

The Role of Unethical Behavior in the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Burnout

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the effects of both transformational leadership and ethical behavior on burnout. Chosen by the convenience sampling method data were collected from health workers in Turkey. The data were analyzed using exploratory factor analysis, a multiple regression model and SOBEL Test. Findings revealed that transformational leadership perception has significant and negative effect on both burnout and unethical behavior. Besides, it was determined that unethical behavior has significant and positive effect on burnout. Finally, unethical behavior partially mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and the perception of burnout. The findings have significant implications for the theory and practice of management and leadership.

Key Words: Transformational Leadership, Unethical Behavior, Burnout, Mediation Test.

Introduction

The importance of ethics, cultures and behaviors is continuing to be questioned in the current competition-intensive working environment. Faced with pressures individuals worrying about gaining success, surpassing rivals, reducing costs, displaying higher performance can go towards unethical inclinations. However, for some individuals, incentive of achieving duties can be more dominant. In this case, unfortunately, results of unethical attitudes and behaviors can be ignored in the dilemma of not breaching ethical borders and reaching goals. Although such behaviors seem to be innocent, it sometimes gives harm to the individual oneself and/or to the organization (Baek and Kim, 2016).

Another problem, as a result of pressure is burnout that individuals experience and hard to be detected. Damaging both people and organization, this uneasiness is impossible to be compensated. Individuals facing this social problem, incline towards displaying low performance, absenteeism etc. and cause themselves to be functionless. Even they can put an end to their employment (Maslach and Jackson 1985). Therefore it is important to find out the factors triggering burnout. On the other side management style and leadership come our way as an important factor. Because managers shape work environment in parallel with their leadership skills and affect workers' levels of work participation (Richardson and Vandenberg, 2005).

The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and burnout and unethical behavior. The relationship between these variables is not well documented and represents a significant gap in the literature. In addition, in the literature the relationship between transformational leadership and unethical behaviors do not display consistency with each other. So in our study, it was tried to reveal the effect of transformational leadership on especially unethical behaviors. Findings in our empirical research whose sampling consists private hospital workers were summarized and discussed by comparing them with other researches in the literature.

Literature Review

Burnout

Burnout syndrome, observed among those who struggles with challenges at workplace (Kim and Stoner, 2008), causes organizations huge costs (Papathanasiou et al., 2014). It is a emotional and/or physical fatigue involving negative stimulation in work (Pines and Maslach, 1978). Burnout, which is the extension of long-term stress (Etzion et al., 1998; Grunfeld et al., 2000; Stordeur et al., 2001), shows itself as emotional depletion and desensitization at workplace (Maslach and Jackson, 1985). Besides deficiency of motivating elements such as being appreciated, honored, and supported, causes individuals to feel themselves worthless and incites burnout (Farber, 1984). As a matter of fact, situations such as feeling dysfunctional and feeling dissatisfied with their own achievements and making negative self-assessment are symptoms of burnout syndrome (Maslach and Jackson, 1985). Briefly, burnout is a reactive disorder characterized by emotional exhaustion, desensitizing alienation/cynicism against to workers or workplace, a sense of lack of success (Cordes and Dougherty, 1993; Maslach et al., 2001) and develops because of losing emotional resources (Jacobs and Dodd, 2003).

Negative working conditions such as intensive requests for the employees (Demerouti et al., 2001), stress (Kokkinos, 2007; Kim and Stoner, 2008), failing to get benefits and awards that has been deserved (Schaufeli et al., 1996), lack of autonomy and control (Buunk and Schaufeli, 1993), excessive workload, role ambiguity and role conflict (Cordes and Dougherty, 1993; Byrne, 1994; Stordeur et al., 2001), interpersonal deviance (Çelik et al., 2011), conflict with co-workers and being kept under pressure and being followed-up by the leader at all times (Stordeur et al., 2001), emotional labor (Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002), and lack of support (Janssen et al., 1999; Jacobs and Dodd, 2003; Jenkins and Elliott, 2004) may have a significant

effect on burnout. Besides, organizational justice perception is one of the factors, which affect burnout negatively (Elçi et al. 2015).

