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## **Examining the Effect of Ethical Work Environment and Leadership Styles on Employees' Career Satisfaction in Organizations**

*Örgütlerde Etik Çalışma Ortamının ve Liderlik Tarzlarının Çalışanların Kariyer Memnuniyetine Etkisinin İncelenmesi*

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**Abstract:** Human resources policies continue as a concept that constantly renews and improves itself. Training and personal development opportunities are provided both to increase the performance of employees as a result of the competitive environment and the expectation that the performance criteria (a determiner of the motivation of employees) is realized. When employee satisfaction starts to decrease in organizations, the intention to leave in organizations starts to increase. In terms of human resources policies, these development opportunities are aimed at keeping challenges to a minimum. And, as a result, the performance of the companies increases based on the leadership roles of the senior managers, in addition to the human resources policies implemented. The leadership style and human resources policies of the managers shape the future of the organization. As a result of the research, we better understand how important leadership and a desirable working environment is for organizations. Thanks to the studies conducted in these areas, it is important that senior managers set an example for the decisions they make and contribute to shaping their leadership roles. In this context, we aim to examine the career satisfaction levels of white-collar employees working in the furniture industry against their leadership styles in an ethical working environment. The data obtained from the research were collected from the furniture producing companies in the marmara region where 388 white-collar employees were surveyed in 2019. Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS 25 and AMOS programs. Firstly, factor analysis and reliability analysis were performed for the validity of the scales representing the variables. Correlation analysis was used to analyze the relationships between variables and regression analysis was used to test hypotheses. The Sobel test was used to analyze the mediation effect. As a result of the research and as stated by the analysis, the change of

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leader members and transparent leadership have positive effects, but visionary leadership has no positive effect.

**Structured Abstract:** In order for organizational goals to be realized, organizations need leaders who work towards organizational goals by collaborating with employees. Leaders carry out activities that have effective characteristics within the organization: to develop the vision and mission of the organization, to make decisions about achieving goals, and to persuade people. There are different definitions of leadership. The concept of human resources and management emerged as a means for an organization to achieve its purpose. Where there are people, the mention of the words satisfaction and performance come together with management, leadership, rules, and discipline, and have been explained in previous studies. It is not possible for organizations to carry out their activities only with management and leaders. The concept of positive leadership that ensures the unity of employees, involves accepting faults and mistakes, offering solutions in the face of problems, saying let's do it all together, is active, self-confident, knows how to empathize in human relations, and provides trust and satisfaction in the organization. This study reveals the relationship between the leader and the career satisfaction of employees in an ethical working environment. It is known that employees in leadership theories adopt a certain leadership style. Generally, the leadership style adopted is a positive directional leadership style. The leader-member exchange theory makes it clear that leaders do not interact with a single leadership style towards employees. Studies conducted in the literature regarding leader-member exchange support this interaction style as positively increasing the performance of employees, ensuring their commitment to the organization, and the beneficial effects of leadership in the organization. Considering the common feature of the solutions proposed, the advantages of having qualified human resources are emphasized. Therefore, it is important to not only find qualified human resource personnel that can integrate the goals of the organization with their own goals but also to keep them in the business. On the other hand, visionary leadership, which is supposed to have a positive effect on the organizations examined in the research, is expressed as one of the modern leadership styles of our age. Such leaders set the target appropriate to the circumstances, group, and environment and explain these targets to the employees. The leader who realizes and innovates the organization's needs is defined as the visionary leader (Elkington et al. 2017). Visionary leaders have the ability to successfully analyze unclear data. They seize new opportunities by acting courageously in the face of problems. Visionary leaders with creative thinking ability attach importance to new views and thoughts (Dhammika 2016). Transparent leaders, in contrast, share the strengths and weaknesses behind their activities with employees in order to create an open and transparent organizational climate. Thus, employees will know exactly what will be rewarded in the organization, what will be encouraged, and what situations should be worrisome. In this case, employees will be willing to discuss procedures, question their leaders' mistakes, challenge the status quo and stereotypes, speak up, and reveal alternative perspectives or new ideas (Zhao and Olivera 2006). Today, organizations have to face both social developments (globalization, technological developments, etc.) and increasing global competition that is constantly occurring. Undoubtedly, not every organization will want to lose its talented, promising employees to exist effectively in highly competitive business environments (Govaerts et al. 2011; Yamazakia and Petchdee 2015). Human capital is the most valuable resource for organizations, as this type of capital is very difficult to substitute and has allowed "people" to possess a key competitive advantage for organizations in an intensely competitive environment (Sanjeevkumar and Wei 2012). The expectations of qualified employees from the organization and the job are constantly increasing. The desire for a more motivational atmosphere, fueled by mass media and social media, constantly differentiates the expectations of employees and makes the job of managers difficult. Leaders or managers, who play an important role in many aspects of increasing employee productivity, have an important function in maintaining the competitive power of the company. Although the transition from traditional management understanding to modern management understanding has changed from culture to culture, it has had positive effects. In the past years, leader and leadership mechanisms have developed largely on the axis of repressive leadership power. However, over time, it has been observed that this perception has changed, and a more democratic leadership style has begun to be adopted, and most importantly, leadership types that focus on the interests of the organization have come to the fore. As well as the characteristics of the leaders, it is very important that ethical principles are adopted in the work environment and that the employees are satisfied with their career opportunities. The superior performance or ability of employees in businesses to reveal their skills may depend on the leadership style as well as the importance of ethical principles in the organization. Because, in terms of career satisfaction, it is very important for employees who perform successfully to earn title/status. In this research, on white-collar employees working in companies operating in the production sector, we aim to determine the effects of the relationship between the leader-member exchange, leadership transparency,

and visionary leadership's ethical work environment mediation variable effect, and career satisfaction. The reason for conducting research in the production sector is to examine whether an ethical working environment is in the furniture companies and to examine the level of career satisfaction in the organizational structures of the employees. A field survey was conducted using a questionnaire to test the propositions.

