

Analysis of the Relationship between Teachers' Perceptions of Organizational Identification and Meaningful Work

Öğretmenlerin Örgütsel Özdeşleşme ile Anlamli İş Algıları Arasındaki İlişkinin Analizi

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ABSTRACT: Teachers that identify with their organizations and find meaning at work can contribute to their students and schools from various aspects. However, there is limited evidence on teacher perceptions of organizational identification and meaningful work in the literature. The present research aims to determine the relationship between teachers' organizational identification and meaningful work perceptions. This quantitative research is in correlational design. The sample of the research consists of 330 teachers working in Kahramanmaraş. The scales of meaningful work for educational organizations and organizational identification were used as data collection tools. In the analysis of the data, Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated, and regression analyses were performed. Research findings show that there is a positive, moderately significant relationship between organizational identification and meaningful work. Organizational identification is a significant predictor of meaningful work. Organizational identification has positive and moderately significant relationships with the sub-dimensions of meaningful work (meaning at work, transcendence at work, work relationships, meaning leadership at work, humility at work), and it is a significant predictor of these dimensions. Nevertheless, it shows no significant relationship with the dimension of search for meaning at work. Implications for identifying with organizations and meaningful work are discussed.

Keywords: Organizational identification, meaningful work, school, teacher.

ÖZ: Örgütleriyle özdeşleşen ve işte anlam bulan öğretmenler, öğrencilerine ve okullarına çeşitli yönlerden katkı sağlayabilir. Ancak, literatürde öğretmenlerin örgütsel özdeşleşme ve anlamli iş algılarına ilişkin sınırlı kanıt bulunmaktadır. Bu araştırma, öğretmenlerin örgütsel özdeşleşme ile anlamli iş algıları arasındaki ilişkiyi belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bu nicel araştırma ilişkisel desenedir. Araştırmanın örneklemini Kahramanmaraş'ta görev yapan 330 öğretmen oluşturmaktadır. Veri toplama aracı olarak eğitim örgütleri için anlamli iş ve örgütsel özdeşleşme ölçekleri kullanılmıştır. Verilerin analizinde Pearson korelasyon katsayısı hesaplanmış ve regresyon analizleri yapılmıştır. Araştırma bulguları, örgütsel özdeşleşme ile anlamli iş arasında pozitif, orta düzeyde anlamli bir ilişki olduğunu göstermektedir. Örgütsel özdeşleşme, anlamli işin anlamli bir yordayıcısıdır. Örgütsel özdeşleşme, anlamli işin alt boyutları (işte anlam, işte aşkınlık, iş ilişkileri, işte liderlik, işte tevazu) ile pozitif ve orta düzeyde anlamli ilişkilere sahip olmanın yanı sıra bu boyutların anlamli bir yordayıcısıdır. Buna karşın işte anlam arayışı boyutu ile anlamli bir ilişki göstermemektedir. Örgütsel özdeşleşme ve anlamli işe yönelik çıkarımlar tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Örgütsel özdeşleşme, anlamli iş, okul, öğretmen.

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Organizational identification is among the central concepts in the field of organizational behavior and has been increasingly receiving attention in management research (Edwards, 2005). Organizational identification is positively correlated with job engagement (Ji & Cui, 2021) and improves employee job satisfaction (Van Dick et al., 2004), while a high level of job satisfaction can also contribute to employees' cognitive and emotional involvement in work. The research literature shows that organizational identification positively affects teachers' job satisfaction, professional development, and job engagement (Guglielmi et al., 2014). Some researchers have investigated the relationship between identification with school and teacher well-being and found that identification is positively related to colleague support and negatively associated with teacher burnout (Avanzi et al., 2018). However, understanding how the interconnection between teachers and school principals in educational institutions will be affected by organizational identification can give significant clues to stakeholders and schools (Dinçman, 2021). As a matter of fact, it has been shown that trust in the school principal can affect job performance, learning-oriented orientation, and organizational citizenship behavior through organizational identification and job engagement (Chughtai & Buckley, 2009).