Tendencies such as frequency of negative self-criticism about themselves, pushing themselves towards unhappiness and not being able to be happy from successes obtained are some symptoms of burnout (Maslach and Jackson, 1981). The first stage of burnout process is emotional exhaustion (Cordes and Dougherty, 1993). Stress can cause resources to be lost. So, energy to be given in work is lost and performance decreases (Halbesleben and Buckley, 2004). At this phase, in order to protect oneself an individual tends to activate defense mechanism (Kokkinos, 2007) becomes alienated (Schaufeli and Peeters, 2000; Jacobs and Dodd, 2003), disengages to work (Demerouti et al., 2001) and shows disinterest in working with cynicism (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004). However, this tendency increases tension rather than reduces existing stress and incites personal problems. Therefore efficiency decrease and failing to reach their goal, individuals suspect themselves and think as if they are insufficient and unsuccessful (Schaufeli and Peeters, 2000; Maslach et al., 2001).

Actually, this perception, which could not be perceived at first, shows itself in people who will be considered psychologically normal (Schaufeli and Buunk, 2003). This condition is seen more in trained and qualified personnel. Because, when employee candidates, who have higher expectations and who predict that they will be beneficial to organization at high level, are used for lower level works than their skills and experiences get disappointed and cannot reach self-fulfillment (Pines and Maslach, 1978). On the other hand, they can have an effect on burnout with their personal characteristics (Bakker et al., 2006; Langelaan et al., 2006; Alarcon et al., 2009).

This syndrome serves as a bridge between resources and demanding work demands and work-related outcomes (Leiter and Maslach, 2009). Therefore, in the environment where burnout prevails, it is no surprise that individuals with negative attitudes towards work such as counterproductive and distressing actions (Bakker et al., 2014). As a matter of fact, burnout causes insomnia, alcohol addiction and family problems, as well as absenteeism at work, intention to quit job (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Kim and Stoner, 2008), turnover (Maslach and Jackson, 1981), and reduces job and life satisfaction (Lee and Ashforth, 1993).

Leading to various health problems (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004; Gill et al., 2006) burnout effects job satisfaction (Piko, 2006) and career satisfaction negatively (Shanafelt

et al., 2009) and decreases organizational commitment (Spence Laschinger et al., 2009). In parallel with the increase in burnout, work-life balance satisfaction also deforms (Shanafelt et al., 2015). Pressures from administration increase the level of burnout, reduce job satisfaction, and stimulate tendencies of leave of employment (Boccio et al., 2016). So, it can be said that burnout and work engagement are poles apart (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Gill et al., 2006; Demerouti et al., 2010).

On the other hand a supportive and motivating working environment involving social support, leadership, authorization and safety (Nahrgang et al., 2011; Papathanasiou, 2014), transformational leadership approaches (Syrek et al., 2013) and improvement in occupational life conditions (Harrison et al., 2017) can absorb negative effects of burnout. If goals of individual and organization integrate or the work carried out is meaningful, and the capacities of workers are used at a maximum level by supporting their development, the possibility of suffering from burnout decreases (Leitwood et al., 1996).

Unethical Behavior

Common in many places, unethical worker behavior is considered as an area of serious problem for organizations (Crossen, 1993). Especially nowadays, the news related to destructible and terrible results of immoral behaviors of top-level leaders is increasing in the media (Hoyt et al., 2010). Thus, interest in the problem of unethical behavior has been increased recently (Gumaer and Scott, 1986). Because of dishonest behaviors many negative reflections are being monitored such as notoriety of organization, legal problems and compensations, and low productivity. This causes many companies to become unsuccessful and leads to bad reputation and/or capital loss (Crossen, 1993). Such behaviors reduce not only profit of organizations but also their reliability (Baek and Kim, 2016). Nonethicalness, which is observed as small and unimportant actions at first, is the behavior series that many deny and do not ascribe to themselves (Chen and Tang, 2006). Including unreliability, immorality and dishonesty, unethical behavior is defined as breaching rules and standards accepted for personal interests (Chandler, 2009).

