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## Araştırma Makalesi • Research Article

### The Effect of Leader-Member Exchange on Employees' Happiness: A Research on White Collar Employees

*Lider-Üye Etkileşiminin Çalışanların Mutluluklarına Etkisi: Beyaz Yaka Çalışanlar Üzerinde Bir Araştırma*

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#### ÖZ

Bu çalışmada lider üye etkileşiminin (LMX) beyaz yaka çalışanların mutluluk düzeylerine etkisi ve bu durumun demografik faktörlerle ilişkisi araştırılmıştır. Mutluluk duygusu gibi çalışanlar için verimlilik ve motivasyon kaynağı olduğu birçok çalışmada tespit edilmiş bir unsuru doğrudan etkileyen faktörlerin araştırılması önemlidir. Bu çalışmada benzerlerinden farklı olarak işyerinde mutluluk değil hayatın her alanında hissedilen genel mutluluk düzeyi ölçülerek sonuca gidilmiştir. Araştırma İnegöl İlçesinde faaliyet gösteren ve mobilya sektöründe üretim yapan işletmelerin beyaz yaka çalışanları üzerinde yürütülmüştür. Toplam 389 çalışandan iki ölçek aracılığıyla veri toplanmıştır. Ölçeklerden ilki çalışanların birim müdürleri ile olan etkileşimini, ikincisi ise mutluluk düzeylerini ölçmek için tasarlanmış ölçeklerdir. Çalışmada öncelikle ölçeklerin dağılım, güvenilirlik ve geçerlilik analizleri yapılmıştır. Daha sonra toplanan veriler aracılığı ile çalışanların mutluluk ve LMX düzeylerinin demografik faktörlere göre anlamlı farklılık gösterip göstermedikleri test edilmiştir. Demografik faktörlerden sadece yaşa göre ve sadece LMX düzeyinin anlamlı bir farklılık gösterdiği görülmüştür. Son olarak çalışmamızın ana hipotezi olan çalışanlar (beyaz yakalılar) ile ekip liderleri (birim müdürleri) arasındaki etkileşim (LMX) düzeyinin çalışanların mutluluk düzeyini yordama durumu analiz edilmiş ve LMX düzeyinin çalışanların mutluluk düzeyini pozitif yönde ve güçlü bir şekilde yordadığı anlaşılmıştır.

#### ABSTRACT

The effect of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on the happiness levels of white-collar employees and its relationship with demographic factors were investigated in this study. It is important to investigate the factors that directly affect a factor such as the feeling of happiness, which has been determined in many studies to be a source of productivity and motivation for employees. Unlike the similar ones, in this study, the result was reached by measuring the general level of happiness felt in all areas of life, not well being at work. The research was carried out on the white collar employees of the furniture manufacturer enterprises operating in Inegöl District. Data were collected from 389 employees through two scales. The first scale measures the interaction of employees with unit managers while the second one is designed to measure the happiness levels of employees. Normality, reliability and validity analyses of the scales were performed and then, it was tested whether the happiness and LMX levels of the employees have significant difference according to demographic factors through the data collected. The result revealed that only LMX level have a significant difference in relation to the age of employees. Finally, the main hypothesis of our study was tested and showed that the relationship between LMX level and the happiness level of the employees is positive and significant.

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## Introduction

While most people aim to be successful and happy in life, they often give priority to success. The belief that success brings happiness has prevailed in traditional psychology for many years. Positive psychology, on the contrary, argued that happiness brings success (Achor, 2013: 17). The happy person has an inner power that prevents negative emotions and anxiety in his brain. This power not only makes the person feel more positive, but also makes them stronger spiritually and physically, and this power gives people success (Goleman, 1996: 23).

Employees whose emotions are ignored and seen as just a machine feel physically and mentally bad over time. Due to these feelings, the productivity and performances of the employees begin to decrease. Realizing this situation, businesses have started to deal with the positive and negative emotions of the employees. The issue of employee health and happiness in the World Economic Forum is also an indication of this (Davies, 2016: 106-107).

Indeed, it seems that happiness has a relationship with work performance and this relationship is evident in various working environments (Wright & Cropanzano, 2000). According to the researches, happy employees are more satisfied with their jobs (George, 1995; Judge et al., 1999; Weiss et al., 1999) and are more popular for team leaders (Cropanzano and Wright, 1999; Judge et al., 1999; Staw et al., 1994; Wright and Staw, 1999). It is inevitable that they will succeed thanks to such situations provided by happiness (Connolly and Viswesvaran, 2000; Fisher, 2002; Thoresen et al., 2003; Judge and Ilies, 2004; Mignonac and Herrbach, 2004). For example, George (1995) states that high-performing sales managers are happy.