**Keywords:** Management, career satisfaction, ethical work environment, leader-member exchange, transparency leadership, visionary leadership

**Öz:** İnsan kaynakları politikaları sürekli kendini yenileyen, geliştiren bir kavram olarak devam etmektedir. Rekabet ortamından kaynaklı olarak çalışanların performanslarını arttırmaya yönelik eğitimler ve kişisel gelişim imkânları sağlanmakta, bu sayede çalışanların motivasyonlarını en üst seviyede sağlayarak belirlenen performans kriterlerinin gerçekleştirilmesi beklenmektedir. Çalışanların memnuniyet seviyelerinin düşük olması durumunda, örgütlerde çalışan sirkülasyonu meydana gelmektedir. İnsan kaynakları politikaları açısından bu sirkülasyonun minimum seviyede tutulması amaçlanmaktadır. Örgütlerin başarılı olmasındaki en önemli etkenlerden biri liderlerin sahip oldukları özellikler ile çalışanların uyumlu bir iletişim içinde olmalarıdır. Liderler ve çalışanlar arasındaki etkileşim insan kaynakları politikaları neticesinde önem kazanmaktadır. Bu nedenle örgütlerin öncelikle insan kaynakları politikalarını çalışan odaklı belirlemeleri gerekmektedir. Literatürde bu alanda yapılacak çalışmalarla, yeni liderlik rolleri ve çalışan odaklı teorilerle katkıda bulunulması önem arz etmektedir. Bu kapsamda mobilya sektöründe çalışmakta olan beyaz yakalılarının etik çalışma ortamında liderlik tarzları karşısında kariyer memnuniyeti düzeylerinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır. Araştırma da anketler 2019 yılında marmara bölgesinde mobilya üretimi yapan firmalarda çalışan 388 beyaz yakalıdan toplanmıştır. Verilerin analiz edilmesinde IBM SPSS 25 ve AMOS programları kullanılmış, öncelikle değişkenleri temsil eden ölçeklerin geçerliliği için faktör analizi ve güvenirlik analizi yapılmıştır. Değişkenler arasındaki ilişkilerin analiz edilmesinde korelasyon analizi, hipotezlerin test edilmesinde regresyon analizi yapılmıştır. Aracı değişken etkisinin analizinde de sobel testi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sonucunda lider üye değişimi ve şeffaf liderliğin olumlu etkileri olduğu ancak vizyoner liderliğin olumlu etkisinin olmadığı analizlerle belirtilmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yönetim, kariyer memnuniyeti, etik çalışma ortamı, lider-üye değişimi, şeffaf liderlik, vizyoner liderlik

## 1. Introduction

Dansereau et al. (1975) conducted a study on the theory of leader-member exchange, developing the theory of leader-member exchange in the field of social change (Harris and Kacmar 2006; Deluga 1994). The leader-member theory researched in organizations focuses on how they exchange attitudes and behaviors towards each other in the relationship between leaders and employees (Lo et al. 2006). In the research conducted about employees, some common thoughts of the employees about their companies are examined: Google employee; "Google is like a second home for me. There are tons of things you can't find here. It's not easy to get into the job, but once you have it you will have an excellent work environment, excellent colleagues, and excellent living standards". Starbucks employee; Starbucks allows and supports a culture that reflects their mission. I've never seen anything like this in any other company. They accept people as they are. Facebook employee; "Everyone in the company is very sincere. Our environment is very healthy and comfortable. There is a very friendly and strong bond between the employees. We all approach each other with respect and friends". EBay employee, "Everybody here positively reacts to every situation and I can't imagine that I would work anywhere except eBay." (<https://www.webtekno.com/en-mutlu-calisanlara-sahip-25-sirket-h54485.html>). These studies, conducted in the best companies in the world, reveal the importance of the environment and leadership style within the organization. As a result, Leader-member exchange not only directs superior behavior towards subordinates but also affects the behavioral superiority of subordinates (Wayne and Green 1993). The visionary traits of leaders can also be integrated with charismatic and transformational traits. The visionary feature of the leaders not only reassures employees but is

also important in terms of helping to achieve the goals and targets set by the organization (Sashkin and Sashkin 2002). When the interpersonal relationship between leaders and employees develops, subordinates receive more support and perform their jobs more effectively. Positive perceptions of the ethical working environment can reverse the role of stress, reduce the degree of stress, and have a positive effect on job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Schwepker and Hartline 2005). Given that job attitudes and work behaviors are often related (Mobley 1982), there are reasons to predict that business ethics will be at least indirectly related to certain work behaviors (Shapira and Griffith 1990). For example, Chiang and Hsieh (2012) found that when employees perceive that they have organizational support, they perform positively and are confident in performing the assigned tasks. Providing an ethical working environment that is very important for organizations, in addition to adopting it as a culture, and supporting the employees with their leadership styles. Research has also been conducted in the Turkish context. The furniture industry in Turkey has a relatively large share, in terms of jobs and contribution to the country and the economy. With a consistent rise in exports, this industry is one of the most relevant. And, the furniture sector's growth enables it to draw on its experience when opening up to the outside (Güleç 2016). In Turkey's recent past, country-wide dealerships were founded in large facilities that produce world-class goods, selling products that have reached a global level. The sector has an export route that stretches to South America, Africa, Russia, and Asia. For this reason, the Turkish furniture industry has developed its medium-sized model with its multi-sectoral structure, its technology-development-compatible structure, its design-oriented nature, and its labor-intensive business model, and in fact, has become an important employment sector. According to the Sectoral Study on Furniture and Forestry Products published in April of 2018, 20,000 macro workshops have been transformed into 34,000 facilities, most of which have been SMEs since 1990. Additionally, the number of companies with 25 or more employees in this sector is 983 companies with 30 or more employees (Müsiad 2018). For the first five provinces with the highest distribution, jobs in the furniture sector in Turkey are shown. These provinces are followed by Kocaeli, Antalya, Düzce, Sakarya and Mersin, respectively. Istanbul province leads the furniture industry in terms of both workplace and employment. The two most important centers of the furniture industry in Istanbul are MASKO and MODOKO, located in the Ikitelli Organized Industrial Zone. Employment averages per business are at 21%. As well, Bursa-Inegöl, which makes good use of this advantage due to its proximity to raw material resources and its location on the Historical Silk Road, is an important furniture center today. The average value per business in Bursa is 14% (Bakanlığı 2015). For these reasons, the research was conducted in the Marmara region. Therefore, in this study, the effects of leadership styles in terms of ethical environment and career satisfaction in the organization are examined with analysis.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Leader Member Exchange**