The concept of ethical / unethical behavior was developed by inspiring differentiated relations theory. Ethical behaviors are learned from the relationships within group and from duty/role cluster. Therefore, those who have learned to be unethical in the group or who have more opportunity to show unethical behaviors are more likely tend to this kind of behaviors. Unless behavior of role models is corrected or as long as unethical behaviors are

overlooked, it is impossible to avoid unethical behaviors (Zey-Ferrell and Ferrell, 1982).

Damaging interpersonal relationships, organizations and economic systems, unethical work behavior, can be observed several ways. Such behaviors where ethical norms and rules are violated include cheating, stealing and similar dishonest actions (Gino et al., 2011). Employee theft, disclosure of secret and sensitive information, alcohol and drug use at the workplace, forgery of documents, discrimination, spoiling product or business, exploitation of resources etc. can be given as examples of such type of behaviors which are individual, group-based or which have become widespread in the organization (Crossen, 1993). In addition, even though it is thought that it will provide profit to businesses in a short time, actions such as changing accounting records, covering up defects of products and polluting environment can be said to be unethical (Effelsberg et al., 2014).

Some of the examples of the reasons which are extremely complex and which have many factors triggering (Moore and Gino, 2015) this behavior are envy towards wealthy (Gino and Pierce, 2009) pressure for achieving organizational goals, deadlines (Chen and Tang, 2006), competition and performance pressure (Baek and Kim, 2016). The more organizations, especially executives, attribute importance to goals of group or organization, the more tendency of being seen fair and quasi justification of unethical behavior increases (Hoyt et al., 2010). Almost one third of employees are forced to act unethically by their executives during their work lives (Boccio et al., 2016). However, encouragement of innovativeness and creativeness can contradict ethical behavior from time to time, because these encouragements can include tactics such as breaching rules, ignoring standard approach and customs, competition, conflict and causing stress (Baucus et al., 2008).

Organizational mission, policies and reward systems have an important role in determining ethical behaviors (Carlson and Perrew, 1995). When individuals know that they will be awarded even though they behave unethically or when they observe that others who behave unethically are awarded, probability of their tendencies towards unethical behaviors increase. Those who identified with their organizations at a high level can tend to unethical behaviors more often to pay their respects to their organizations (Umphress et al., 2010). Similarly, these tendencies become frequent among employees who have committed themselves to their works and whose job dedication is strong (Baek and Kim, 2016). On the other hand, especially individuals whose self-control levels are low are not aware that their behaviors are unethical, they show a tendency to

display more unethical behaviors (Gino et al., 2011). This trend is more common in individuals with creative personalities (Mai et al., 2015).

Leader has principle responsibilities for having ethical thought and behaving ethically (Gumaer and Scott, 1986). According to social learning theory, observers take their leaders as a model. If he acts unethically all the time, observers think such behaviors are desired and expected behaviors. Moreover, when they observe that their leader is awarded because of these unethical behaviors, these behavior patterns are accepted as correct (Treviño and Brown, 2005). Therefore, leaders who is a role model for employees themselves must adopt ethical behaviors first and display them, and then they lead observers to behave ethically (Crossen, 1993). They can contribute to generalizing ethical culture within organization, and avoiding factors causing ethical tension and burnout (Harrison et al., 2017).

Transformational Leadership

Because of great changes in market and work power, expectations and requirements from leader have evolved in recent years. The necessity for better-trained and experienced personnel continues for some jobs that require a variety of skills, while automating simple other jobs that require little talent. Instead of transactional leaders who act according to condition, the need for transformational leaders who come to the fore with their characteristics and effectiveness has increased. The transformative leadership approach in these contexts provides the conditions to strengthen subordinates and increase their participation in the business, and to create conscious audiences where all employees value cost-effectiveness, quality and productivity (Bass, 1999).

