The Effect of Authentic Leadership on Organizational Communication: The Mediating Role of Psychological Well-Being

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The purpose of this research is to determine the mediating role of psychological well-being in the effect of authentic leadership on organizational communication. For this purpose, the opinions of 439 teachers working in Istanbul in the 2020-2021 academic year were consulted. Hypotheses related to the model, which was created based on the theoretical framework, were tested by establishing the research. In the research, "correlation design," one of the quantitative research designs, was used, and Baron and Kenny's four-stage model was used to create and test the model. "Authentic Leadership Scale," "Communication Competence Scale," and "Psychological Well-Being Scale" were applied to the participants in the study. As a result of the research, it was found that authentic leadership highly affects organizational communication; It has been determined that psychological well-being has a partial mediating role in the significant positive effect of authentic leadership on organizational communication. In the research, according to the gender of the teachers, in the opinions of school administrators on communication competencies; shows that male teachers are higher than female teachers. In the research, according to the educational status of the teachers, the psychological well-being of undergraduate teachers was lower than that of graduate teachers. The most striking finding of the study is that authentic leadership highly affects organizational communication.

INTRODUCTION

Although many definitions have been proposed for 'leadership' which all have the common feature of directing, facilitating, structuring, organizing and influencing all the work done towards the purpose of an organization, no clear definition has been reached by social scientists, even today. Recent studies have determined that leadership involves "a life-long process" and "learnable/improvable and unique" features and characteristics (Aksoy, 2020; Maxwell, 2020; Yukl, 2018; Zel, 2011). Leadership as a concept has developed along several different approaches according to its various characteristics: in the characteristics approach, it is the characteristics of the leader which are explored; the behaviors exhibited by the leader are the focus in the behavioral approach and in the situational approach the attitudes of the leader in different situations are investigated. Today, with the modern/contemporary approaches, the reasons for a leader's behavior have started to be investigated and different leadership characteristics have been identified by considering the leader holistically (Yetgin, 2020). Different managerial needs point out the need to address the deficiencies of the previous approaches and the unanswered questions and inadequate aspects of modern approaches to leadership. The common feature of the current approaches is that "the relationship between the leader and his followers" comes to the fore. These approaches increase as new ones continue to emerge (Yılmaz, 2020).

The changes brought about by globalization, the negativities in the world, the loss of trust in the leader, social resistance and a range of concerns have led people to seek different leadership styles and the recent increase in interest in positive psychology and authentic leadership which focuses more on the concepts of trust and ethics and on the essence of the human being, separate from the previous leadership – charismatic, transformational, servant and ethical – has been revealed. Based on and nourished by the foundations of positive psychology, authentic leadership is focused on the truth of the leader and is still in its developmental stage (Coşar *et al.*, 2012; Northhouse, 2019; Oruç, 2020; Yukl, 2018). Authentic leadership means that the leader, who is also included in the content of positive psychology, has the characteristics of being "positive, sincere, reliable, transparent and self-assured". An authentic leader is someone who knows him/herself, has self-awareness, attaches importance to personal development, has moral values, acts without duplicity, has positive relations with followers, reveals the potentials of others like him/herself and is full of hope (Avolio *et al.*, 2004; Akyürek, 2020). Authentic leadership expresses the interaction and positive communication between the leader and the followers and also emphasizes communication between the leader and the followers within an organization (Eagly, 2005). Understanding the communication in organizations that are communities which have come together to serve a specific purpose is a process in which members of the organization mutually "value their ideas, feelings, and behaviors, try to understand, and exchange information and thoughts" (Etzioni, 1964, as cited in Aziz & Dicle, 2017). If there is no exchange of information and ideas among the

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members of an organization, the existence of the organization becomes untenable: this communicative relationship includes understanding; that is, that both parties can see the same picture. Communication is a force for "control, motivation, interaction and knowledge transfer" within an organization (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Interpersonal communication can be effective if it consists of openness, empathy (feeling what others are feeling), support (accepting), positivity and similarity (Tampubolon & Harati, 2019). Healthy communication within an organization is an expression of managerial power. Depending on this power, the organization shows efficiency and sustainability and has the key to success. In this regard, leaders must give their followers confidence, make clear, precise and accurate transfers, and in the same way, their followers must exhibit the same attitude towards their leader. The more open, honest and reliable the communication between the leader and the followers is, the easier it will be for the organization's success and goal to be achieved (Gülver, 2014). Authentic leadership, unlike other leadership approaches, is based on more positive values, self-awareness and a relationship of trust with followers (Yukl, 2018). Transparency in relationships is one of the dimensions of authentic leadership; it means that the leader's sincerity, trustworthiness and honesty towards the followers are at the highest level and it means sharing openly in all aspects of the organizational endeavor, exhibiting clear behavior and expecting the same transparency from the followers (Luthans *et al*., 2007; Gardner *et al*., 2005).