Some researchers state that the leader-member exchange (LMX) and working environment may not be independent of each other, and that there may be a potential relationship between them (Van Knippenberg 2007). In this respect, the potential relationship between leader-member exchange (LMX), business ethics and career was investigated. Quality leader-member exchange (LMX) has a significant impact on the success of employees in their careers, open communication with each other, and the ability to provide consistent business ethics (Tse et al. 2013). The leader can use formal or informal ways to share his vision and expectations to employees through quality leader-member exchange (LMX). In addition, with quality leader-member exchange (LMX), employees will be able to adopt the tasks assigned to them and consider working more resolutely in their departments/teams (Loi et al. 2014). This phenomenon will encourage employees to adapt to the organization in terms of business ethics and a desire to work towards achieving their career goals. Therefore, when employees believe that they are in a reliable organization, they can think more comfortably in a career-oriented way. Leader-member exchange (LMX) is important in terms

of the efficient use of organizational resources and psychological support for employees- as suggested in the literature. Leader-member exchange not only provides resources and support for employees, but also brings an important responsibility (Harris and Kacmar 2006). This responsibility, provides employees with opportunities to develop themselves and to help them achieve excellent career development- in terms of gaining organizational identities. The reluctant attitudes and behaviors of the employees are seen as dangerous for the quality leader-member exchange, both between the employees and the leaders as well as the relationship between the employees and the organization which are negatively affected. For this reason, business ethics is gaining importance within the organization. Within this scope, the following hypotheses are proposed:

*H1: Leader member exchange has an impact on the ethical working environment within the organization.*

## **2.2. Visionary Leadership**

Visionary leadership includes idealized, future-oriented, value-based attitudes and behaviors that shape the behaviors of followers (Stam et al. 2010). Visionary leadership helps maintain high performance expectations, encourages followers to achieve their goals and helps followers to look positively to the future (Shamir et al. 1993). Visionary leadership strives to achieve organizational integrity and to adopt teamwork and cooperation by reflecting the vision created by balancing the reality of today with the reality of the future in every step of the organization (Erçetin 2000). The visionary leader is the person who has the ability to explain this vision to his followers as well as create the “vision”. The visionary leader should define the goals to be achieved, communicate the vision to the employees through open verbal and written communication, effectively define the vision, and apply it according to the leader’s priorities in order to make the vision applicable in different conditions. A visionary leader is not only a person who conveys the vision orally but also reflects his/her behaviors to his/her employees (Robbins and Judge 2012). Leadership is the power to influence and mobilize people, and vision is one of the important factors that help to realize this aim. For this reason, the visionary leader is the one who clearly understands the present and establishes the balance between focusing on the future and can do effective work with his or her vision (Yılmaz and Akdemir 2005). Visionary Leadership is the ability to express a vision that has a realistic, reliable, attractive future for the whole or part of the organization. The importance of visionary leadership from these approaches stems from the development of a vision for the organization for the future. If past developments cannot be clearly documented, this poses a serious organizational problem. The visionary leader is the leader who succeeds in solving this problem (Heintzel 1995). In this context, the visionary leader is a leader who can successfully transmit and institutionalize the vision to all levels of the organization. This leader not only has power but he can influence his followers with his thoughts (Erçetin 2000). Within this scope, the following hypotheses are proposed:

*H2: Visionary leadership has an impact on the ethical working environment within the organization.*

## **2.3. Leadership Transparency**

In the literature, transparency has been proposed as a descriptive structure, and it is clear that information about the sharing of values and emotions is known to all stakeholders (Vogelgesang and Crossley 2006). In the literature, it is seen that the analysis of leaders with transparency (in the field of organizational behavior) is limited. However, it is known that transparency is examined in financial research, international management studies, and strategic management. In the research conducted by Walumbwa et al. (2008), it is stated that the transparency characteristics of the leaders were examined only in authentic leadership studies, and the transparency in the relations between the leader and the employees was emphasized. In the

research conducted by Vogelgesang and Lester (2009) regarding leadership transparency, they share information, emphasize feedback, emphasize the reasons behind the decisions taken, and emphasize the relationship between employees and leadership style. When transparency is effective in the behavior of leaders within organizations, the communication between the leader and the employees is healthy and thus information sharing within the organization is at the desired level (Gong et al. 2012). Thanks to the transparency provided between the leader and the employees, the employees know how to behave in the organization and act by knowing the reward and punishment system. Transparent leadership within the organization enables the exchange of ideas between the leader and the employees, thereby allowing both parties to act together in the face of the problems, question managerial mistakes, seek out the emergence of new ideas and alternative thoughts about producing solutions, and support cooperation by breaking down the stereotyped management approach (Zhao and Olivera 2006). Therefore, the transparent behavior of leaders contributes to the careers of employees by providing information to employees and creating a transparent climate. Within this scope, the following hypotheses are proposed:

