and tax morality. They used subjective happiness as the happiness variable in the study.

³ While individualism emphasises the independence of the individual, collectivism emphasises being part of society and a sense of unity (Triandis, 1995: 407).

Athira & Ramesh (2024) conducted a panel data analysis. They analyzed the effect of happiness on tax compliance at the firm level. They found that countries with high levels of happiness have lower rates of tax avoidance. Another finding is that the negative relationship between happiness and country-level tax administration increases in countries with stronger governance.

In a study of Turkish self-employed people, Olsen et al. (2018) adopted a scenario-based methodology. They discovered that while a combination of high trust and high power boosts compliance, boosting the tax administration's coercive sanctions—that is, its power—causes negative emotions.

Eralp et al. (2020) conducted a province-level panel data analysis for Türkiye and found that the tax burden reduces happiness.

The studies show that the relationship between tax morality and happiness is analyzed in two directions. In studies where tax morality is the dependent variable, the effect of happiness on tax morality is positive, except in one study for Türkiye. In studies using happiness as the dependent variable, tax morality (or taxes in some studies) is found to have a positive effect on happiness. The number of studies using tax morality as an independent variable is higher than those using happiness as an independent variable. In terms of methodology, many studies have used the regression method using data from the World Values Survey. In addition, it can be seen that some data sets collected from local households are also used. Accordingly, the happiness variable is mainly measured by a single question. The number of studies in which a single question measures the tax morality variable is also high. If the studies on Türkiye are also evaluated in terms of results and methodology, one of the studies examining the relationship between happiness and tax morality found a positive relationship (Doğan & Seçilmiş, 2020), while Tekeli (2011) found a negative one. In both studies, the regression was estimated using the World Values Survey. In studies examining the effect of taxes or tax burden on happiness, the result is that taxes induce negative emotions and reduce happiness (Olsen et al., 2018; Eralp et al., 2020). It can be seen that there is no consensus in the studies conducted in Türkiye.

This study examines the relationship between tax morality and happiness in Türkiye. The study differs from the studies in the literature in terms of methodology and measurement method/scale used. A literature review shows that happiness and tax morality variables are usually measured with a single question to facilitate cross-country comparisons. There are many advantages to using a multi-item index rather than a single question to measure tax morality (Kirchler, 1997; 1999). Measuring a concept such as tax morality, which is influenced by many factors, with a multi-item scale rather than a single question and using a multi-item scale to measure the happiness variable makes the study different from others. However, the number of studies collecting primary data is minimal so that it will contribute to the literature in this sense.

3. Methodology

The study is an applied exploratory research. A descriptive research design was chosen by selecting the survey from quantitative data collection techniques. Is there a link between tax ethics and happiness? Are people with higher tax ethics happier? Is the state of being happy effective in having higher tax ethics? The study used non-probability convenience sampling to collect data. The hypotheses tested in this direction are as follows.

H₁= People with higher tax morality scores are happier than those with lower scores.

H₂= Being happy increases tax morality.

The data was collected between December 2023 and March 2024. Participation was voluntary. The interviewers were trained before the survey. For tax morality, the tax perception scale developed by Çelebi et al. (2017), and for happiness, the long Turkish form of the Oxford Happiness Scale (6-point Likert) developed by Hills & Argyle (2002), translated and tested for validity and reliability by Doğan & Sapmaz (2012) were used. The study was carried out in Istanbul. Istanbul province was selected due to its high population density and high-income taxpayers. Five hundred twenty-four people participated in the study. The number of income taxpayers in Istanbul is 2,478,134 as of December 2023. The minimum acceptable sample size at the 0.05 significance level is 348 (Sekaran et al., 1992: 137). The data were analyzed using SPSS software. In the reliability test, the Cronbach alpha coefficient of the Oxford Happiness Scale is 0.829. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the tax morality scale is 0.728. The fact that this coefficient is greater than 0.7 indicates that the scales are reliable.

4. Results

Demographic characteristics of the participants are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Features		Percent
Gender	Woman	45
	Male	55
Age	18-29	65
	30-49	27
	50-64	7
	65 and over	1
Education Status	Primary Education	11
	High School	18
	Front Degree	16
	Bachelor	52
	Post Graduate	2
Marital Status	Married	33
	Single	66

Forty-five percent of the participants were female, and 55% were male. When analyzing the age distribution, 65% of the participants were 18-29, 27% were 30-49 and 7% were 50-64.