Moreover, organizational identification is expected to contribute to the creation of meaning at work (Schnell et al., 2019). Thus, the concept of organizational identification can affect the meaning at work and have an important place in educational organizations. This study focuses on the relationship between organizational identification and meaningful work and examines whether organizational identification predicts meaningful work. As a matter of fact, while it has been determined in various studies that meaningful work predicts organizational identification (Cohen-Meitar et al., 2009; Demirtas et al., 2015; Ouwerkerk & Bartels, 2022), we assume, like Schnell et al. (2019), that organizational identification may be an antecedent of meaningful work because we expect that teachers who identify with their organizations will increase their sense of meaningful work and thus contribute more to their students and schools.

Conceptual Framework

Organizational Identification

Organizational identification has the potential to define and predict many key behaviors and attitudes in the workplace and is considered a psychological state that reflects the fundamental bond that exists between the organization and the employee (Edwards, 2005). While organizational identification is complex in nature, the key point is that it addresses relationships between organizations and individuals. This link indirectly affects the total performance and development of the organization, so it should be regarded as an essential part of organizational behavior (Fuchs, 2012). Organizations are consequential groups with which individuals can identify at various levels. Social identity theory, in which the concept of identification is addressed, is used to define and explore the psychological basis of intergroup behavior and outgroup discrimination. It specifies the elements of identification, as well as provides estimates of the conditional variability of identification. In this context, self-categorization theory, which indicates whether people describe themselves in terms of social identity, personal, and which group is related to behavior in the case of distinctive social identities, contributed to the assumptions of social identity theory by addressing the

behaviors of in-group members. The self-categorization theory asserts that individuals can consider themselves at certain levels, such as personal, middle or group, and upper (Van Dick, 2001). Hence, the concept of organizational identification has areas where the researchers may address each of these levels to reveal specifically the effects of themselves, their groups, administrations, or other factors on individuals' identification with their institutions.

Identification with the organization has been seen as a critical factor for understanding work behavior (Lee, 1971). Organizational identification is defined as a perception of sharing the experiences and characteristics of group members (Mael & Tetrick, 1992). Conversely, identification can also have negative effects on the organization. These may arise from conflicting identities between different focus and prototypical in-group norms and also may cause over-identification that can lead to the unconditional follow-up of organizational rules and the prevention of innovation initiatives (Van Dick, 2001). However, if used as an effective tool to increase organizational functioning and performance, organizational identification can help achieve the desired results. The effect of organizational identification on the success of the organization is hidden in the behaviors of the employees to contribute to the organizational goals. This is facilitated when organizational goals and individuals' goals are aligned, so there is also theoretical and empirical evidence that organizations perform better (Fuchs, 2012). In this direction, it can be assumed that teachers who identify with their schools can have a more positive effect on students' learning.

Meaningful Work

People require meaning in their lives. This meaning is a bridge from negative emotion led by negative life experiences to positive emotion through restructuring cognitively (O'Connor, 2003). In order to understand what the meaning of life means, the concepts of adaptation, purpose, and importance can be discussed: Adaptation means a sense of being understood and giving meaning to one's life. Purpose refers to key goals, purposes, and a sense of guidance in life. Importance, however, is about the intrinsic value of life and the feeling of having a valuable life (Martela & Steger, 2016). Studies on meaning in life examine a person's basic orientation to the world by addressing everything that is critical for a person's past, present, and future (Steger, 2012). In this context, the meaning people seek in their work, which is a part of their life, also has an important place in making sense of their life.