*H3: Leadership transparency has an impact on the ethical working environment within the organization.*

#### **2.4. Career Satisfaction**

Over time, in the study of Arthur et al. (1989), the experience of the employees in their organizations and the success of their work as a result of these experiences are defined as careers. Arthur et al. (2005) developed this definition, explaining that employees' work experience gained over a certain period of time was a successful outcome. The achievements of the employees in their career while climbing their career ladder were multiple: a new title/status, a new office, salary increase, premiums and new duties/responsibilities (Brousseau et al. 1996). Some of the important factors taken into consideration in the career success of employees are multiple: subjective factors such as employee satisfaction (Ng et al. 2005; Shaffer et al. 2012), work-life balance of employees (Finegold and Mohrman 2001), or a sense of employee identity within the organization (Law et al. 2002). A career is based on assumptions that individuals have the capacity to influence their own development and environment (that is, when employees act in a certain group, they have the power to organize wrong actions and to perform effective actions by acting for a specific purpose) (Bandura 1986). Important determinants of career satisfaction include environmental support, and social and financial support (Barnett and Bradley 2007). Employees with high career satisfaction are expected to work more willingly, be beneficial for their organizations, and pursue organizational interests (Nerkar et al. 1996; Gary and Saks 2005). It is stated that career satisfaction is one of the main factors determining labor turnover rate. It can be seen that the intention to quit is more prevalent in organizations where career opportunities do not exist. The harmony between the career goals of the individuals and the objectives of the organization is of great importance for the organization as it will ensure the career satisfaction of the individuals. Dissatisfaction occurs when there is a conflict between the objectives of the organization and the objectives of the individuals. At the same time, career dissatisfaction can be affected by unethical behaviors in the working environment as well as decreasing motivation and decreasing desire of employees (Bell and Staw 1989). In literature studies, most of the studies reveal that career satisfaction is more related to leadership rather than personal and organizational characteristics. Based on these findings, the effects of leader member exchange, leadership transparency, visionary leadership, and ethical working environments on career satisfaction are examined within the scope of the research model. Within this scope, the following hypotheses are proposed:

*H4: Leader member exchange has an impact on career satisfaction within the organization.*

*H5: Visionary leadership has an impact on career satisfaction within the organization.*

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*H6: Leadership transparency has an impact on career satisfaction within the organization.*

*H7: Ethical working environments have an impact on career satisfaction within the organization.*

### **2.5. Ethical Working Environment**

Researchers associate and discuss work ethics within situations where an effort-performance relationship exists (Furnham 1990). Business ethics is an individual difference structure characterized by a series of beliefs and attitudes that reflect the core value of work, in accordance with the concept of business values (Meriac et al. 2015). As stated in the study of Weber (1958), business ethics represents an individual structure of difference that is put forward in relation to multiple outcomes. Business ethics is used to create a positive impact both within the organization and in the business environment in order for a business to survive and improve its capabilities (Reilly and Kyj 1990). However, in the definition of business ethics, beliefs, laws and responsibilities are included (Lewis 1985). Controlling the personality structure of individuals in an organization with norms and values about how they should behave in an organization is explained as a comprehensive definition of business ethics. An ethical working environment is accepted as an important factor in distinguishing between right and wrong in employees' behaviors. The ethical environment provided to the employees by the organizations, the employees ability to perform ethical actions between themselves, and their relations with the management are tied to the implementation of organizational policies with an ethical understanding (Schwepker et al. 1997). The acceptance of an ethical work environment by employees may mean that it is a kind of informal control mechanism (Schwepker and Hartline 2005). An ethical work environment is composed of many factors, including the perception of employees' correctness or inaccuracy of individuals and inter-behavioral behaviors within the organization, in addition to how much they are willing to work (Babin et al. 2000). An ethical work environment captures employees' perceptions of how normal the working climate in the organization is. The perceptions of the ethical work environment include the following: age, job position, duration of duty, which varies according to the department they work for (Forte 2004). For example, the longest employees in the organization tend to see the ethics working environment more positively because of a more extensive socialization period. Within this scope, the following hypotheses are proposed:

*H8: Ethical working environments have a mediation variable effect on the relationship between leader member exchange and career satisfaction.*

*H9: Ethical working environments have a mediation variable effect on the relationship between visionary leadership and career satisfaction.*

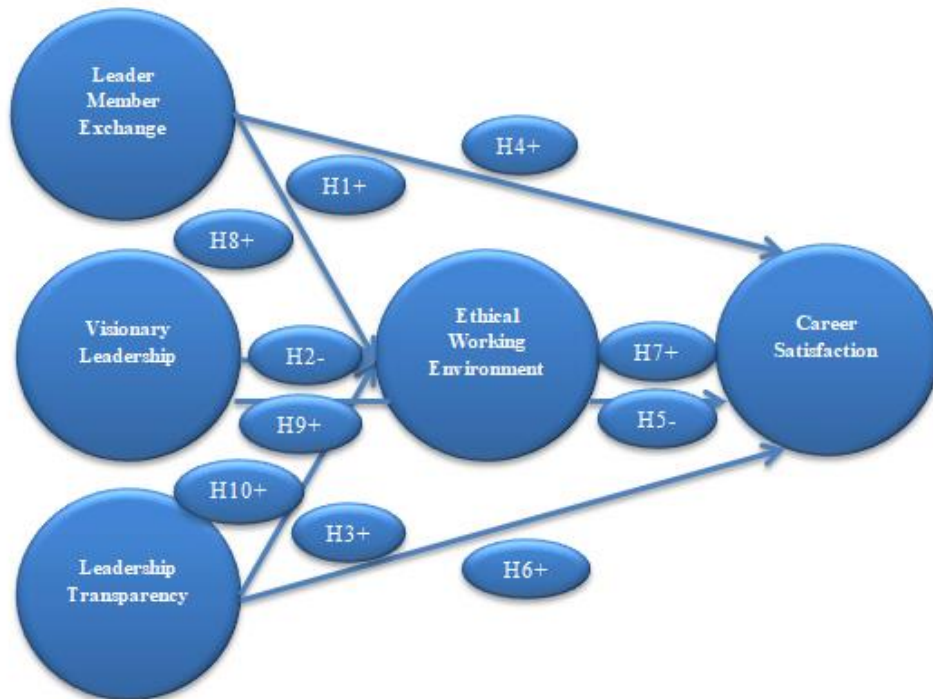
*H10: Ethical working environments have a mediation variable effect on the relationship between leader transparency and career satisfaction.*