Transformational leadership is a management style, which inspires subordinates, increases their expectations and so enables challenging goals to be achieved (Schaubroeck et al., 2016). Such charismatic leaders come to the fore with their energies, self-confidence, decisiveness, intellectual personalities, communication skills and strong ideals (Bass, 1997). In this style the leader whose principle is giving a vision and set a goal gives, value to others, assumes that each employee can serve a certain purpose, and provides contribution. To achieve this vision, leaders encourage all their personnel to get more responsibility, so things gets easier, people are given authority and they become more trained and embedded with creativity culture. This paves the way for utilizing potential of individuals to the utmost. Transformational leaders mix the necessities of employees and the factors such as creative idea, decisiveness and energy, perception and sensitivity

(Bass and Avolio, 1993) and turn diversity and difference within the group into advantage and use different thoughts and viewpoints effectively (Kearney and Gebert, 2009). The leaders both incite collective efforts needed to achieve change and enable ethical levels of subordinates to increase (Engelbrecht et al., 2005; Zhu et al., 2011).

Transformational leaders, defined as mentors with high-performance (Bass, 1997), introduce goals clearly which are hard to reach, they become a model themselves about intended behaviors, encourage subordinates for new methods and ways to be tried and urge all group for team work (Schaubroeck et al., 2016). Therefore, they motivate their subordinates and enable them to do works much more than those, which were assigned to them. They increase expectations, put challenging goals and increase performance (Bass, 1996). Such leaders increase awareness about duties and goals of group, and enable these goals to be accepted by everyone (Bass, 1997). Besides, they put forward value and importance of inputs to be gained because of the work they will do and raise awareness of their subordinates. Thus, vision of organization and duties take precedence over self-interests of employees (Yammarino et al., 1993; Wang et al., 2005) and make efforts much more than those which they are expected from them (Arnold et al., 2001; Dvir et al., 2002).

Components of this management style are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Bass and Avolio, 1993). Effect, power and charisma of leader makes duty and vision attractive for employees (Bass, 1996; García-Morales et al., 2012) and behaviors which evoke admiration in society increases the effect felt by subordinates (Zhu et al., 2013). Transformational leaders consider skills, desires, ideals and needs of each individual and support them to overcome their individual and organizational challenges (Walumbwa and Lawler, 2003). Showing interest in subordinates they take into consideration individual differences of their personnel and the things subordinates need to improve. Consequently, employees use their potential at the highest level (Yammarino et al., 1993). Within the scope of individualized consideration being shown to subordinates, various opportunities are given and employees are coached (Bass, 1999).

Intellectual encouragement, another factor seen in such leaders, is the self-competence of subordinates (Sivanathan et al., 2004) and includes raising awareness. The problems faced by this encouragement of the leader instill his own thought and vision in his subordinates. Besides, they pave the way for subordinates to be more creative and more innovative (Yammarino et al., 1993; Bass, 1999;

Eisenbeiss et al., 2008; García-Morales et al., 2012). By meeting their needs, leader motives them and gains support of one's subordinates (Carlson and Perrew, 1995). Feelings of belief and trust felt against leader intensify thanks to some features of one's (Kelloway et al., 2012; Zhu et al., 2013), emotional tie between leader and subordinates and reciprocal respect and feeling of trust tighten (Avolio and Yammarino, 2013) and employees identify themselves with their leaders. The inspiration their leader gives increase their belief that they will achieve astounding things by spending additional effort (Bass, 1997). Ideals, desire for success and maturity levels of workers increase, and goodness and interest of other individuals and organizations are considered (Bass, 1999). That is, the leader who inspires and motivates one's personnel by making work meaningful and challenging duties one has given with his subordinates (Bass and Steidlmeier, 1999) develops team spirit and increases enthusiasm. So, leader strengthens the goals determined and commitment towards the vision shared (Bass, 1996).

Leaders at all levels can be converted into transformational leader via training and education (Bass, 1997). When common benefit and effectiveness of organization taken into consideration, establishing transformational leadership within organization may increase organizational commitment and effectiveness while avoiding or reducing withdrawal intentions and organizational deviation (Walumbwa et al., 2004).