Meaningful work has been a body of growing research in recent years, with an understanding of the importance of meaningfulness for commitment, work motivation, and well-being. However, various researchers use partially overlapping, partially different conceptualizations (Martela & Pessi, 2018). The concept of 'meaningful work' refers to the positive meaning of the job that individuals experience as significant in the relevant literature. The meaning of work has two sources: the self (values, motivation, beliefs) and others (co-workers, leaders, communities and groups, family) (Rosso et al., 2010). Work meanings represent a significant part of how employees see their experience in their organization. There are two kinds of meanings related to work. These are the tasks and activities themselves (the content) and the meaning formed by assessing those tasks and activities. The meaning of work is fluid and can be configured while doing the work. Therefore, it is not constant (Wrzesniewski et al., 2003). How

people make sense of their work positively affects their individual development, the groups, and the organizations they find themselves a part of. Ultimately, individuals' deciding what role they will play in the life stage can enable them to find deeper meaning in work (Wrzesniewski, 2003). However, meaningful work has been found to be the foremost protector of well-being and burnout, but attention has also been drawn to studies showing that it can be a potential source of burnout because it causes working beyond its limits (Correia & Almeida, 2020). Therefore, within the scope of meaning at work as a motivational construct, the sense of self and the sense of balance stand out as critical dimensions besides the work itself (Chalofsky, 2003). Namely, it is important for employees to find a balance between work and life, no matter what organization they are in.

Meaningful work can be a source for a person to maintain a satisfactory work life in line with the values he/she has and to develop a transpersonal relationship at work. For teachers, practicing their profession has a special meaning in terms of the process of serving society and transferring social values, apart from the purpose of income. Due to the dignity of teaching, the meaning that society ascribes to this profession is also high. However, what makes the work meaningful is the meaning that the teacher ascribes to his/her job rather than the meaning and sanctity that society ascribes to the professional or the job. A teacher's sense of meaningful work can assume the role of either a mere educator or a savior in the eyes of students (Göçen & Terzi, 2019). That draws attention to the role of the teachers in conveying social values to students and preparing them for the future more effectively, thanks to the fact that the teachers find their jobs meaningful.

The Relation between Organizational Identification and Meaningful Work

Meaningful work is related to engagement, social support, organizational commitment, organizational identification, psychological ownership, and socio-moral climate. Research on these concepts deals with the attitudes and relationships of employees towards co-workers, supervisors, and higher-level social systems (such as work teams or the organization) (Schnell et al., 2019). In this context, a study by Ouwerkerk and Bartels (2022) on identification, meaningful work, organizational behavior, and job insecurity during the coronavirus shutdowns included employees from over 14 industries in the Netherlands. Similarly, the effects of professional identification, organizational justice, empathy, and meaningful work on burnout in doctors and nurses during the coronavirus pandemic were examined (Correia & Almeida, 2020). Akdoğan et al. (2016) investigated the strategic effect of social responsibility on organizational identification and meaningful work through ethical leadership perceptions. The data were gathered from the workers of an aviation company in Turkey. In another study on aviation workers, Demirtas et al. (2015) analyzed the effect of ethical leadership on organizational identification, follower engagement, and jealousy through meaningful work. One of these studies (Ouwerkerk & Bartels, 2022) included a small number of employees from the education sector.

Some other recent studies regarding teachers in the related literature are as follows: the relationship between teachers' reasons for whistleblowing, organizational cynicism and identification (Kaya et al., 2022), and the association between teachers' perceptions of meaningful work and their decision-making styles (Göçen et al., 2021),

the level of meaningful work among teachers and the relevant factors (Toptaş, 2018), the relationship between perceptions of total reward, work engagement, and organizational identification among Chinese kindergarten teachers (Ji & Cui, 2021), organizational change facilitated by the motivation of change agents through organizational identification and meaning (Specht et al., 2018). Furthermore, meta-analyses on organizational identification (Lee et al., 2015) and meaningful work (Allan et al., 2018) show that organizational identification is highly associated with key attitudes (work involvement, affective organizational commitment, and job satisfaction) and behaviors in organizations while meaningful work has relationships with commitment, work engagement, and job satisfaction; links with life meaning, life satisfaction, withdrawal intentions, general health; and associations with self-rated job performance, organizational citizenship behaviors, and negative affect. These results indicate that organizational identification and meaningful work have related concepts.