Positive psychology is a scientific field which forms the basis of authentic leadership. It focuses on searching for meaning, positive and virtuous aspects, strengths and the development of human beings (Peterson, 2006; Seligman & Csikszentmikalyi, 2000); it is a balancing act which focuses on developing the strengths of individuals and of communities (Göçen, 2019; Hefferon & Boniwell, 2018). It includes the experiences of the past (well-being and satisfaction), the present (hope and optimism) and the future (flow and happiness) in the individual, and in terms of individuality, it includes "love and professional capacity, courage, interpersonal skill, aesthetic sensitivity, perseverance, forgiveness, originality. It is about future-mindedness, spirituality, high talent and wisdom". The organizational field is about correct orientation such as "responsibility, care, altruism, kindness, moderation, tolerance and business ethics" (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The main purpose of positive psychology is to seek answers to questions about the positive traits which feel good and which of our strengths cause us to act (Işık, 2020). The concept of 'psychological well-being' in human beings includes "the individual realizing her/his potential, knowing herself/himself and accepting herself/himself as she/he is, establishing good relations with positive thinking and having a purpose in life" (Keyes *et al*., 2002). Psychological well-being has an important role in individuals' working lives and organizations, and previous studies have supported this (Demirci & Şar, 2017).

Studies have shown that authentic leadership comprises several different variables: the relationship between authentic leadership and psychological capital (Soylu, 2018), between authentic leadership and organizational commitment (Yaşbay, 2011); between authentic leadership and job satisfaction (Uslu, 2017) and the mediating role of psychological capital in the relationship between authentic leadership and organizational commitment (Büyükbeşe *et al*., 2019). The purpose of the current study is to determine the effect of authentic leadership on organizational communication and the mediating role of psychological well-being in this effect. The distinguishing feature of this study from other studies is that these three variables have not been studied together in the previous literature.

Authentic Leadership

Authentic leadership, which focuses on the reality and truth of leadership, is based on the word *authenticity* whose roots go back to Aristotle and Plato. Authenticity is the commitment to "the individual's core values, feelings, personality traits" and "depending on his life experiences, showing his essence, that is, all his wishes, desires, feelings, priorities, beliefs" in his actions by knowing and accepting; authenticity symbolizes the "self-identity" of the individual (Korkmaz, 2017; Ladkin & Spiller, 2013). Authentic leadership is based on positive psychology: for positive psychologists, authenticity means "reflecting one's self as one is"; behaving in accordance with one's essence, free from pretense and falsehood (Gardner *et al*., 2011; Goffee & Jones, 2005). The authentic leadership approach is based on promoting openness, which is important for innovation and creativity, and building trust between the leader and the followers, basing the validity of the leaders on ethical and moral grounds, and establishing respectful and honest relationships with their followers (Elrehail *et al*., 2018). Luthans and Avolio (2003) used the concept of originality by integrating positive psychology with existing leadership theories and drew profiles of leaders as "confident, hopeful, optimistic

and resilient" (Sparrowe, 2005). Authentic leadership is a developmental leadership model which develops self-awareness in the leader and frames a process for his followers which makes use of positive capacities in the organization, positive personal development, is happy, confident, optimistic and transparent, attaches importance to the development of his followers, is loyal and sets a model for his followers through his core values, beliefs and behaviors (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Because authentic leaders do not act selfishly and are not 'me-centric', a positive atmosphere is created within the organization, and thus the goals, mission and vision of the organization can be achieved successfully (Baykal, 2017).