Danserau et al. (1975) found that especially individuals under the leaders need dynamic relationships and accordingly, the interaction processes in their relations with their leaders pay attention to meet their expectations. Over time, this approach has become a one-sided and diverse form of exchange, and has been conceptualized as Leader-Member Exchange (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Graen and Scandura 1987).

In this approach addressing the impact of leaders on employees from a broad perspective, it is important to consider the issue of happiness as an emotion that expresses the positive feelings of the employees in the broadest sense. As noted by Yagil (2006), if employees see that team leaders have abusive attitudes, they feel depersonalization and exhaustion. From a wider perspective, leaders play an important role in creating an environment where employees can be happy (Nielsen et al., 2008; Rasulzada et al., 2003).

So, in this study, it was examined in what direction and at what level the leaders' attitudes, more specifically, the interaction of the leaders with their employees, affect the happiness of the employees.

It is important to investigate the factors that directly affect a factor such as the feeling of happiness, which has been determined in many studies to be a source of productivity and motivation for employees. Unlike the similar ones, in this study, the result was reached by measuring the general level of happiness felt in all areas of life, not well being at work.

The manner of leader (who is both one of the social conditions himself and an important factor in the regulation of other social conditions) to employees and the level of communication he establishes with them can change the employees' positive/negative emotions in a positive or negative direction.

In order for employees to be highly happy, Shier and Graham (2010: 416) specified that it should not be ignored how the physical and cultural work environment, the relationships established with colleagues and managers, and the work itself (workload, flexibility, change,

limitations, type of work, the perception on work) relate to the person's daily life and feelings. For this reason, it is important that organizations can establish an organization climate that will make them comfortable in order to increase the happiness of their employees (Bryson et al. 2014: 13; Joshi, 2010: 25).

The research was carried out on the white collar employees of the furniture manufacturer enterprises. White-collar employees feel themselves closer to the managers (Cook et al., 1975: 47) and improve more effective (obedience-minded) relationships with the managers through the functions they undertake due to the nature of their work (Reynaud, 1969: 149). From this point of view, white-collar employees are considered to be more affected in terms of LMX, which is the independent variable of the hypothesis. On the other hand, white collar employees put their individual benefits above all else (Roberts et al., 1977: 129). This subjective attitude makes subjective happiness, which is the dependent variable of the hypothesis, a more remarkable variable.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Since ancient times, numerous researches and analyzes have been carried out on what happiness is and the components of it. The subject that these studies overlook is the desire of human beings to reach happiness, which is at its core (Bruckner, 2012: 11).

The term happiness also defined as the optimum psychological experience (Deci and Ryan, 2008: 1), is the subject of not only daily interpersonal research but also many scientific researches. The definition of optimal experience and what constitutes good life emerges as a complex and controversial area (Ryan and Deci, 2001: 142).

Happiness can be depicted with different meanings such as positive emotions, enjoyment of life and pleasure, depending on the meaning that people attach to it (Buettner, 2012: 27).

The person makes an effort only with the desire to be happy if he considers happiness as the sole purpose of life. However, the mental and emotional reactions of the person to what he lives and the conditions he is in determines whether he will be happy. The formula of happiness is personal, the key to happiness is in the hands of the person (Lama and Cudler, 2008: 7).

According to Ryff (1989: 1071), happiness is not only that the person has no psychological problems, but also that he has some positive features. Self-acceptance of the individual, having a purpose in his life, developing positive relationships in social life, giving importance to his personal development are important for being happy.

Happiness is a personal experience and situation that has no equivalent in the material world (Gilbert, 2008: 47). When the criteria that make people happy are analyzed, it is seen that the social relations established with the environment of the person take the first place. People take into consideration the relationships they have established with the people in their environment before their success in business and private life and their material / spiritual opportunities. Good social relationships bring happiness, and bad ones cause stress and unhappiness of the person (Burger, 2006: 221).

In this context, in the research carried out by Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) to create a conceptual model and examining the relationship between success and happiness, it was determined that happiness leads to success in addition to the finding that success leads to happiness. Also, Bakker and Oerlemans (2010) claim that the happiness of the employees increases the performance of the organization. Because the work that has most of the time spent

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by the person other than sleep has an important share in life (Judge and Klinger, 2009: 107). While the work that the person has is determining the living conditions in a sense, it is also determining in terms of economic, psychological and social aspects. For this reason, the happiness of individuals in their business and private lives mutually affect each other (Baysal, 1993: 16). Happy employees are people who are more social, able to establish more positive and effective relationships with their environment, sharing, accommodating and productive people (McKenna, 2006: 296).

Moreover, employees who have positive emotions not only go beyond the necessary duties at work, but also invest more in their jobs (George, 1995). Employees with high happiness are better than unhappy employees in keeping up with organizational change (Judge et al., 1999). In summary, a wide variety of research has established a link between working conditions and the stress and happiness of employees (Cox et al., 2000; De Jonge et al., 2000; De Lange et al., 2004; Grawitch et al., 2007).