This research aims to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of organizational identification and meaningful work. It is thought that the identification of teachers with their institutions and the level of meaningfulness of their work in educational institutions and studies on these topics can contribute to students, teachers, and schools. In this context, teachers who identify with their school and find their work meaningful are more likely to take action to increase school success. Therefore, this research is expected to provide evidence to the literature in terms of revealing the relationship between meaningful work and identification perceptions of teachers in educational organizations. The relevant literature shows that the studies regarding teachers' perceptions of meaningful work and organizational identification are limited. Since little is known about the relationship between teachers' organizational identification and meaningful work perceptions, it is considered important that studies on this subject have the potential to provide evidence on identifying with organizations and experiencing meaningful work. Moreover, it is thought that the findings can bring new perspectives to organizations and administrators. From this point of view, the present research examines whether there is a relationship between teachers' organizational identification and meaningful work perceptions, and answers have been sought to the following questions:

1. What is the level of teachers' organizational identification and meaningful work perceptions?
2. Is there a significant association between teachers' organizational identification and meaningful work perceptions?
3. Do teachers' perceptions of organizational identification predict meaningful work perceptions?

Method

Research Design

This study is quantitative research in correlational design. Correlational designs are quantitative research procedures in which researchers consider the degree of relationship between two or more variables by using the correlational analysis statistically (Creswell, 2015). Since this study aims to reveal the link between teachers'

organizational identification and meaningful work perceptions, the correlational design enables the researchers to investigate this relationship.

Population and Sample

The population of this research includes 8957 teachers working in Kahramanmaraş province in the 2021-2022 academic year. The sample of the study comprises 330 participants determined with the simple random sampling technique providing equal probability of teachers' participation in the study. After the sample group was formed, the measurement tool form was reproduced as 420 pieces. The researcher collected the research data from the teachers who voluntarily wanted to participate within the scope of the research population. Before starting the analysis of the data, 23 forms that were found to be incompletely filled were excluded from the evaluation, and data analyses were conducted with 330 returned forms. The return rate of the measurement tool forms taken into the evaluation was 78.5%. Table 1 presents information about the teachers in the sample group.

Table 1

Demographic Information of Participants

Variables		<i>N</i>	Percent (%)
Gender	Female	202	61.2
	Male	128	38.8
Age	30 years and below	168	50.9
	31-40 years	120	36.4
	41-50 years	32	9.7
	51 years and over	10	3.0
Specialty	Preschool	51	15.5
	Primary school	104	31.5
	Secondary School	175	53.0
Faculty that they graduated	Faculty of Education	287	87.0
	Other	42	13.0
Professional seniority	0-5 years	135	40.9
	6-10 years	111	33.6
	11-19 years	53	16.1
	20 years and over	31	9.4
Total		330	100

It can be stated, according to Table 1, that the teachers participating in the research show sufficient diversity in terms of gender, age, specialty, faculty that they graduated from, and professional seniority. The high number of female participants means that female teachers are more involved in this task than males; On the other hand, the high number of teachers under the age of 40 and with seniority of less than 11 years can be explained by the low average age of teachers across the country.

Data Collection Tools

The research used a personal information form, the meaningful work scale for educational organizations, and the organizational identification scale as data collection tools. The researchers developed the personal information form. The form includes questions about age, gender, branch, graduation, graduated faculty, and professional seniority.

‘Meaningful Work Scale for Educational Organizations’ was developed by Göçen and Terzi (2019) and it has 21-item and 6-dimensions (Meaning at Work, Work Relationships, Search for Meaning at Work, Transcendence at Work, Meaning Leadership at Work, Humility at Work). To test its validity, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied in the Amos 22 program and the six-dimensional structure was examined. DFA results [$\chi^2/df=2.01$; AGFI=.88; GFI=.91; NFI=.90; CFI=.94; RMSEA=.05] showed that the scale had construct validity. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency value for the scale’s reliability was calculated as .82 in general; .84 for meaning at work, .81 for Search for Meaning at Work, .89 for Work Relationships, .73 for Transcendence at Work, .72 for Humility at Work, and .78 for Meaning Leadership at Work.