Authentic leadership has many different definitions. Shamir and Eilam (2005) considered authentic leadership to be an "inner perspective" and defined authentic leaders as having "self-knowledge, self-regulation, self-concept, away from copying, developing by knowing their own experiences". Eagly (2005) considered authentic leadership to be an "interpersonal process" and emphasized the relationship and interaction between leader and follower. Avolio and Gardner (2005) and Gardner et al. (2005) defined authentic leadership as a process which can develop throughout life and whose course can change with lived events with a "developmental perspective". The theoretical perspective on which this current study is based is authentic leadership as defined by Walumbwa et al. (2008). Walumbwa et al. (2008) studied authentic leadership extensively: they regarded it as a form of leadership which has positive psychological qualities and an enhanced moral sense and which reflects these in the leader's behavior. In this context, they identified four components of authentic leadership: self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced action and relational transparency (Northouse, 2018). These four components were the basis of the Authentic Leadership Questionnaire developed by Walumbwa et al. (2008) which was used in the current study (Gardner et al., 2011).

The Components of Authentic Leadership

Self awareness: the Ancient Greek maxim 'Know thyself' refers to the importance of self-knowledge in all aspects; being aware of all your strengths and weaknesses, knowing your needs, desires, wishes, values and beliefs, being honest with yourself and acting primarily with these components as they are, and being empathetic to others. Individuals with high self-awareness are aware of how their emotions affect them and others, have high self-confidence, can evaluate themselves realistically, accept their mistakes and exhibit objective behaviors according to their own beliefs and values (Goleman, 2004; Yaşbay, 2011; Yılmaz, 2020). Self-awareness includes the ability to distinguish an event or process from others, perceiving and knowing the necessity of awareness and turning it into behavior, and enables leaders to recognize themselves in all aspects and take firm and decisive steps (Cüceloğlu, 2021a; Gardner et al., 2005).

Internalized moral perspective: this means self-regulation, which includes an individual's behavior consistent with his/her moral understanding, values and beliefs and guides the followers. It aligns with the leader's activities, beliefs and moral values, expressing self-worth before wanting to be liked by someone else (Northouse, 2018; Walumbwa et al., 2008). Leaders give confidence to their followers by making decisions in line with ethical standards (Karadağ & Öztekin-Bayır, 2018).

Balanced Transaction: leaders make evaluations on the principle of impartiality. They analyse and understand data accurately by making objective, transparent and fair analyses during the decision stages. By acting honestly, they manage the process without distorting, exaggerating or ignoring. They are as close to the perspectives of others as to their own. Such leaders make decisions for the benefit of the organization and its members (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Coşar et al., 2012; Northouse, 2018; Walumbwa et al., 2010).

Relational Transparency: this means that the individual is open, clear and honest with other people and does not hesitate to show his/her positive and negative sides, reflecting reality in communication. Establishing transparent communication ensures trust between the leader and the followers and achieving the goal in a healthy way. Relationships which work with sincerity can establish relationships far from falsehood by both sides knowing what is positive or negative about each other. Leaders take part in the organization with their real identity (Coşar et al., 2012; Gardner et al., 2005; Kernis, 2003; Walumbwa et al., 2008). Authentic leaders act with self-awareness, trust-based, open and transparent communication, and sharing (Robbins & Judge, 2019).