According to the research conducted by Gallup company, the employees who are uninterested in work because they are unhappy, have an annual cost of 450-550 billion dollars to the US economy (Fleming, 2017: 57). It is an obvious result that the working conditions of the owned business will affect the happiness of the person even while affecting his health (Liu et al., 2016: 1044). In the studies conducted to analyze the emotions of the employees on social media (Liu et al., 2016; De Choudhury and Counts, 2013; Yardi et al., 2008; Kolari et al., 2007), it is seen that the reasons for unhappiness related to the jobs of the employees are mostly managers, working hours and wages expectation.

Diener (1984) stated the factors that affect people's happiness as (1) bio-social characteristics such as age, genetic, (2) personality characteristics such as self-esteem and extraversion, and (3) social support factors such as family and job satisfaction. Therefore, happiness is directly related to people's working life (Cotter and Fouad, 2011: 52).

Dávila and Finkelstein (2013), in their research, concluded that organizational citizenship behavior perceived as a role increases happiness. Employees with high happiness are more committed to their organizations (Herrbach, 2006; Judge et al., 1999; Mignonac and Herrbach, 2004; Thoresen et al., 2003). Employees' low happiness is stated as an indicator of a problem in their job roles, reward system, interpersonal relations and working conditions (Joshi, 2010: 25).

As a result, the superior performance of happy employees is not limited to the tasks explicitly stated in the job position. The presence of a positive impact also provides behavior that goes beyond a job description but benefits other individuals or the organization itself. Happiness has individual benefits such as productivity, creativity, motivation, and organizational benefits such as harmonious collaboration, high satisfaction and high performance (DeNeve et al., 2013: 56-57).

Leader Member Exchange (LMX) Theory focuses on the level of interaction leaders take with their employees. It argues that leaders interact with their subordinates at different levels, and that low-level employees do not achieve the benefits of high-level employees (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995).

The LMX theory predicts that leaders provide subordinates with different levels of tangible and intangible support. The topics in this support are information, meaningful work, participation opportunities etc. (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). LMX refers to the quality of the leaders' interaction with their subordinates (Dansereau et al., 1975). Low-quality LMX is a relationship limited to employee job descriptions, while a high-quality LMX refers to a form of

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relationship that includes positive behaviors beyond the job description (Liden and Maslyn, 1998).

Dienesch and Liden (1986) argued that cases subject to social exchange between the leaders and their subordinates would be more understandable if they were classified by a systematic. Based on this proposition, Liden and Maslyn (1998) designed the LMX model in four dimensions. The first one is the contribution dimension, which includes the quantity and quality of the work that both sides of the relationship (leader and members) put forward for common purposes. Second dimension is the loyalty that express the team members and the leader have in support of each other. Third is the loyalty dimension that represent the emotional closeness that team members and leader feel towards each other. The fourth dimension added to the model later (in future studies) is the professional respect of the team members to the knowledge and experience of the leader. In studies on LMX for a long time, it is seen that this four-dimensional structure, the frame of which was laid out by Dienesch and Liden, was later developed by Liden and Maslyn (1986).

### **Leader-Member Exchange and Happiness**

Positive management practices provide businesses the opportunity to use their performance efficiently and effectively (Cameron, 2016: 161). Is it possible for most of people to have a job that they will go to every day with the same desire and pleasure and constantly improve their performance? Although researchers working in the field of industrial psychology have been looking for the answer to this question for years, a working environment where every employee can enjoy their job and show high performance has not yet been created (Aamodt, 2010: 2).

According to the previous studies it is possible to make a classification as follows: (1) Studies showing that the level of LMX affects happiness level. (1a) Studies dealing with the relationship between LMX level and positive emotions. (1b) Studies dealing with the relationship between LMX level and negative emotions. (1c) Studies dealing with the relationship between LMX level and both positive and negative emotions. (2) Studies showing that level of happiness affects the level of LMX. (3) Studies showing that LMX level and happiness level affect each other mutually (bidirectional).

(1a) When considering organizational factors, one of the first things that come to mind is the attitude of the management. It has been determined in many studies that both HR management and unit managers play a common role in influencing the responses of employees (Gilbert et al., 2011; Kuvaas and Dysvik, 2010; Purcell and Hutchinson, 2007). In various studies on the subject, it has been observed that all managers from the top to the bottom, and even those who are natural leaders, have significant effects on the happiness of individuals (Kossek et al., 2011; Maidaniuc-Chirila and Constantin, 2016; Thirlwall, 2015). More specifically, the researchers who dealt with the subject found a direct link between LMX and happiness (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Gerstner and Day, 1997).