‘The Organizational Identification Scale’ was developed by Mael and Ashforth (1992), and the adaptation into Turkish was made by Şahin (2014). The scale has six items and one dimension. To test its validity, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was applied in the Amos 22 program and the one-dimensional structure was examined. DFA results [$\chi^2/df=1.58$; AGFI=.95; GFI=.98; NFI=.95; CFI=.98; RMSEA=.04] showed that the scale had construct validity. The Cronbach Alpha value for the scale’s reliability was calculated as .84.

Data Analysis

The data collected through printed forms were transferred to Microsoft Excel, then SPSS before starting the data analysis. SPSS 25.0 program was used in the analysis of the data. Data distribution was tested. Since the calculated kurtosis and skewness values were between -1.5 and +1.5 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013), the data were considered to be normally distributed. For this reason, parametric tests were used. Analyses such as arithmetic mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation test, and regression were used. Limits regarding the level of perceptions in the measurement tools used in the research were determined. While determining these limits, the level range was accepted as 0.80 (Score Range=Highest value-Least value/N). The values between 1.00-2.59 was interpreted as low level, 2.60-3.39 as moderate (medium), 3.40-5.00 as high. A correlation coefficient between 0.1 and 0.3 indicates a low level, values between .3 and .5 show that the relationship is moderate (medium), and values greater than .5 indicate a high level of relationship (Field, 2018). The significance level was accepted as $p<.05$ in the analysis of the data. Table 2 includes the measures of central tendency of variables and kurtosis-skewness coefficients.

Table 2

Measures of Central Tendency of Variables and Kurtosis-Skewness Coefficients

	Arithmetic Mean	Median	Mode	Coefficient of Skewness	Standard Error of Skewness	Coefficient of Kurtosis	Standard Error of Kurtosis
Meaningful Work (General)	3.9903	3.9524	4.00	.098	.134	.551	.268
Meaning at work	4.2986	4.4000	4.00	-.831	.134	1.225	.268
Search for Meaning at Work	2.9747	3.0000	2.00	.089	.134	-.766	.268
Work Relationships	3.9939	4.000	4.00	-.567	.134	.389	.268
Transcendence at Work	4.2040	4.0000	4.00	-.278	.134	.007	.268
Humility at Work	4.2505	4.0000	4.00	-.315	.134	-.614	.268
Meaning Leadership at Work	4.0157	4.0000	4.00	-.096	.134	-.246	.268
Organizational Identification	3.3238	3.500	3.50	-.152	.135	-.975	.270

Table 2 shows that the values of skewness and kurtosis are between -1.5 and +1.5. These values show the normal distribution. Therefore, parametric statistics were used in this study.

Ethical Procedures

This study was found ethically appropriate by the Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research Ethics Committee of Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam University with its decision dated 09.07.2021 and numbered E. 43426.

Results

The study examined the levels of teachers' organizational identification and meaningful work perceptions by considering the dimensions. The findings are given in Table 3.

Table 3

Findings Regarding Levels of Organizational Identification and Meaningful Work

Scale and Dimensions	<i>N</i>	\bar{X}	<i>Ss</i>
Meaningful Work (General)	330	3.99	.38
Meaning at work	330	4.29	.53
Search for Meaning at Work	330	2.97	1.02
Work Relationships	330	3.99	.67
Transcendence at Work	330	4.20	.55
Humility at Work	330	4.25	.59

Meaning Leadership at Work	330	4.01	.59
Organizational Identification	330	3.32	.86

Table 3 indicates that the average of teachers' perceptions of organizational identification is 3.32 (moderate) and the general average of meaningful work perceptions is 3.95 (high). It is determined that the search for meaning at work dimension of the meaningful work scale is at a medium level and the other dimensions were at a high level.

Pearson's Correlation Analysis was done to determine whether there was a relationship between teachers' organizational identification and meaningful work perceptions. The findings are given in Table 4.