Organizational Communication – Educational Organizations

The purpose of communication is to be understood and understanding between individuals involves the sharing of any feelings, ideas or information; verbal, written or non-verbal, positive or negative effects, which can be one-way, two-way or more, including diversity; it is a tool for the interaction within communities consisting of individuals and distinguishes humans from other living things and reveals their superiority; it is a process which surrounds us in every aspect of our lives and will continue throughout our lives (Aziz & Dicle, 2017; Ertekin, 2017; Robbins & Judge, 2019; Zıllıoğlu, 2014). As soon as people notice each other, they communicate; not only words but also facial expressions, stance and gaze all have a meaning and people are in constant communication in their life adventures (Cüceloğlu, 2021b). Individuals need communication when presenting themselves, working with others, and ensuring work within an organization (Ertekin, 2017). Communication is a situation in which all individuals live and cannot escape in every area of life and in various ways because people live and work in society, in various organizations; in short, they socialize (Zıllıoğlu, 2014). Communication has exactly the same function within an organization. In line with the goals and objectives of the organization, its members are in a continuous process of sharing under the principle of cooperation. This sharing occurs and progresses with the power of communication. When the management approach is genuinely human-oriented, communication comes to the forefront by taking on a more sensitive aspect. Organizations unite for specific goals, and this unity enables the goals to be reached more accurately and easily through the robustness of communication. The fact that people are the main element of any organization necessitates communication as the principal activity (Eskiyörük, 2015). The existence of organizations also depends on this communication, on the exchange of messages. The effective functioning of the communication process means that the leader establishes problem-free and correct communication with his/her followers. As a result, the success of the organization is inevitable. Various factors can hinder communication, one of which is personal factors. Individuals' "emotions, values, habits, goals, trust, beliefs, attitudes" can cause different evaluations in sending and receiving messages between people (Koçel, 2018; Yıldız, 2019). Bursalıoğlu (2019) considered this factor to be psychological and expressed it as the "difference of opinion, emotions, excitements, obsessions and personal concepts". Mutual personal differences and uncertainty between the leader and the followers will always be an obstacle to communication. Even though perfect communication is challenging, it is possible to reach near perfect. There is a positive relationship between the effectiveness of communication (perception of trust, accuracy, openness/transparency) and the productivity of organizational members (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Communication plays an important part in every field of life, at every moment and in every organization, and educational organizations are no exception. Like every organization, educational organizations should have a correct communication network and policy which enable leaders and followers to achieve their goals. The most important factor affecting the healthy working of people in a social group is healthy communication (Güçlü, 2017). Educational organizations have a comprehensive organizational structure with administrators, teachers, students and parents. In this context, educational organizations reach their goals as a result of everyone working together. The good management of the organization is directly related to the leader, and the results of the leader's managerial style depend on his/her communication with the followers. The fact that communication is based on the principles of respect, trust and openness is at the top of the list of factors which will bring success. The integrity of an organization's 'nervous system' is maintained through communication (Ayeni & Akınola, 2020). The communication of school principals with their teachers, as leaders, is also important because teachers are at the center of achieving the goals of schools (Ayeni & Akinfolarin, 2014). An effective leader has the ability to successfully direct and mobilize all activities planned to achieve the organization's goals. Within the organization, the performance of the followers is affected by the communication with the leaders (Reza & Nugroho, 2020). It has been accepted that one of the most important dimensions of communication is "to try to understand first and then to be understood". It therefore has an important place as a competence which leaders and followers should develop (Wijewantha, 2018).

Psychological Well-Being

Positive psychology, unlike the traditional psychology approach, is what constitutes people's success; it focuses on their strengths and positive aspects such as happiness and creativity. It seeks to focus on the reasons for people's happiness, productivity and well-being, rather than what lies behind people's negative thoughts and behaviors. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) discussed the negative effects of concentrating on negativities and the importance of the development of individuals' strengths (Carr, 2016; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Uyar, 2019) and stated that "Well-being refers to what people think and how they feel

about their life, the cognitive and affective outcomes they reach when they evaluate their existence" (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Ryff (1989) discussed the concept of well-being, which is fed from the eudemonic point of view, in terms of accepting the negative aspects of the individual, having life goals, showing personal development and establishing environmental relations based on values, rather than focusing only on happiness and positive aspects: Ryff (1989) talked about the individual reaching his goals with the awareness of his potential by means of self-realization. Psychological well-being is a process with six sub-dimensions: self-acceptance; individual development; environmental dominance; autonomy; positive relationships with others and life purpose (Hefferon & Boniwell, 2018; Ryff, 1989). *Self-acceptance* is the acceptance of the experiences of the individual at the maturity level and the individual evaluates past and present negative experiences with positive emotions and develops positive thoughts. *Individual development* is the individual being open and willing to accept new life experiences, being able to see changes in himself and having a sense of struggle. *Environmental domination* is the individual's ability to be in an environment suitable for his own values and needs and to have control. *Autonomy* is the ability of the individual to make his own decisions and to have internal control with the ability of self-mastery. *Positive relationships with others* means that the individual establishes positive relations with others by showing empathy, building a relationship of trust and conducting relations within the framework of respect. *Life purpose* means that the individual uses his goals in life as motivation to determine his goals and adds meaning to his life by knowing the importance of the past and present in his life (Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Ryff & Singer, 2008). Csikszentmihalyi (2014) presented his main idea as "to focus on understanding how people perform at their best and what their experiences are when their business is doing well". Csikszentmihalyi (2014) regarded "to be intensely involved in every moment of the activity (physical or cognitive)" as the crucial flow, and advocated the necessity of feeding the individual with positive emotions in order to reach the flow (Hefferon & Boniwell, 2018). Previous studies have shown that people with high psychological well-being have established positive and harmonious relationships with their environment, can cope with problems more easily, act more freely with self-confidence, have self-control, have goals and lead a life in line with a purpose, attach importance to their development and care about development. It can be seen that their emotional intelligence is higher because of this (Deniz *et al*., 2017; İkiz & Asici, 2017; Ryff, 2014; Yakut & Yakut, 2018).