(1b) We can understand the effects of the interaction style of leaders on employees from the positive emotions it creates, as well as the negative emotions it causes. It is seen that the issue of how (the direction and the level of) the negative emotional states of employees change with the interaction of leaders is studied in a broad perspective: in the results of the research, with those who emphasize that employees who feel indolent in their relations with their colleagues and managers are more unhappy (Paulin and Griffin, 2016; Lim et al., 2008; Pearson and Porath, 2009), there are also those who deal with the issue in terms of many diseases at the level of health disruption due to stress (Cooper and Payne, 1991).

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Studies have shown that leader-member relationship is one of the most common sources of stress in organizations (Landeweerd and Boumans, 1994; Tepper, 2000). LMX affects employees' stress levels because a high-quality relationship is characterized by trust, good communication, and emotional support from the leader, and control of such a relationship can only be achieved through emotions (Brouer et al., 2007).

According to Liao et al. (2017), it can be said that LMX has a positive effect on happiness through psychological capital.

(1c) According to the previous studies it is understood that a certain behavior exhibited by the leader has positive / negative effects on both the stress and happiness levels of the employees (Skakon et al., 2010). Studies working on the subject specifically with regard to LMX show that a high-quality interaction decreases employees' emotional exhaustion while increasing job satisfaction (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Skakon et al., 2010). As a result, the leader's supportive attitude and establishing a good relationship are named as behaviors that can reduce stress and increase happiness among employees (Bass, 1990; Yukl, 1994). Gonzales-Navarro et al. (2019) argued that, although it differs according to cultures, LMX positively affects happiness and life satisfaction. Of course, the resilience levels of the employees are also an important mediating factor.

(2) People who do not have problems in communicating and interacting with their managers are those who are more easily connected to their jobs and exhibit above-standard performance. On the contrary, people who have problems with their managers are standard employees who only do what is expected of them (Blake et al., 2003: 475; Moen et al., 2016: 158). A happy person is more likely to be successful after finding a job. Employees with high positive feelings receive more positive evaluations from both their supervisors and other employees (Staw et al., 1994). In the study of Staw and his colleagues, it was observed that managers give higher evaluations to employees whose positive feelings are above average on issues such as job quality, productivity, reliability and creativity. In their ongoing study on the same research, when Wright and his colleagues tested this effect again, they found that happy people got higher scores from their superiors (Cropanzano and Wright, 1999; Wright and Staw, 1999).

As the job satisfaction and happiness levels of the members of a team increase, their perception of the quality of the relationship they establish with their managers becomes homogeneous (Hooper et al., 2007). In fact, it can be said that the perceptual leader support originates from this climate (Moyle, 1998). Prottas (2008) points out, employees who are happy and behave honestly, especially towards their leaders, have higher job and life satisfaction, better health and less stress. In the study of Hill et al. (2015), it is stated that employees' happiness levels (with the effect of their expectations) affect LMX quality.

(3) According to the previous studies it is seen that apart from the one-way relationship mentioned here, there are also models that claim that the level of LMX and happiness level mutually affect each other. For example, according to Russell (2008), while happiness provides job satisfaction and high performance, job satisfaction and high performance also affect happiness. According to another study, while leader behavior, which is characterized by trust, recognition and feedback, increases happiness, happiness of employees also affects leader behavior. That is, the relationship in question is bidirectional (van Dierendonck, 2004). As Bernert and Hirschfeld (2016) stated, Just as LMX quality affects the happiness of the employees, the happiness level of the leaders also affects the LMX quality. In another study, Clarke and Mahadi (2017) argued that when the emotional intelligence of the employees is involved, a reciprocal relationship can be mentioned between happiness and LMX.

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## Methodology

### Purpose

There are many studies in the literature, some of which are mentioned above, that support this. The study of Audenaerta et al. (2017) dealing with the subject in the relationship between LMX-happiness is one of the important studies supporting this relationship.

Situations such as social support of managers (Iverson et al., 1998), a high-quality relationship established between leaders and employees (Schaufeli and Enzmann, 1998), meeting the expectations of employees by managers (Epitropaki et al., 2005) appear as factors that reduce stress and increase happiness in the work environment.

Based on the above studies, which reveal that many emotions are in a strong relationship with the attitudes and communication styles of the leaders, this study aims to determine how and how much the interaction with the managers of the departments they work in affects the happiness level of white-collar employees.

**H1:** A strong Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) positively affects employees' feelings of happiness.