Table 4

Pearson's Correlation Analysis Results Regarding the Relationships between Organizational Identification and Meaningful Work

	Meaning at work	Search for Meaning at Work	Work Relationships	Transcendence at Work	Humility at Work	Meaning Leadership at Work	Meaningful Work	Organizational Identification
Meaning at work	1							
Search for Meaning at Work	-.080	1						
Work Relationships	.414*	-.036	1					
Transcendence at Work	.603*	-.033	.375*	1				
Humility at Work	.365*	-.066	.213*	.391*	1			
Meaning Leadership at Work	.444*	.118*	.297*	.401*	.357*	1		
Meaningful Work	.740*	.346*	.644*	.691*	.546*	.671*	1	
Organizational Identification	.334*	-.028	.302*	.381*	.191*	.271*	.381*	1

$N=330$; * $p<.05$

The findings in Table 4 show that there is a positive and moderate relationship between organizational identification and meaningful work perceptions ($r=.381$; $p<.05$). When the dimensions of the meaningful work scale are examined in particular, it is understood that similar findings are obtained and that there is positive significant relationships between organizational identification and meaning at work, work relationships, transcendence at work, humility at work, and meaning leadership at work dimensions. However, it is seen that there is no significant correlation between organizational identification and the search for meaning at work dimension.

A simple regression test was conducted to reveal the extent to which teachers' organizational identification perceptions predicted meaningful job perceptions. The obtained findings are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Simple Regression Analysis Results Regarding Organizational Identification Predicting Meaningful Work

Predictive Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>Std. E.</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	3.420	.079		43.043	.000
Organizational Identification	.171	.023	.381	7.404	.000
<i>R</i> =.381	<i>F</i> ₍₁₋₃₂₂₎ =54.814				
<i>R</i> ² =.145					

Dependent Variable: Meaningful Work

As seen in Table 5, organizational identification was revealed to be a significant predictor of meaningful work perceptions ($R=.381$; $R^2=.145$; $p<.05$). According to the findings, teachers' perceptions of organizational identification explain 14.5% of meaningful work perceptions.

Simple regression tests were done to reveal the extent to which organizational identification predicted the sub-dimensions of meaningful work. The search for meaning dimension was not included in this analysis because it did not have a significant relationship with organizational identification. The findings are shown in Table 6 and Table 7.

Table 6

Regression Analysis Results Regarding Organizational Identification Predicting Sub-Dimensions of Meaningful Work

Dependent Variables	Meaning at work				Work Relationships				Transcendence at Work			
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Organizational Identification	.207	.334	6.356	.00	.236	.302	5.695	.00	.247	.381	7.403	.00
<i>F</i>	40.396				32.430				54.808			
<i>R</i>	.334				.302				.381			
<i>R</i> ²	.111				.091				.145			

Table 6 shows that Organizational identification is a significant predictor of meaning at work ($R=.334$; $R^2=.111$; $p<.05$), work relationship ($R=.302$; $R^2=.091$; $p<.05$), and transcendence at work ($R=.381$; $R^2=.145$; $p<.05$) variables. Organizational identification explains 11% of the variance for the meaning at work sub-dimension, 9% of the variance for work relationships sub-dimension, and 14% of the variance for the transcendence at work sub-dimension.

Table 7

Regression Analysis Results Regarding Organizational Identification Predicting Sub-Dimensions of Meaningful Work

Dependent Variables	Humility at Work				Meaning Leadership at Work			
	<i>B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Organizational Identification	.132	.191	3.490	.00	.187	.271	5.047	.00
<i>F</i>	12.180				25.472			
<i>R</i>	.191				.271			
<i>R</i> ²	.036				.073			

Table 7 shows that Organizational identification is a significant predictor of humility at work ($R=.191$; $R^2=.036$; $p<.05$), and meaning leadership at work variables ($R=.271$; $R^2=.073$; $p<.05$). Organizational identification explains 3% of the variance for humility at work sub-dimension, and 7% of the variance for meaning leadership at work sub-dimension.