The changes experienced with globalization have affected leadership approaches as well as existing psychological views, and the need to focus on people and to understand people more, and the necessity of focusing more on understanding and being understood, which is the main element of communication, have come to the fore. Examination of the relevant literature shows that the effect of authentic leadership, which provides an environment of trust, is open and clear to its followers, coincides with its values as it is, and accepts itself with its past, and organizational communication and the mediator role of individuals' psychological well-being in this effect have not been previously studied in educational organizations. Using data obtained from teachers, the purpose of this current study is to examine the effect of authentic leadership on communication in educational organizations and the mediating role of psychological well-being in this effect. The important aspect of this research is to examine the relationship between the authentic leadership behaviors of school administrators and their followers in various dimensions. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the literature. It is predicted that in the coming years, the approach of leaders in educational organizations, the communication with their followers depending on this approach, and the sensitivity of positive psychology in an organization whose principal element is human, will be discovered in educational organizations as well as in every organization.

RESEARCH METHOD
Research Model

The purpose of this study is to determine the mediating role of psychological well-being in the effect of authentic leadership on organizational communication. The correlation design, one of the quantitative research designs, was employed. A correlation pattern is used to find and describe the effect or relationship between two or more variables (Creswell, 2019). Baron and Kenny's (1986) four-stage model was used to test the mediation relationship: there are three variables in the model, dependent, independent and mediator. In this model, there are three conditions which must be met for the mediating effect: the effect of the independent variable on the mediating variable (H2); the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable (H1); and when the effects of the mediator variable and the independent variable on the dependent variable are

considered together, the mediating variable should have a significant effect on the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. In this case, we can talk about 'full mediation' if the effect disappears completely, or 'partial mediation' if there is a decrease in the effect (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Yay et al., 2020). The hypotheses of the research and the intended theoretical model are given in Figure 1.

H_1. Authentic leadership affects organizational communication.

H_2. Authentic leadership affects psychological well-being.

H_3. Psychological well-being affects organizational communication.

H_4. Psychological well-being has a mediating role between authentic leadership and organizational communication.

Population and Sample of the Research

The universe of the research consists of teachers working in the Anatolian side of Istanbul, in the disricts of Üsküdar, Kadıköy, Beykoz, Maltepe, Sancaktepe and Pendik, in the 2020-2021 educational year. The sample was determined by the easy method and the data from 439 volunteer teachers were obtained by collecting the scales reported on Google forms on the digital platform. Of the total number of teachers, 302 (68.8%) were female and 137 (31.2%) were male. In terms of their years in teaching, 154 (35.1%) of the teachers had between one and ten years of service; 142 (32.3%) had 11-20 years and 143 (32.6%) had 21 years and above. In terms of their education level, 333 (75.9%) of the teachers had undergraduate and 106 (24.1%) had post-graduate qualifications.

Measurement Tools and Data Collection

In this study, a personal information form, the authentic leadership scale, the communication competence scale and the psychological well-being scale were used as data collection tools. The personal information form prepared by the researcher consisted of three questions asking about the gender, the length of professional service and the educational status of the participants. The authentic leadership scale was developed by Walumbwa et al. (2008) and adapted into Turkish by Tabak et al. (2010), and validity and reliability studies were conducted to ensure its suitability. The scale consists of four sub-dimensions (self awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced transaction and relational transparency) and sixteen items. It is a five-point Likert-type scale (1. Never, to 5. Always) and the reliability coefficient of the scale was found by Tabak et al. (2010) to be .90. In the current study, the reliability coefficient of the scale was calculated as .95. The communication competence scale was developed by Wiemann (1977) and adapted into Turkish by Topluer (2008). The scale consists of three sub-dimensions (understanding empathy, social comfort and supporting) and 31 items. It is also a five-point Likert-type scale (1. Never, to 5. Always). The reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be .96 by Toptaner [2008]. In the current study, the reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be .98. The psychological well-being scale was developed by Diener et al. (2009) and adapted into Turkish by Telef (2013). The scale consists of single dimension (pyschological well-being) and eight items. It is a seven-point Likert-type scale (1. I strongly disagree, to 7. I strongly agree). The reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be .80 by Telef (2013) and in the current study it was found to be .80. The data collection tools were applied online to the participants after permission from the Istanbul Provincial Directorate of National Education had been obtained. The acquired data were tested using regression analysis and the Sobel test was used to calculate the significance of the mediation effect.