### **3. Data, Variables and Research Model**

Within the scope of the aim of the research, a survey was conducted with 388 employees. Data obtained using SPSS 25 and SPSS AMOS (Confirmatory Factor Analysis) were evaluated and descriptive analysis was used in demographic information. In order to test the validity of the scales representing the variables, factor analysis and then reliability analysis were performed. After the scales were tested, correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between variables, and regression analysis was performed to test hypotheses within the scope of the research model. The Sobel test was performed for the analysis of mediation effect. The questionnaire consists of five variables. In the research, the leading member exchange scale; Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) (The reliability of the scale in this study was 0.888). Visionary Leadership; Conger and Kanungo (1994)'s reliability (0.920). Leader transparency; Walumbwa et al. (2008), Walumbwa and Schaubroeck (2009), Norman et al. (2010), Walumbwa et al. (2010) (The reliability of the

scale in this study was measured by 0.870). The questions developed by Victor and Cullen (1988) and Babin et al. (2000) were used to measure the ethical working environment. Career satisfaction was utilized by the scales defined by Greenhaus et al. (1990) (reliability of the scale in this study 0.840) and Judge et al. (1995) (reliability of the scale in this study 0.880).

In the research model determined as a result of literature research, independent variables; leader member exchange, leadership transparency and visionary leadership, dependent variable; career satisfaction, mediation variable; ethical working environment, as a research model was applied. In the research, a quantitative approach was adopted to analyze the relationship between the concepts given in the statistical sense. We use the independent variable or independent variables to investigate the effect on the dependent variable in a quantitative study (Thomas et al. 2015).



**Figure 1:** Research Model

## 4. Findings

### 4.1. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

In the study, a total of 388 employees from the furniture producing companies in the Marmara Region were surveyed in 2019. 173 female, 215 male white-collar workers answered the questionnaire. Of the participants, 85% (333 Participants) have University degrees, 15% (55 Participants) have master degrees. The fields of activity of the companies where the participants work: 112 participants work in the “National”, 153 participants work in the “Regional”, 123 participants work in the “International”. The level of achievement of the goals determined by the employees (individually): The level of achievement of 24 participants' targets is very low, the level of achievement of 37 participants' targets is low, the level of achievement of 155 participants' targets is medium, the level of achievement of 128 participants is high, the level of achievement of targets of 44 participants is very high.



## 4.2. Analysis and Results

In the surveys, factor analysis is conducted primarily to test the validity of the scales representing the variables (Büyüköztürk 2005). A questionnaire consisting of 38 questions was prepared on a 5 point likert scale and evaluated with the data collected from the sample. As a result of factor analysis, 9 questions were excluded from the scale because they did not show factor distribution and decreased reliability to different factors. The remaining 29 questions were divided into 5 factors. Before the factor analysis; primarily, “Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test” are considered. A significant Barlett test of KMO greater than 0.60 indicates that the data are suitable for factor analysis. In order to determine the suitability of the data for exploratory factor analysis, “Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) = .931 and  $p < 0.05$  were significant. In this respect, it can be said that the data are suitable for exploratory factor analysis:

**Table 1:** Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
KM3. I am pleased with my progress towards achieving my career goals.	.811				
KM2. I am pleased with my progress in achieving my goals to gain new skills.	.796				
KM8. I am pleased with the promotion opportunities at the company I work for.	.752				
KM1. Compared to my colleagues, I find myself successful in my career.	.728				
KM5. I am pleased with my progress in terms of the career goal I set when I started working.	.723				
KM4. I am pleased with my progress towards achieving my revenue goals.	.719				
KM7. I am satisfied with the success I have achieved in my career in the company I work for.	.611				
KM6. I am pleased with the opportunities for promotion in the company I work for.	.591				
EWC13. At the company I work for, employees are expected to follow the rules.		.800			
EWC15. In the company I work for, employees act according to ethical rules.		.734			
EWC14. In the company I work for, employees are expected to comply with professional standards.		.726			
EWC12. In my company, ethical rules are the most important issue.		.714			
EWC11. In my company, the order in the working environment is the most important issue.		.709			
EWC16. In the company I work for, ethical principles are never compromised.		.641			
LME3. In my company, the Leader understands my work challenges and needs.			.810		
LME2. In my company, the Leader applies pressure to employees.			.750		
LME4. I understand the degree of satisfaction the leader has with my work.			.750		
LME5. In my company, the Leader gives importance to communication with employees.			.649		
LME1. In my company, the Leader attaches importance to the opinions of the employees in every subject.			.623		
LME7. In the company I work for, the Leader seeks solutions to			.577		