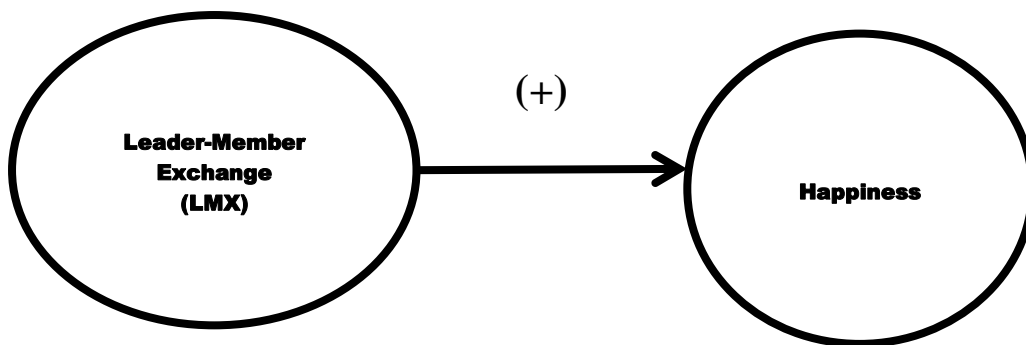


Figure.1: Hypothesis Model

### Sampling

In 2019 October, a total of 500 questionnaires were distributed among white collar employees working in administrative departments in furniture enterprises operating in Bursa/İnegöl, out of which 411 were successfully received. Because of some discrepancies, 389 valid questionnaires were included for data analysis.

In parallel with the expansion of capital accumulation the majority of management functions were diversified and increased to such an extent that they could not be carried out. This situation necessitated the breakdown of these functions and their transfer to paid employees. This paid group, which is mandatorily authorized on behalf of the capital, is the white collar (Sobel, 1989: 18). According to this approach, which is included as the authorization theory in the literature, the fragmentation of leadership and management functions has enabled white-collar employees to be empowered to a certain extent and transferred these functions to authorized white-collar employees (Carter, 1983: 48).

There are various acceptances and calculations when determining the sample size. For example, it was stated by Kline (2016) that the sample size 10 times the number of statements used in the scale was sufficient. According to the table prepared by Bartlett et al. (2001: 47) using statistical calculations for the number of universes of various sizes, the maximum sample number recommended to be reached with the acceptance of 0.05 margin of error for 95% confidence level, including the cases where the number of individuals in the universe is

unknown, is 384. The number of participants reached by us is even above this max value. 500 questionnaires were distributed to be used in the research but as a result of the evaluation, the data of 389 participants were considered appropriate for analysis.

### Measures

Oxford Happiness Questionnaire short form (OHQ-SF) was employed to measure happiness level. This scale is a form developed by Hills and Argyle (2002). This 8-item scale was adapted to Turkish by Doğan and Çötök (2011) and its validity / reliability analyses were also made.

LMX-MDM scale was used to measure Leader-Member Exchange which was developed by Liden and Maslyn (1998). This 12-item scale was previously used by a number of study in Turkey (Baş et al., 2010; Aydın, 2014; Kanbur and Kanbur, 2015; Tanrıverdi and Kahraman, 2016; Tarm, 2017). There are four categories comprising each three questions. These categories are: Affect, Loyalty, Contribution and Professional Respect.

Both scales are on five-point Likert type consisting degrees from "strongly agree (1)" to "strongly disagree (5)".

The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS and AMOS 23.0 package programs. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to determine the validity in the analysis of the data collected through the questionnaires. Cronbach's alpha score was examined to determine the reliability.

While conducting the confirmatory factor analysis, it was first examined whether the data had a normality, then the goodness of fit values, whether the observed variables were above 0.5 value of the factor load representing the measurement adequacy and the convergent and divergent validity by taking into account the AVE and CR values. It was checked whether the Cronbach's alpha scores - including sub-factors - were above 0.7 for each measurement tool in the reliability analysis (Büyüköztürk, 2003: 23). Whether the LMX and Happiness variables differ significantly according to demographic factors was found by applying T test and ANOVA tests with the help of SPSS 23.0.

Finally the results (predictive values) obtained by performing PATH analysis were interpreted to test the hypothesis (Şimşek, 2007: 13). The assesment based on these criteria is the final stage concluding that the hypotheses are supported or rejected.

## Findings

### Frequencies for demographic factors and definitions

In the introduction part of the questionnaire, the participants were asked about their age ranges, education level, gender and seniority in the workplace. The frequency distributions for this information are as follows:

<b>Gender</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Male	166	42,7	Under 25	117	30,1
Female	223	57,3	25 – 40	185	47,5
			Over 40	87	22,4
<b>Education</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Seniority</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Higher Education (formal)	145	37,3	Under 5	208	53,5
Higher Education (open)	139	35,7	5 – 15	151	38,8
Secondary Education	105	27,0	Over 15	30	7,7
<b>Total:</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Toplam:</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>100</b>



In this section, it will be examined whether the LMX level of the participants with their managers and their feelings of happiness differ significantly according to demographic factors. By SPSS 23.0, T test was used to determine whether there is a significant difference according to gender. ANOVA test was used to find out if there is a significant difference according to other features. The results are as follows:

There is no significant differences according to demographic factors except age factor. It was determined that the LMX level of the participants with their managers differ significantly according to their ages ( $F(2,386)= 3,658, p < ,05$ ). As a result of the homogeneity test (Levene Test), there was no homogeneity at the level of significance of 0.002, and the Games-Howell test was applied to understand which groups the difference was between, and it was seen that the resulting significant difference was between under 25 aged and 25-40 aged participants. This difference may be due to the low level of experience in those aged 25 and under.

### Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The validity (model fit) of the model is tested first. The purpose of this process is to reveal to what extent the data obtained from the field are compatible with the constructed model (Çokluk et al., 2016: 266). For this, firstly, the distribution of the data is checked (Gürbüz, 2019: 69). In order to understand whether the distribution is normal for each scale, it is necessary to look at the kurtosis and skewness values of the variables and the multivariate kurtosis value. Values for distribution are as follows.

	<b>LMX</b>	<b>HAPPINESS</b>	<b>References*</b>
Skewness	-0,901	-0,698	±1
Kurtosis	-0,533	-0,743	±1
Multivariate kurtosis		6,676	≤10

\*Byrne (2013: 104)

Table.2 displays the skewness and kurtosis values obtained through the SPSS program and the multiple normality value obtained through the AMOS program, which were within the reference values, in other words, the data is normally distributed.

Next, it is necessary to check the model fit values in the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) results to understand whether the desired fit has been achieved. In this study, among these criteria, CMIN / DF (Chi-Square / Degree of Freedom), NFI (Normed Fit Index), CFI (Comparative Fit Index), GFI (Goodness of Fit Index), RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) value and the standardized version of this value, SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual) values were examined. In the first analysis results, the analysis was repeated by defining a covariance between the error variances of the two expressions under happiness by looking at the modification indices. This connection, which is established between two variables with high values according to their modification indices, expressing the measurement error and shown with a bidirectional arrow in the model (Aish and Jöreskog, 1990), helps the model to become more fit by decreasing the Chi-Square value (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1993). After the model became more fit, the values obtained as a result of the analysis made were at acceptable levels as given in Table.3:

	<b>CMIN/DF</b>	<b>GFI</b>	<b>CFI</b>	<b>NFI</b>	<b>RMSEA</b>	<b>SRMR</b>
<b>Breakpoint for Admission</b>	≤ 5	≥ 0,85	≥ 0,90	≥ 0,90	≤ 0,08	≤ 0,08
<b>Post-Correction Goodness of Fit Values</b>	1,968	0,934	0,961	0,924	0,050	0,034

These findings can be interpreted as the items of the scale were loaded with an acceptable compliance with the relevant dimensions.

In the confirmatory factor analysis, besides the goodness of fit values, the structural validity of the model should also be provided. Construct validity is the determination of which concept or properties the scale measures (Saruhan and Özdemirci, 2013: 177). In order for structural validity, first of all, factor load values are examined. Factor load value is the value that shows how compatible each statement is with the factor to which it belongs to, and it is expected to be above 0.5.

Structural validity shows to what extent the scale overlaps with the theory (Kline, 2015: 284). The methods used in determining structural validity are convergent validity and discriminant validity.

In order to analyze convergent validity, composite reliability (CR) coefficients and explained average variance (AVE) values for the factors that make up the model and the sub-dimensions of each factor are calculated. CR value and AVE for discriminant validity were also recorded above required levels of 0.70 and 0.50, respectively (Hair et al., 2014: 619). AVE values above 0.50; It means that variables explain sufficient variance about the factor to which they belong, and CR coefficients above 0.60 means that the factor in question has internal consistency.

**Table.4: Standardized factor loads of the LMX scale and CR / AVE values of the factors**

Scale expressions		Factor loads	CR	AVE
<b><i>Affect</i></b>				
I like my manager as a person.	Affect1	0,760	0,700	0,584
My manager is the kind of person everyone would like to be friends with.	Affect2	0,758		
<b>Table.4: Standardized factor loads of the LMX scale and CR / AVE values of the factors (cont.)</b>				
My manager is a very pleasant person to work with.	Affect3	0,775		
<b><i>Loyalty</i></b>				
My manager is in my business actions ...	Loyalty1	0,689	0,673	0,544
If others would come to me about work ...	Loyalty2	0,792		
If I made a mistake in good faith unintentionally ...	Loyalty3	0,729		
<b><i>Contribution</i></b>				
Beyond the tasks in my job description for my manager ...	Contribution1	0,754	0,876	0,702
For my manager to achieve his goals within the organization ...	Contribution2	0,759		
To do the best I can for my manager ...	Contribution3	0,715		
<b><i>Professional Respect</i></b>				
My manager's knowledge of his work impresses me.	Respect1	0,742	0,884	0,719
I respect the knowledge and competence of my manager in the job.	Respect2	0,729		
I admire the professional skills of my manager.	Respect3	0,878		