Based on the assumption that the authentic leadership scale and the communication competency scale used in the research are equally spaced, the score interval coefficient for the arithmetical averages was calculated as 0.80. Scoring range = (highest value-lowest value) /5= 4/5 =0.80. Accordingly, the evaluation range of the arithmetical averages was as follows: 1.00-1.80 'very low' never, 1.81-2.60 'low' very rarely, 2.61-3.40 'moderate' sometimes, 3.41-4.20 'high' often, and 4.21 -5.00 'too high' all the time. Based on the assumption that the psychological well-being scale is equally spaced, the score interval coefficient for the arithmetical means was calculated as 0.86. Between 1.00-1.86 'strongly disagree', between 1.87-2.71 'disagree', between 2.72-3.57 'somewhat disagree', between 3.58-4.43 'undecided', between 4.44-5.29 'somewhat agree', between 5.30-6.14 'agree', and between 6.15-7.00 'strongly agree'.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this section, the findings of the research are presented. First, the results regarding whether the data were normally distributed according to the tests performed are given in Table 1. Values between +1.5 and -1.5 are accepted as normal distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). In Table 1, the data can be seen to be normally distributed according to these values.

Table 1. Skewness and kurtosis values of the variables

Variables	Skewness	Kurtosis
1. Authentic leadership	-,965	,490
2. Communication	-1,187	,766
3. Psychological well-being	-,565	,774

Table 2. T-test results of authentic leadership, communication and psychological well-being by gender

Variables	Gender	N	$\bar{x}$	Ss	t	p
Authentic leadership	Female	302	3,66	0,86	-1,95	,052
	Male	137	3,83	0,89	-1,92	
Communication	Female	302	3,85	0,92	-2,24	**,025**
	Male	137	4,06	0,85	-2,31	
Psychological well-being	Female	302	5,95	0,60	1,36	,172
	Male	137	5,86	0,69	1,29	

* p<.005

The t-test results of authentic leadership, communication and psychological well-being are given in Tables 2 and 3 after the data showed a normal distribution. Table 2 shows that there was a significant difference in the communication competencies of the teachers according to their gender. The significance and the average of communication competence is higher in the male teachers ($\bar{x}$=4.06, p<.005) than in the female teachers ($\bar{x}$=3.85, p<.005).

Table 3: T-test results of authentic leadership, communication and psychological well-being by educational background

Variables	Educational Background	N	$\bar{x}$	Ss	t	p
Authentic leadership	Undergraduate	333	3,71	0,87	-,292	,770
	Postgraduate	106	3,73	0,87	-,292	
Communication	Undergraduate	333	3,92	0,91	-,056	,955
	Postgraduate	106	3,92	0,88	-,057	
Psychological well-being	Undergraduate	333	5,88	0,65	-2,48	**,013**
	Postgraduate	106	6,05	0,54	-2,72	

* p<.005

In Table 3, the t-test results related to authentic leadership, communication and psychological well-being are given according to education level. These results show that psychological well-being showed a significant difference according to educational status: the psychological well-being of teachers with a postgraduate qualification ($\bar{x}$=6.05, p<.005) was more positive than that of the graduate teachers ($\bar{x}$=5.88, p<.005).

The arithmetical mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficient values between the variables of authentic leadership, organizational communication and psychological well-being are given in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4. Correlation Analysis Results

Variables	1	2	3
1.Authentic Leadership	1		
2. Communication	,85**	1	
3. Psychological Well-being	,17**	,19**	1
Mean	3,71	3,92	5,92
Standard Deviation	0,87	0,90	0,63

** p<.001

Table 4 shows that the general averages of authentic leadership perceived by the teachers were calculated as x̄=3.71, the general averages of organizational communication were x̄=3.92 and the general averages of psychological well-being were x̄=5.92. According to the teachers' opinions, school administrators' authentic leadership compliance and organizational communication scores were high (r=0.85, p<.001), their authentic leadership and psychological well-being scores were low (r=0.17, p<.001), and their psychological well-being scores were high (r=0.85, p<.001). A low (r=0.19, p<.001) and a positively significant relationship was found between the well-being and organizational communication scores. These findings support the H1, H2 and H3 hypotheses of the study.