The distribution of the answers given by the participants regarding the adequacy of the household income to spend the month is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics

	Is the household income sufficient to spend the month (%)?
With great difficulty	16
Hardly	23
Easily	42
Quite Easy	9
Easily	7
Very Easily	3

As a result of the normality tests performed prior to data analysis, it was determined that the data were not normally distributed. Therefore, data analysis continued with non-parametric analyses.

In order to determine the level of happiness and tax compliance of the participants, the mean of the happiness scale and the tax compliance scale were calculated, taking into account the reverse questions. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Scale Scores

Scale	Scores
Happiness	3,41
Tax Compliance	4,08
Tax Morale	3,75

According to Table 3, the happiness average of the participants is at a medium level. However, the tax compliance score is higher. Tax morality⁴ is slightly higher than the average of happiness.

The frequency analysis of the answers given to the tax compliance scale is in Table 4.

⁴ Questions 6, 13 and 14 from the tax compliance scale were used for tax morality. Questions 6 and 14 were reverse coded.

Table 4: Distribution of Responses to the Tax Compliance Scale

Tax Compliance Scale	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Partly agree Partly disagree	Partly agree	Agree
1. Paying taxes is a civic duty.	6	8	12	16	58
2. Paying tax is a legal obligation.	5	9	10	15	61
3. Paying taxes is a sacrifice.	11	21	18	15	35
4. Tax rates are high in our country.	4	4	8	15	69
5. If tax revenues are insufficient, public services will fail.	10	12	21	23	34
6. If a taxpayer does not pay his/her taxes, he/she does not have the means (income) to pay.	17	24	27	14	18
7. Taxpayers found to be evading taxes should be arrested.	9	12	18	19	42
8. In our country, tax payment times are convenient for taxpayers.	7	10	40	18	25
9. Criminal sanctions for tax evaders are not sufficient.	5	7	22	17	49
10. The tax system in our country is unfair.	4	5	20	18	53
11. Tax legislation is complicated to understand.	4	11	30	18	37
12. Taxation by the state negatively affects the private sector.	18	28	29	13	12
13. Tax evasion is immoral.	4	5	12	15	64
14. It is usual for taxpayers to evade a small amount of tax	46	25	10	11	8
15. Tax amnesty favors tax evaders.	6	8	16	16	53

Seventy-four percent of respondents believe that paying taxes is a civic duty. At the same time, a large majority of respondents see paying taxes as a legal obligation. While 32% of respondents disagree with the idea that paying taxes is a sacrifice, 50% of respondents agree. A large majority of taxpayers, 84%, agree with the statement that the tax burden in our country is high. Insufficient tax revenues The proportion of those who believe that public services will be disrupted is 57 percent. While 41% of taxpayers disagree with the statement that if a taxpayer does not pay his/her taxes, he/she does not have the means (income) to pay, 32% of taxpayers agree. The % of those who think taxpayers who have evaded taxes should be arrested is 61%. 43% of respondents think that the deadlines for paying taxes are reasonable. The proportion of those who think the penalties imposed on tax evaders are sufficient is 66 percent. About half of the respondents think that tax legislation is inadequate. 46% of respondents disagree with the statement that government taxation has a negative effect on the private sector. The

proportion of those who believe that tax evasion is unethical is 79 percent. 71% disagree with the statement that it is normal for taxpayers to evade a small amount of tax. The percentage of those who think that tax amnesties favor tax evaders is 69 %.

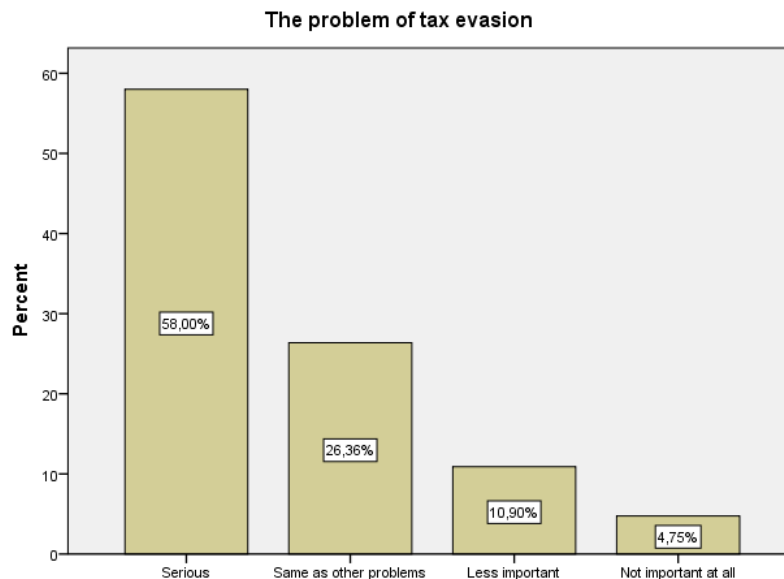
The frequency distribution of the participants regarding the happiness scale is given in Table 5.