According to the analysis results, the factor load values for all the expressions in the scale were found to be compatible with the factor they were under, taking values between 0.802 and 0.930 ( $> 0.60$ ) (Kline, 2015: 298). However, it is seen that AVE values are above 0.50 and CR coefficients are above 0.60. In addition, since the CR coefficients, which are seen as another proof of convergent validity, must be greater than the AVE values (Byrne, 2013: 357), it can be said that the scale dimensions have convergent validity according to Table.4.

Two different approaches are applied to ensure divergent validity. The first of these is

to look at the correlation values between the factors. The fact that the correlation values between the factors are less than 0.85 is considered as an indicator of divergent validity (Kline, 2015: 297; Chou et al., 2002). The second approach is that the square root of the AVE value ( $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$ ) of a factor is higher than the correlation values of the same factor with other factors (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Both conditions are met according to Table.5. In other words, there is divergent validity among the factors of the LMX Scale used in the study.

**Table.5: Correlation coefficients and square roots of AVE values**

Değişkenler	1	2	3	4
(1) Affect	<b>0,764</b>			
(2) Loyalty	0,722	<b>0,737</b>		
(3) Contribution	0,711	0,731	<b>0,742</b>	
(4) Professional respect	0,763	0,703	0,732	<b>0,785</b>

Bold values on the diagonal represent the square root of the AVE value of the related dimension.

### Reliability

In a study, after the validity analysis, a reliability analysis should be performed, which reveals that the researcher has obtained the correct data about the sampled universe, or in other words, showing the compatibility of the scale and the universe. The most commonly used analysis type for reliability analysis, which is an 'internal consistency test', is the calculation of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient (Saruhan and Özdemirci, 2013: 178). The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients calculated for each factor / scale used in this study are as follows:

**Table.6: Reliability Coefficients**

Scale/Factor	Number expressions	ofCronbach's Alpha value
LMX	4	,935
Affect	3	,702
Loyalty	3	,778
Contribution	3	,780
Professional Respect	3	,744
HAPPINESS	7	,861

As seen in Table.6, the reliability coefficients emerging for each factor or scale are greater than the acceptable value of 0.7. Since there were no expressions that would increase the Alpha value significantly if removed, the measurement model was used as is.

### Testing the Structural Model

Following the confirmatory factor analysis as the stage of testing the measurement model, the structural model was tested for the validity of the hypothesis. For this purpose, the structural model is tested simultaneously by connecting equality systems and latent variables to each other and the estimated values obtained are interpreted (Çokluk et al., 2016: 261).