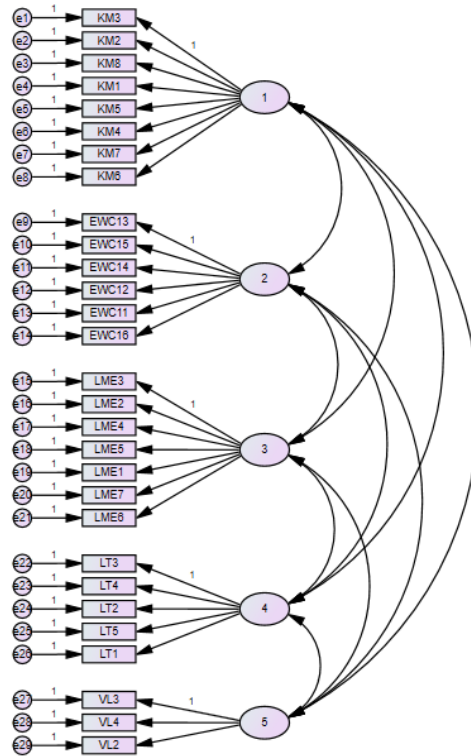
the problems and needs of the employees together with the employees.	
LME6. Everyone is satisfied with the exchange between the leader and the employee in the company I work for.	.541
LT3. In my company, the Leader clearly shares information with employees.	.800
LT4. In the company I work for, the Leader expresses his / her thoughts to the employees clearly.	.762
LT2. Leader in the company I work for naturally meets the errors.	.705
LT5. In my company, the Leader shares the problems experienced with the employees without hesitation.	.700
LT1. The company I work for has a transparent management approach.	.688
VL3. The leader in the company I work for motivates employees by expressing the importance of the work they do.	.887
VL4. The leader in my company motivates and inspires employees.	.885
VL2. The Leader has the ideas of a leader and is a visionary in the company I work for.	.883

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

KM: Career Satisfaction, EWC: Ethical Working Environment, LME: Leader Member Exchange, LT: Leadership Transparency, VL: Visionary Leadership

Confirmatory Factor Analysis; Confirmatory factor analysis was performed in order to evaluate the degree of agreement between the original structure of the scale and the data obtained in this study. It is used to analyze the hidden structures observed or represented in more than one variable structure (Aytaç and Öngen 2012; Ozdamar 2013).



KM: Career Satisfaction, EWC: Ethical Working Environment, LME: Leader Member Exchange, LT: Leadership Transparency, VL: Visionary Leadership

**Figure 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Model Fit: Values generally considered for model fit are; GFI, CFI, NFI, IFI and RMSEA (Schumacker 2006; İlhan and Çetin 2014). However, values may vary depending on the scope and model of the research. Conformity values obtained for the model as a result of the analysis,  $\chi^2/df = 3.903 < 5$ ,  $0.85 < GFI = 0.875$ ,  $0.90 < IFI = 0.911$ ,  $0.90 < NFI = 0.918$ ,  $0.90 < CFI = 0.920$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.060 < 0.076$  conformity values show conformity with the model. As a result of the analyzes, the validity of the 5-factor structure evaluated within the scope of the research model is verified by confirmatory factor analysis.

The reliability of the research variables in the questionnaire was measured by Cronbach's Alpha values, which are widely used in the literature (Bryman and Cramer 1997; Norusis 1992). One of the common methods used to analyze the reliability of the data is the calculation of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. In this method, the alpha known as the alpha coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) is acceptable, i.e. to be reliable, alpha value is expected to be between 0.70 and 1 (Altunışık et al. 2010; Nunnally and Bernstein 1978). Reliability coefficients based on the final situation are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Reliability Analysis**

Variables	Number of Questions	Cronbach Alfa ( $\alpha$ )
Leader Member Exchange	7	.894
Visionary Leadership	3	.869
Leadership Transparency	5	.888
Ethical Working Environment	6	.901
Career Satisfaction	8	.923

Correlation analysis showed that there is no relationship between visionary leadership and other variables. The reason for this is the fact that visionary leadership has no effect on individuals who are working intensively in the production sector or that visionary leadership cannot be fully perceived due to differences in opinion. We can explain that leader-member exchange and transparent leadership styles are appropriate leadership styles both for ethical work environment and career satisfaction.

**Table 3: Correlation Analysis**

		Correlations				
		Leader Member Exchange	Visionary Leadership	Leadership Transparency	Career Satisfaction	Ethical work climate
Leader Member Exchange	Pearson Correlation	1	0.020	.625**	.657**	.606**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.726	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	388	388	388	388	388
Visionary Leadership	Pearson Correlation	0.020	1	-0.030	0.057	-0.070
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.726		0.603	0.318	0.222
	N	388	388	388	388	388
Leadership Transparency	Pearson Correlation	.625**	-0.030	1	.605**	.578**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.603		0.000	0.000
	N	388	388	388	388	388
Career Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.657**	0.057	.605**	1	.636**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.318	0.000		0.000
	N	388	388	388	388	388
Ethical work climate	Pearson Correlation	.606**	-0.070	.578**	.636**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.222	0.000	0.000	
	N	388	388	388	388	388

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

After the correlation analysis, the results of the analysis of the effects of the examined independent variables on the dependent variables are shown in table 4.