Table 5. Descriptive Analysis Results

Variables	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Relational transparency	439	3,80	0,88
Internalized moral perspective	439	3,79	0,93
Balanced transaction	439	3,54	1,03
Self-awareness	439	3,65	1,00
Authentic leadership total	439	3,71	0,87
Understanding and empathy	439	3,94	0,97
Social comfort	439	3,86	0,84
Supporting	439	3,93	0,97
Communication competence total	439	3,92	0,90
Psychological well-being total	439	5,92	0,63

Table 5 shows the average values of the four sub-dimensions of authentic leadership: transparency in relationships was x̄=3.80; internalized morality was x̄=3.79; balanced evaluation of knowledge was found to be x̄=3.54 and self-awareness was x̄=3.65. The mean values of the three sub-dimensions of communication competence were understanding and empathy x̄=3.94; social comfort x̄=3.86 and support x=3.93.

The results of Baron and Kenny's (1986) four-stage regression analysis model used for testing the hypotheses are given in Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6. Regression Analysis

Hypothesis 1

Independent variable	Dependent variable	β	R²	t	Sig.
Authentic leadership	Communication	.855	.730	34,399	.000

Hypothesis 2

Independent variable	Mediator/dependent variable	β	R²	t	Sig.
Authentic leadership	Psychological well-being	.178	.032	3,773	.000

Hypothesis 3

Mediator/independent variable	Dependent variable	β	R²	t	Sig.
Psychological well-being	Communication	.193	.037	4,120	.000

In the first stage of the regression analysis carried out according to this model, it was found that authentic leadership, which was the independent variable, explained the dependent variable, organizational communication, by 73%, and authentic leadership had a positive and significant effect on organizational communication (β=.855, p<.001). In the second stage, it was found that authentic leadership, which was the independent variable, explained the mediating variable psychological well-being by 3%, and that authentic leadership had a significant positive effect on psychological well-being (β=.178, p<.001). In the third stage, it was found that psychological well-being, which was the independent variable, explained organizational communication by 4% and psychological well-being had a significant positive effect on organizational communication (β=.193, p<.001).

Table 7. Regression Analysis

Hypothesis 4						
Independent/ Mediator Variable	Dependent Variable	β	R²	t	Sig.	Sobel (z)/Sig.
Authentic leadership	Communication	.847	.732	33,623	.000	4.0859 /0.000
Psychological well-being		.043		1,704	.089	

In the fourth and final stage, the effects of authentic leadership, which was the independent variable, and psychological well-being, which was the mediating variable, on organizational communication were evaluated together and it was found that authentic leadership (β=.847, p<.001) and psychological well-being (β=.043, p<.001) had a positive and significant effect on organizational communication. However, the effect of authentic leadership on organizational communication (β value) was .855 when calculated alone. When the mediator variable was calculated with psychological well-being, it decreased to .847. This difference is explained by the fact that psychological well-being plays a partial mediating role in the positive and significant effect of authentic leadership on organizational communication. With the Sobel test, the mediating effect was found to be significant and the test result (Sobel (z)=4.059, p<.001) was significant. This finding supports the H4 hypothesis.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In this study, the relationship pattern between authentic leadership, organizational communication and psychological well-being in schools was examined according to the views of teachers. In the t-test results of the teachers according to their gender, the opinions of the school administrators on the communication competencies showed that the male teachers were higher than the female teachers. These results confirm those of Sağar and Parlak (2018), Demirkaya (2012) and Çelik (2013). Unlike the results of those studies, Bala (2017), Uzman (2019) and Çağlar and Çınar (2021) did not find a significant difference by gender. Considering the results of the current study, it can be said that female teachers' perceptions of their school administrators had a more sensitive perspective on communication skills and competencies.