Table 5: Distribution of Responses to the Oxford Happiness Scale

Oxford Happiness Scale	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Ne Katılıyorum Ne Katılmıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
1. I don't feel particularly pleased with the way I am. (R)	43	34	11	7	5
2. I am intensely interested in other people.	5	13	29	35	18
3. I feel that life is very rewarding.	14	23	34	18	11
4. I have very warm feelings towards almost everyone.	9	27	30	23	11
5. I am not particularly optimistic about the future. (R)	15	29	24	18	14
6. I find most things amusing.	6	19	34	29	12
7. I am always committed and involved.	5	8	16	41	30
8. Life is good.	7	8	25	37	23
9. I do not think that the world is a good place. (R)	14	23	27	23	13
10. I laugh a lot.	4	13	31	30	22
11. I am well satisfied about everything in my life.	5	25	41	21	8
12. Çekici birisi olduğumu düşünmüyorum.	21	28	29	15	7
13. I don't think I look attractive. (R)	8	22	27	23	20
14. I am very happy.	7	15	41	26	11
15. I find beauty in some things.	4	7	18	51	20
16. I always have a cheerful effect on others.	4	10	31	37	18
17. I can fit in (find time for) everything I want to.	9	24	30	25	12
18. I feel that I am not especially in control of my life. (R)	13	22	30	23	12
19. I feel able to take anything on.	6	7	14	38	36
20. I feel fully mentally alert.	11	19	29	26	15
21. I often experience joy and elation.	4	10	31	39	16
22. I don't find it easy to make decisions. (R)	15	25	22	26	12
23. I don't have a particular sense of meaning and purpose in my life. (R)	39	31	16	7	7
24. I feel I have a great deal of energy.	5	16	34	30	15
25. I usually have a good influence on events.	5	10	27	42	16
26. I don't have fun with other people. (R)	25	37	21	11	6
27. I don't feel particularly healthy. (R)	19	30	27	18	6
28. I don't have particularly happy memories of the past. (R)	23	31	21	14	11

In the happiness scale, which includes questions about the participants' perspectives on life and the emotional states they mostly feel, the rate of agreement with the statement “I am very happy” is 37%, the rate of those who neither agree nor disagree is 41%, and the rate of those who disagree is 22%. The average of the scale is 3.41.

Graph 1: Attitude Towards the Tax Evasion Problem



Fifty-eight percent of taxpayers surveyed consider tax evasion to be a severe problem. Twenty-six percent think it is on par with other problems.

According to the results of the standard distribution tests to measure the relationship between happiness and tax morality, the data are not normally distributed. Therefore, the Mann-Whitney U test was used to analyze the relationship between tax ethics and happiness. Undecided Likert statements were not included in the analysis.

The results of the Mann-Whitney U test to examine the effect of the happiness variable on tax ethics are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: The Effect of Happiness on Tax Morality

Y	Happiness	N	Rank Mean	Z	p
Tax morale	Happy	125	150,75	-2,475	,013
	Unhappy	209	177,52		

The mean tax morale scores of those who feel happy are higher than those who feel unhappy, and this difference is statistically significant. The tax compliance of those who are happy is high.

The effect of tax morality on happiness is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: The Effect of Tax Morality on Happiness

Y	Tax Morale	N	Rank Mean	Z	p
Happiness	High tax morality	51	172,27	-4,081	,000
	Low tax morality	449	259,39		

The average happiness of those with a high tax ethic is higher than that of those with a low tax ethic, and this difference is statistically significant. It can, therefore, be said that financial honesty brings happiness.