**Table 4: Regression Analysis**

IV	DV	Standart $\beta$	Sig.	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F Value
Leader Member Exchange	Ethical Working Environment	<b>.606***</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.365</b>	<b>177.802</b>
Visionary Leadership	Ethical Working Environment	<b>-.070</b>	<b>.222</b>	<b>.002</b>	<b>1.495</b>
Leadership Transparency	Ethical Working Environment	<b>.578***</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.332</b>	<b>153.354</b>
Leader Member Exchange	Career Satisfaction	<b>.657***</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.429</b>	<b>231.256</b>
Visionary Leadership	Career Satisfaction	<b>.057</b>	<b>.318</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>1.000</b>
Leadership Transparency	Career Satisfaction	<b>.605***</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.364</b>	<b>176.431</b>
Ethical Working Environment	Career Satisfaction	<b>.636***</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.402</b>	<b>206.918</b>

\*: p $\leq$  0.05, \*\*:p $\leq$  0.01, \*\*\*:p $\leq$  0.00

Supported and unsupported hypotheses according to regression analysis; Regression analysis was used to test the predicted research hypotheses, and the five hypotheses that were accepted outside the effect of the mediation variable according to the results of these regression analyzes are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5:** Hypothesis Results

Hypotheses	Supported / Not Supported	Significance Level (Sig.)
<i>H1: In organizations, leader member exchange has an impact on the ethical working environment.</i>	<b>It was supported</b>	<i>P &lt;0.001</i>
<i>H2: In organizations, visionary leadership has an impact on the ethical working environment.</i>	<b>It was not supported</b>	
<i>H3: In organizations, the leadership transparency style has an impact on the ethical working environment.</i>	<b>It was supported</b>	<i>P &lt;0.001</i>
<i>H4: In organizations, leader member exchange has an impact on career satisfaction.</i>	<b>It was supported</b>	<i>P &lt;0.001</i>
<i>H5: In organizations, visionary leadership has an impact on career satisfaction.</i>	<b>It was not supported</b>	
<i>H6: In organizations, the leadership transparency style has an impact on career satisfaction.</i>	<b>It was supported</b>	<i>P &lt;0.001</i>
<i>H7: In organizations, the ethical working environments have an impact on career satisfaction.</i>	<b>It was supported</b>	<i>P &lt;0.001</i>

Determination of mediation variable (mv) effect in research model; In order to determine the effect of the MV in the research model, especially the ethical working environment (MV); The relationship between the leader member exchange, visionary leadership and leadership transparency (IV) and career satisfaction (DV) has been stated to have an effect on the hypotheses established as a result of the analyzes;

**Table 6:** Results of Regression Analysis of Mediation Variable (MV) Effect

	IV	DV	Standart $\beta$	Sig.	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F Value
Regresyon	Leader Member Exchange (IV)	Career Satisfaction	<b>.428***</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.429</b>	<b>231.256</b>
	Ethical Working Environment (MV)		<b>.375***</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.516</b>	<b>164.299</b>
Regresyon	Visionary Leadership (IV)	Career Satisfaction	<b>.104</b>	<b>.018</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>1.000</b>
	Ethical Working Environment (MV)		<b>.643***</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.411</b>	<b>107.829</b>
Regresyon	Leadership Transparency (IV)	Career Satisfaction	<b>.358***</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.364</b>	<b>176.431</b>
	Ethical Working Environment (MV)		<b>.429***</b>	<b>.000</b>	<b>.486</b>	<b>145.776</b>
			*: p<0.05	** :p<0.01	***:p<0.001	

In order to explain the effect of the mediation variable, the variable between the IV and the DV must be a measured variable. One of the tests measuring the effect of this MV is the Sobel (1982) test. Analyzing the effect of the MV with Sobel test is calculated using the uncorrected regression coefficients and standard error values of the related variables. In 1995, MacKinnon, Warsi, and Dwyer spread statistical methods to evaluate the effect of interstitial variables. There are two main versions of the sobel test, Aroian (1944/1947) and Goodman (1960).

**Table 7: Sobel Test**

<b>Sobel / Aroian / Goodman Analysis was used to determine whether the ethical working environment mediation variable had an impact on the relationship between leader member exchange and career satisfaction;</b>							
<b>Variables</b>			<b>Input:</b>	<b>Test statistic:</b>	<b>Std. Error:</b>	<b>p-value:</b>	
IV	Leader Member Exchange	a	0.562	Sobel test:	6.52606325	0.039269	0
MV	Ethical Working Environment	b	0.456	Aroian test:	6.51221815	0.03935249	0
		Sa	0.042	Goodman test:	6.53999703	0.03918534	0
DV	Career Satisfaction	Sb	0.061				
<b>Sobel / Aroian / Goodman Analysis, determining whether the ethical working environment mediation variable has an effect on the relationship between visionary leadership and career satisfaction;</b>							
<b>Variables</b>			<b>Input:</b>	<b>Test statistic:</b>	<b>Std. Error:</b>	<b>p-value:</b>	
IV	Visionary Leadership	a	0.442	Sobel test:	9.67940273	0.03575489	0
MV	Ethical Working Environment	b	0.783	Aroian test:	9.66666667	0.035802	0
		Sa	0.034	Goodman test:	9.69218926	0.03570772	0
DV	Career Satisfaction	Sb	0.054				
<b>Sobel / Aroian / Goodman Analysis was used to determine whether the ethical working environment mediation variable had an effect on the relationship between leadership transparency and career satisfaction;</b>							
<b>Variables</b>			<b>Input:</b>	<b>Test statistic:</b>	<b>Std. Error:</b>	<b>p-value:</b>	
IV	Leadership Transparency	a	0.491	Sobel test:	6.85618599	0.03745421	0
MV	Ethical Working Environment	b	0.523	Aroian test:	6.83943447	0.03754594	0
		Sa	0.043	Goodman test:	6.87306119	0.03736225	0
DV	Career Satisfaction	Sb	0.061				
We can explain that there is an effect of the mediation variable among the variables because p value is less than <0.05.							