In this study, according to the t-test results of the teachers' educational status, the psychological well-being of undergraduate teachers was lower than that of graduate teachers. Jeon *et al*. (2018) reported similar results, but the most common results in the literature are that there is no significant difference between the educational status of teachers and their psychological well-being (Altiparmak, 2019; Dinç, 2018; Ertürk *et al*., 2016; Köylü & Gündüz, 2019). Considering the results of this current study, it can be said that the postgraduate teachers' self-confidence, their greater awareness of their life goals and their personal development all had an effect.

The most striking finding of the study is that authentic leadership highly affects organizational communication. Jiang and Men (2017) found that authentic leadership significantly and positively affects communication; Lee *et al*. (2018) concluded that authentic leadership has a significant impact on internal communication and Basit and Siddigui (2020) found that authentic leadership has a significant effect on communication. All these findings coincide with the results of the current study and the H1 hypothesis was accepted. The characteristics of an authentic leader of establishing transparent, open and honest relationships and bringing trust and binding elements into the organization can be considered as an important factor in the high impact of the research. It can also be said that the power of communication within an organization is directly proportional to the leader's authentic leadership characteristics.

In the second step of the study, a positive and significant effect was found in the effect of authentic leadership on psychological well-being. It can be said that authentic leadership has a basis which will reveal a positive leadership style. Authentic leaders provide transparent leadership with their moral, ethical, truthful and righteous characteristics. Hülsheger and Schewe (2011) found that the individual well-being of leaders decreased when they displayed false emotions and behaviors. The fact that the natural and sincere relationships established by authentic leaders have a positive effect on their own psychological well-being coincides with the H2 hypothesis of this research, and results confirmed those of Weiss *et al*. (2018) and Yener (2018).

In the third step of the study, it was determined that psychological well-being had a positive and significant effect on organizational communication. This result confirms those of Jiang and Men (2017), Di Fabio (2017), Behzadi *et al*. (2020) and Mahmoudi *et al*. (2020). Psychological well-being is a concept which looks at the evaluation of individuals' mentality and life from a wide perspective and the positive effect of communication within an organization on the well-being of individuals confirms the H3 hypothesis. The high well-being of the individual is also an indicator of positive communication within the organization.

According to the results of the regression analysis in the final stage of the study, it was determined that psychological well-being had a partial mediating role in the significant positive effect of authentic leadership on organizational communication. When the third and fourth stages of the model test are compared, it can be seen that the β value decreased from 8.55 to 8.47. It can be said that this is a significant effect. The reasons why the difference between the two values is low are that psychological well-being is at the core of authentic leadership characteristics, and that in the positive psychology-based authentic leadership there is self-knowledge with transparent communication and the individual's awareness of meaningful, valuable and contented feelings in terms of evaluating his life.

The results show that authentic leadership significantly affects organizational communication. The sub-dimensions of authentic leadership (self-acceptance, self-awareness, transparency, honesty and moral and ethical high perception levels) are based on positive psychology. The reflection of this also brings about the well-being of the individual. An individual's knowing himself and being at peace with himself (in his past and

future goals) will also affect his communication with those around him. Communication within the organization will also be affected by the leadership characteristics of the leader. An environment of trust within an organization is a primary dimension which affects communication: this is a feature of an authentic leader which also exists in an individual with psychological well-being. The communication between people within an organization will also affect their work performance and the steps needed to reach the goals of the organization.

In the light of the results reported above, it is thought that the higher the authentic leadership characteristics of school leaders, the higher (and therefore the more effective) the communication will be within the school. It is therefore recommended that administrators working in educational organizations should make self-evaluations by knowing their authentic leadership characteristics in order to have a better communication with the organization. Educational administrators should aim to exhibit appropriate behaviors by knowing their managerial competencies and characteristics in order to be successful in their goals and objectives. They can follow academic studies on these subjects, receive support for their personal development and focus on their own strengths and weaknesses. The communication of administrators with teachers is very important. In this regard, the effects of other leadership styles on communication could be further studied with different variables. Managers have a responsibility to have self-awareness and to contribute to their own development in this direction. At the same time, the Turkish Ministry of National Education (MEB) should provide training to school administrators which includes the leadership skills which will maintain strong and effective communication. Because this study was carried out with teachers's perceptions of their school administrators as the participants, more in-depth research could be done with school administrators and in a mixed study in order to examine the issue from different perspectives. The effect of school administrators' leadership styles on organizational communication could also be studied using different mediator variables and could contribute to improving the communication skills of managers.

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