Discussion and Conclusion

This research aims to determine the relationship between teachers' perception levels of organizational identification and meaningful work. In addition to this main purpose, teachers' organizational identification and meaningful job perception levels were determined, and it was revealed whether organizational identification was a significant predictor of meaningful work perceptions. The findings show that teachers' organizational identification perceptions are moderate and meaningful work perception levels are high. In the study by Toptaş (2018), it was seen that teachers' levels of finding their jobs meaningful are high. In this context, educators who identify with their organizations show emotional and normative commitment by following the mission of their institutions and expressing their affection for their students and institutions. Yet, participants who have not been identified are likely to leave their institutions (Orphan & Broom, 2021). However, people with a high sense of meaningful work do their jobs with a sense of service and benefit to a much wider community than themselves. The sense of meaningful work in educational organizations appears as the teacher's interpretation and action in the context of a necessary compass that guides the future of society. The fact that teachers, who have the chance to touch the lives of thousands, perform their profession in the form of service to the society in a higher purpose beyond letters and supports the self-realization of teachers who feel this (Göçen & Terzi, 2019). Therefore, the fact that teachers identify with their schools and have a high meaningful work perception indicates that they can make significant contributions to the society through their students and schools.

According to another result of the research, there is a positive, moderate relationship between organizational identification and meaningful work perceptions of teachers. In addition, organizational identification is a significant predictor of meaningful work perceptions. When the dimensions of the meaningful work scale were examined specifically, it was seen that there was a significant association between

organizational identification and the dimensions of meaning at work, transcendence at work, work relationships, meaning leadership at work, humility at work, and organizational identification was a significant predictor of these dimensions. The order of importance in explaining these dimensions was as follows: Transcendence at Work, Meaning at work, Work Relationships, Meaning Leadership at Work, Humility at Work. The literature shows similar results. Some studies (Akdoğan et al., 2016; Correia & Almeida, 2020; Demirtas et al., 2015) discovered moderately positive relationships between meaningful work and organizational identification. Similarly, moderately positive significant relationships were found between positive meaning and identification with the organization and colleagues (Ouwerkerk & Bartels, 2022). While the literature showed that meaningful work predicts organizational identification, organizational identification predicts meaningful work as seen in the present research. In this context, the research findings support the researchers (Schnell et al. 2019) who assert that both causal aspects are plausible and possibly mutually influencing and reinforcing each other when considering organizational identification and meaningful work. Accordingly, it can be stated that teachers' finding their work meaningful may affect identifying with their schools or vice versa.

In this study, a different finding shows no significant association between organizational identification and the dimension of seeking meaning at work. In other words, although there is a low negative correlation between search for meaning at work dimension and organizational identification, this is not statistically significant. As a matter of fact, this finding can be interpreted that identifying with their organizations is not associated with the search of meaning at work. As meaning makers, leaders identify their followers' meanings with those of their organizations and can inspire beyond these legal ties. However, it can protect employees like teachers from emotional problems (Göçen, 2021). Thus, meaningful work can be seen as a structure that is compatible with the individuals, enabling them to realize themselves and contribute to society. In other words, meaningful work is the work in which the individuals find themselves and identify. Meaningful work can serve the individual goals and needs of employees through organizational behavior (Toptaş, 2018). In this context, Van Dick (2001) emphasizes that while it is argued that organizational identification is more important for many people than other categories such as age, gender, or ethnicity to which they belong, the organizational groups (teams, work groups etc.) how well it performs compared to other groups also depends on the individual efforts of each member. Thus, members should help their organizations become better. According to this point of view, members of the organization are expected to show participation, in-role and out-of-role behaviors, low absenteeism to build or improve their self-esteem. Therefore, teachers who identify with their organizations and develop self-esteem are expected to find meaning at work.