5. Conclusion

Individuals' fulfillment of their tax-related obligations is called tax compliance. Tax compliance is divided into two: voluntary and compulsory compliance. Compulsory compliance is defined as taxpayers paying their taxes to comply with the laws and not to be subjected to any penalties or sanctions. In this model, defined as the Classical/Economic model among tax compliance models, individuals make decisions based on tax rate, audit probability, and penalty rate. For example, if the audit or penalty rate is high, tax collection or tax evasion will be less. However, the classical model has been criticized over time. In some studies, it has been found that individuals pay taxes despite low audit and penalty rates. Thus, the behavioral/psychological model gained importance.

The pleasure individuals feel from paying taxes has increased the individual's intrinsic motivation to pay taxes, i.e., voluntary compliance. The addition of the pleasure that individuals receive when they act honestly by paying their taxes to their utility functions has led the psychological model to gain importance. It is discussed under the name of happiness economics, in which concepts such as the fact that people are affected by their emotional states when making some decisions and that their mood is essential when making some economic decisions are discussed. Since taxation is an economic decision, the effect of emotional state on tax morality and compliance has gained more importance in the literature in recent years. Studies on the effect of happiness, which is also the subject of behavioral finance, on tax compliance are still limited. In the studies in the literature review, while the effect of happiness on tax morality is examined, the effect of tax morality on happiness is also examined. In most of these studies, happiness is used as an independent variable. In studies examining different countries, the effect of happiness on tax morality is generally found to be positive.

Although there are fewer studies in which tax morality is used as an independent variable, the effect of tax morality on happiness is found to be positive. Tax ethics and

happiness variables were generally measured with a single question, and the regression method was chosen as the analysis method. The number of studies examining happiness and tax compliance in Türkiye is limited. This study used a more than one-question scale to measure happiness and tax compliance variables. Direct (primary) data were collected. It will contribute to the literature regarding the differences between data collection and measurement methods. This study aims to determine the relationship between tax morality and happiness. Two hypotheses were constructed in the study. The first hypothesis is “People with higher tax morality scores are happier than those with lower scores”. The second hypothesis is “Being happy increases tax morality”.

A survey was conducted with 524 people from Istanbul province using non-probability-based convenience sampling. Oxford Happiness Scale was used to measure happiness. The scale Çelebi et al. (2017) developed was used for tax compliance. When the results are analyzed, happiness and tax morality scores are below 4, while the tax compliance score is slightly higher. Although most taxpayers see paying taxes as a civic duty, they find the tax rates in our country high. The rate of those who find tax evasion unethical is relatively high. Mann Whitney U test was used to measure the effect of happiness on tax ethics. According to the results, the tax morality of happy people is higher than that of unhappy people. This result is in parallel with most of the previous studies conducted for different countries. Torgler (2003;2004) for Latin American and Asian countries, Olsena et al. (2018) and Doğan and Seçilmiş (2020) for Türkiye found a parallel result. According to the results of the analysis conducted to test the second hypothesis to measure the effect of tax morality on happiness, those with high tax morality are happier than those with low tax morality. This result is consistent with many previous studies (Verme, 2009; Lubian and Zari, 2011; Akay et al., Albanese et al., 2015).


The study contributes to the originality of the study by addressing the issue from both aspects and measuring happiness using a scale with more than one question and with high validity and reliability.

Since it has been determined that the effect of happiness on tax morality is essential in tax compliance, it would be a very appropriate practice for the state to give importance to public expenditures that prioritize the happiness of individuals in order to increase tax compliance. In addition to social expenditures such as education and health, transfer expenditures to low-income people are also considered adequate. At the same time, compliance with the principle of fiscal transparency and the concepts of fiscal linkage, which are essential in the tax ethics literature, may effectively increase happiness. Practices that will improve taxpayer satisfaction and tax compliance include eliminating waste, allocating the money to areas that will benefit the taxpayers the most, and ensuring that taxpayers are satisfied with the expenses to be made with the money received from taxes. Practices of the tax administration that increase positive emotions in taxpayers will increase trust in the slippery slope curve and increase voluntary compliance of taxpayers.

Ethics Committee Approval: It is not a study that requires an ethics committee document.

Peer Review: External independent.

Author Contributions:

İşıl Ayas  - Idea, Design, Data Collection, Interpretation of Data, Drafting, Critical Review, Final Approval and Responsibility, Literature Review, Supervising. Overall Contribution - 100%.

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