As a result of the Sobel test in which the effect of the mediation variable was analyzed, Hypothesis results;

**Table 8:** Supported / Unsupported Status of Research Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Supported / Not Supported	Significance Level (Sig.)
<i>H8: Ethical working environments have a mediation variable effect on the relationship between leader member exchange and career satisfaction.</i>	<b>It was supported</b>	<b><i>P &lt; 0.001</i></b>
<i>H9: Ethical working environments have a mediation variable effect on the relationship between visionary leadership and career satisfaction.</i>	<b>It was supported</b>	<b><i>P &lt; 0.001</i></b>
<i>H10: Ethical working environments have a mediation variable effect on the relationship between leader transparency and career satisfaction.</i>	<b>It was supported</b>	<b><i>P &lt; 0.001</i></b>

In the research model in which the mediation effect of the ethical working environment is measured, it is revealed that there is an effect between independent and dependent variables and how important the ethical working environment is for the organizations. This shows the value that employees attach to ethical rules in their organizations. At the same time, the level of satisfaction with the working environment can strengthen the level of commitment.

## 5. Discussion

Despite some adversity in organizations, leaders need to turn the working environment into a livable, even preferable one. As a matter of fact, one of the factors that has the greatest impact on the quality of life in the organization is the quality of leader-member exchange. The quality of the relationship and the exchange between the leader and the employee; is a valuable business resource for both the leader and the employee. It is highly probable that success and performance will increase as a result of the leadership and employees of this business resource trusting, respecting, feeling sincere communication, and mutually supporting each other. This positive effect of course reflects the career satisfaction of the employees. In spite of many demands, such as heavy demands on the workplace, heavy workload, stress, etc., the provision of an ethical working environment, the presence of the quality of exchange can lead to a more motivating and performance-enhancing dynamic especially for the employees. He et al. (2017) explain the effect of leader-member exchange on employee performance in their study. Flickinger et al. (2016), on the other hand, stated the effect of leader-member exchange on job satisfaction. As a result of our research, it is stated that leader-member exchange has an effect on career satisfaction, which is important for employees. When the quality of exchange between employees and leaders is high, together with support and autonomy authority given to employees, employees are more satisfied with their jobs, their loyalty to their organizations is strengthened, their performance increases, their tendency to quit decreases, and they do not exhibit organizational deviation nor anti-productivity work behaviors. Therefore, first of all, leaders should establish quality relations with their subordinates and direct their subordinates accordingly. In order to achieve all these, the characteristics of the leaders must positively feed the employees. At the same time, the ethical working environment provided within the organization is an important factor in ensuring that employees work in a peaceful environment and their satisfaction levels are high. Cheema et al. (2015) stated in their research that visionary leadership has an effect on employee satisfaction. In addition, the research conducted by Dhammika (2016) explains the effects of visionary leadership and leader-member exchange on organizational commitment. However, in the research we have done, it has been revealed that visionary leadership has no effect on career satisfaction. Although the sample population is not at the desired level, the results are supported that employees cannot express themselves in the face of visionary leadership, do not feel they are in a peaceful working environment, and do not want to work in an organization that does not care about employees' thoughts. Because the vision of the sample is not fully perceived as a sense of leadership, there is no effect on the ethical work environment and career satisfaction. The reason for this is that

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employees may not be able to adopt a visionary leadership approach under intense stress and a high-level work tempo. We advocate that research on leadership styles and human resources management approaches to increase the productivity of employees will contribute more to the literature, primarily through studies to be conducted between sectors and cultural variances at different organizational levels.

## 6. Conclusion

In competitive conditions, leaders who create value in organizations with their interests, knowledge, experience, competencies and abilities are very important for employees to be satisfied with their organizations. In this context, the loss of difficult-to-replace personnel with superior skills is a major disadvantage for organizations because organizations and administrations provide many material and moral costs/efforts for recruiting, training, gaining experience, and adapting to work conditions. On the other hand, a certain workload has become inevitable in today's business environment where technology and competition are intense. When the workload, which is an indispensable element of working life, is above a certain level, both the quality of work-life and the leader-employee relationship (leader-member exchange) are negatively affected. The heavy workload thus exposed triggers to many chains of negativity detected in the working environment. Today, competition between enterprises continues with increasing acceleration. The factors that affect this competition are the resources. The use of resources also depends on the development of human resources and the importance attached to manpower. When one considers that human resources is one of the biggest criteria that reveal the difference between the organizations themselves, the difference between the organizations in terms of the importance given to human resources will be revealed. Leaders should evaluate their relations with their employees in a comprehensive manner and realize positive relations; It will enable the employees to use their talents at a higher level and to increase their performance in line with the interests of the business. In addition, the overall performance of the organizations will have a positive effect on productivity. When the theory of leader-member exchange is considered, leaders should be supportive, encourage their members to take responsibility and fulfill their duties, open communication channels, and increase mutual exchange between themselves and their members. In the globalizing world, employees who have a sense of ethics are preferred by organizations. It is likely that a positive performance increase will be expected from the employees, since this means that they will feel comfortable and peaceful if this style is adopted by the managers. In organizations where employees feel that they are valued and where career opportunities are based on merit systems, employees' commitment to the organization is also stronger. Detailed research has been carried out in the study conducted by Joo and Ready (2012), including the effects on job satisfaction of leader-member interaction. When they had a higher output target orientation and experienced a higher learning atmosphere and a stronger relationship with their boss, workers displayed the highest job satisfaction. Looking at the research findings, it is clear that the openness in leadership positively affects both the ethical working climate and job satisfaction. However, since there is no positive or negative significant relationship, it can not be precisely inferred about the impact of innovative leadership on both variables. This scenario can be seen as an opportunity for research on the visionary understanding of leadership among workers in the furniture industry. It would not be right to make a general decision because the research was only performed in the Marmara area of furniture companies. In particular, new concepts and concepts that may arise due to cultural differences between regions are in the field of management and organization, but it will be possible to obtain new findings and concepts in the field of social sciences. The emerging problems in working life and new leadership and management styles also help to lead to academically new concepts. By examining the problems experienced in working life more it will be possible to gain new concepts in terms of theory and analysis that may contribute to the literature in future studies.



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