There is some evidence showing positive relationships between teachers' work engagement and organizational identification, job performance, learning-based orientation and organizational citizenship behavior (Chughtai & Buckley, 2009). In this context, recognizing the similarities and differences of people in work groups can improve identification, and that increases the performance. These effects can be seen directly applicable by managers when dealing with and structuring work teams, determining rewards etc. (Van Dick, 2001). Organizational identification is seen as a

significant predictor of work motivation, as identified workers can engage in behaviors that benefit their workgroup or organization (Ouwkerk & Bartels, 2022). However, meaning at work consists of evaluations conveyed by various people experienced at work. The interpersonal dynamics that arise between people in the workplace create a strong context of work meanings. The ability to comprehend the process allows employees to reach the deeper meaning of on-the-work experience. The meaning of work can be considered as an emerging feature of the social scene at work. This subject, which is treated as individual processes, has rich relational foundations. While emphasizing the role of others in the workplace, the active role that employees play in creating work meaning through interpersonal meaning is also important. As a matter of fact, the social context draws attention to the roles of others in making sense of work (Wrzesniewski et al., 2003). Hence, it can be said that teachers' relationships with their colleagues and school administration, which are factors that affect their identification with their school, have an important role in teachers' perceptions of making sense of work. In addition, the school administrators' knowing their teachers well can contribute to this identification and meaningful work processes.

Organizations should actively support and foster managers' capacity to rethink work environments and cultures to foster greater sentiments of meaningful work. Additionally, by putting the "job crafting" idea into practice, organizations can encourage their staff to have more meaningful work experiences. Additionally, it is the responsibility of senior management to concentrate on aspects of the job that could alter employees' personal needs and make them view their work as having more meaningful (Ghadi et al., 2015). Meaningful leadership can contribute to self-realization of members in educational organizations, and provide an intrinsic motivation factor for all school members. In qualitative research with teachers, ten main themes about meaningful leadership emerged (Göçen, 2021): a high purpose in life, connecting the past- present-future, allocation of meaning, peacefulness, insight, serving others, a moral compass, fostering unity, and inner motivation. In a similar study on how leaders can build their meaningful work and their employees' meaningful work (Frémeaux & Pavageau, 2022), 42 interviews with leaders were conducted. It is discussed how leaders make sense of leadership practices, which are accepted as contributing factors to meaningful work in the relevant literature. New components of meaning associated with leadership effectiveness have been identified as moral exemplary, personal/professional support, self-awareness, community spirit, commitment to collaborative work, and a positive attitude towards situations and individuals.

With a meaningful and democratic division of work instead of a hierarchical division of work, all employees who can participate in shaping an institution's policies have the opportunity to act as autonomous individuals and encourage their autonomous development (Schwartz, 1982). However, organizational communication can play a very important role in maintaining a sense of identification. In this context, research is needed on how face-to-face and electronic communication can contribute to this. As a matter of fact, it has been determined that the lockdowns due to Covid 19, the employees find their jobs less meaningful, and they identify less with their colleagues and work (Ouwkerk & Bartels, 2022). On the other hand, many people want meaningful work. There are also numerous books, seminars and websites to help people find meaning and purpose in their work (Steger et al., 2012). By taking these factors

into account, administrators and policymakers in schools should support teachers in terms of autonomy, participation in decisions, cooperation, feedback, and development opportunities, so that the development of a sense of meaning for teachers is possible with the preparation of an environment where teachers can experience the feeling of being a contributor (Göçen & Terzi, 2019). Thus, school administrations and senior administrations should employ practices that will increase the level of organizational identification and meaningful work perceptions of teachers.

Limitations and Recommendations

This research is limited to the participation of teachers working in a province in Türkiye. Moreover, the fact that only the teachers working in public schools constitute the sample of the research is seen as a limitation. Future research can include teachers in different provinces and private schools. Besides, researchers can examine how school administrators, colleagues, and senior management affect teachers' perceptions of organizational identification and meaningful work. The effect of these situations on student achievement can also be investigated. Mixed methods research can be conducted with teachers and school administrators to expand the literature evidence on organizational identification and meaningful work.

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Statement of Responsibility

Salih Yılmaz; Conceptualization, methodology, software, validation, formal analysis, investigation, resources, data curation, writing-original draft, writing-review & editing, visualization. Ahmet Kaya; Supervision, resources, data curation, review & editing, project administration.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest within this study.

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