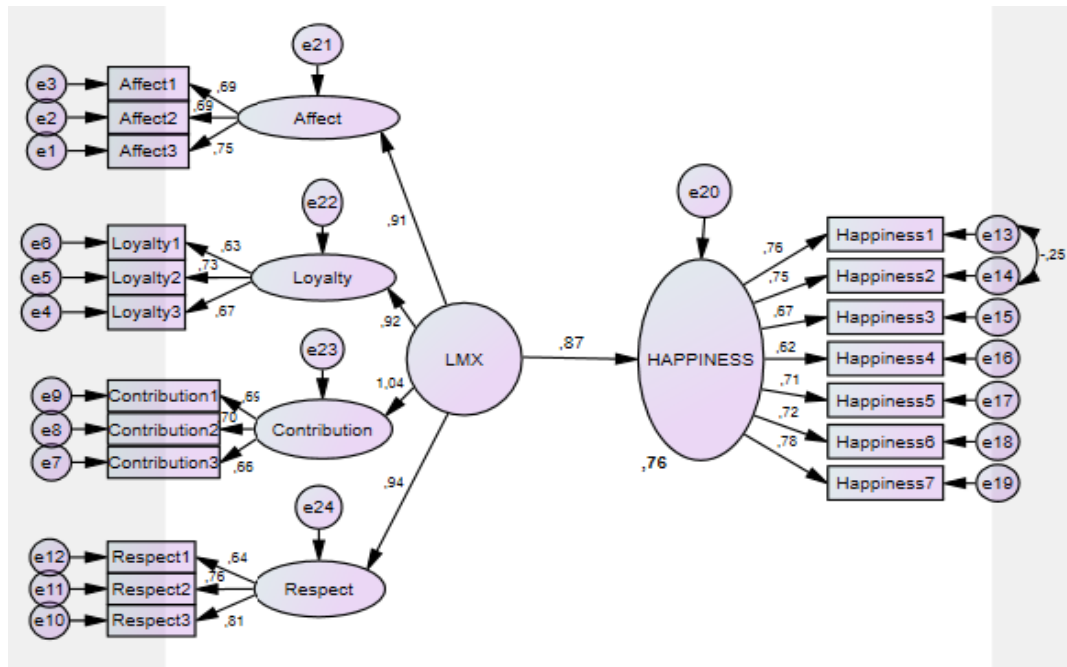


Figure.2: Path Analyze Diagram for LMX - Happiness relationship

According to Figure.2, the p (significance level) and t (critical ratio) values obtained for the two-level model constructed in the AMOS program in order to test the relationship subject to the hypothesis were discussed and evaluated. The critical ratio, also referred to as the z-test in the literature, is the ratio obtained by dividing the predicted value of each variable in the constructed model by its own standard error value. The fact that this ratio exceeds 1.96 as an absolute value indicates that the value estimated at the 0.05 significance level and the value exceeding the value of 2.58 at the 0.01 significance level is statistically different from zero (Byrne, 2013: 351-352; Kline, 2015: 320) . This means that the hypotheses that are less than 0.05 as the p value, larger than 1.96 as the t value and related to the expected direction (positive / negative) are supported.

**Table.7: Values of the structural relationship between leader-member exchange level and happiness level of employees**

Hypotheses/Relation	Beta Coefficient	Relationship Direction	Critical Rate (t Value)	P	Finding
H1: LMX → HAPP	0,762	( + )	16,339	***	Supported

\*\*\*≤0,01

In Table.7, it is seen that the z-value of this relationship is 16,339, well above the absolute value of 2.58 (which is seen as "acceptable" at the 0,01 significance level). It was determined that the predictive value / ratio represented by the beta coefficient was 0.762 and was also positive (+) as predicted by the direction of the relationship. Accordingly, it was seen that the hypothesis we put forward in the model was supported.

### Results

It has been concretely revealed in the study that Leader-Member Exchange obviously contributes to the increase in the happiness levels of the employees. In many previous studies, it is seen that results supporting this relationship were obtained. For example, the study conducted by Bono et al. (2007) revealed that the most influential factor on the enthusiasm and optimism of the employees is the approaches of the managers. In the same study, with the

comparison between different factors, it is seen that the strongest factor affecting happiness in the workplace is the interaction established by the managers. In another similar study, by Nquyen et al. (2016), the leader's positive approaches bring the business closer to its goals by creating an environment of proactive personality and optimism.

Leaders' approach to employees is extremely important in terms of directing employees with different goals, different education levels, different habits and different personalities towards the same goals in a happy and harmonious way and to motivate them towards the efficiency of the organization in all processes. While Breevaart et al. (2015) emphasize the importance of having a qualified LMX in terms of work engagement and performance, Li et al. (2018) reveal that approaches including social support make significant contributions to employees' resilience and self-efficacy.

For enterprises, reducing the workforce turnover rate means effective resource use (Guthrie, 2001: 183). Since the working approach of white-collar employees, who do more initiative-based work in different departments of the enterprises, usually under the coordination of a manager (team leader), performing well and being successful is the product of a joint effort. For this, the team leader can use his strength and might. The power mentioned here comes not from the leader's position in the organization, but rather from the leader's contribution to the team members and the environment of trust established among them (Liden & Maslyn, 1998: 45). By supporting team members, gaining their trust, showing genuine interest in them, the team leader can make them happy and thus lead them to success. Here, the leader can use his power in a positive way by affecting the benefit of the employee. Thus, the intention to leave the job of white-collar employees, who are on a more slippery ground compared to blue-collar employees in terms of alternative and career, can be minimized (Di Fabio, 2017).

For leaders, there are psychological factors that need to be considered in order to create an environment called organizational climate, which is more attractive with the nourishment of positive emotions. The feeling of happiness is one of the first that comes to mind among these factors (González-Navarro, 2018). In the study of Solomon and Steyn (2017), effective leadership is important for retaining competent white-collar employees in a long-term competitive environment. It is important that leaders establish a high-level and strong positive relationship and communication with team members in order to increase the happiness levels (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2010), which are considered necessary for a white-collar workforce based on brain power and teamwork to be successful and productive.

In conclusion, it is important for leaders to establish a high level and strong positive relationship and communication with team members in order to increase the level of happiness (Bakker and Oerlemans, 2010), which is required for a workforce based on brain power and teamwork such as a white collar to be successful and productive.

Further research should focus on determining the mediating effect of some organizational and psychological factors such as work/life balance and workload. In addition, as can be understood from the results, management department is not a position that can only be obtained with professional competence and experience. It is important that department managers who lead the team receive motivation and communication training and that they are also motivated by the senior management.

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