Researches have showed that this management style leads to satisfaction from the leader (Seltzer et al., 1989), and job satisfaction (Medley and Larochelle, 1995; Mahmoud, 2008; Liu et al., 2010; Braun et al., 2013). It also raises organization commitment (Barling et al., 1996; Walumbwa and Lawler, 2003), intensifies organizational citizenship behaviors (Richardson and Vandenberg, 2005; Wang et al., 2005) and levels of identification (Walumbwa et al., 2008), contributes to performance of employees (Dvir et al., 2002; Richardson and Vandenberg, 2005; Wang et al., 2011) and group/team performance (Lim and Ployhart, 2004).

As different from other management styles, it was found that there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and motivation, commitment to quality and organizational productivity (Masi and Cooke, 2000) and commitment to change (Yu et al., 2002). In addition, it was observed that transformational leadership significantly contributes to corporate social responsibility (Waldman et al., 2006), trust, commitment and team efficacy (Arnold et al., 2001) and quality of leader-member exchange (Turunç et al., 2010). On the other hand, it was suggested that there is a reverse relationship between transformational leadership, and

absenteeism rate (Richardson and Vandenberg, 2005), withdrawal behaviors (Walumbwa and Lawler, 2003; Tse, 2008), and turnover behavior (Tse, 2008).

Relationships between Variables and Hypotheses

Burnout occurs as a result of not meeting personal goals and corporate goals, individuals feeling inadequate, not receiving adequate support, losing the excitement and enthusiasm of the work and not having an inspiring element (Leithwood et al., 1996). On the other hand, by motivating their employees, transformative leaders raise performance expectations and unite their staff around a common goal, enticing the group to which they belong and making individual sacrifices (Pillai and Williams, 2004). The subordinates of transformative leaders are more satisfied with their job, and committed to their organization. Organizational deviations, and withdrawal behaviors are not observed in these employees (Walumbwa et al., 2004).

It can therefore be stated that transformative leadership embodies factors that are diametrically opposed to these negative factors that trigger burnout. For example, a worker is dragged into burnout thinking he is deprived of the support of his leader because of that leader does not trust his subordinate and follows him continuously (Stordeur et al., 2001). Researches revealed that transformational leadership positively contributes to better working conditions and goodness of employees (Nielsen and Daniels, 2012). There is a negative relationship between transformational leadership and work stress (Gill et al., 2006) and burnout (Stordeur et al., 2001; Eghdamy et al., 2013). So transformational leadership helps burnout level to be reduced (Seltzer et al., 1989), especially under time pressure, transformational leadership is an important factor in terms of work-family balance and burnout (Syrek et al., 2013). In this case it can be said that there is a negative and significant relationship between transformational leadership and burnout.

Hypothesis 1: Transformational leadership is negatively related to burnout.

Leader must increase one's effectiveness, exert vision and lead personnel with one's behaviors to realize this vision. In this direction, a leader must tend towards ethical behaviors in ethical organization (Carlson and Perrew, 1995). Because leader have correct things done, has charisma and effectiveness which can take required precautions in order for works to be done within the framework of ethics and morals (Bass, 1996), can direct perceptions of work characteristics with language he uses, symbols and images (Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006).

There are some opposite opinions suggesting that

transformational leader may not behave ethically with the effect of power one owns (Carlson and Perrewé, 1995; Treviño and Brown, 2005; Effelsberg et al., 2014). As opposed to these claims, Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) stated that leaders breaching universal ethical rules are individuals who not only are so said “transformational leaders”, but also do not have characteristics of real transformational leaders. Within this scope, it was emphasized that real transformational leader priorities pluralism, autonomy, unity of purpose rather than personal interests; and gather one's entourage around the basic values. Some researchers found that there is a negative relationship between the two variables (Dvir et al., 2002).

Treviño and Brown (2005) stated that a transformative leader with good morals can transform the level of moral development and value of his employees, but many theoretical and experimental studies are needed to test this proposition. On the other hand, Hoyt et al. (2010) concluded that when it comes to their group objectives, leaders do not self-criticize the unethicality of their illegal behavior and tend to justify all their actions. Schaubroeck et al. (2016) determined that ethical and transformative leadership styles reinforce commitment to service quality and performance by influencing the beliefs of employees.

On the other hand, Haron et al. (2011) revealed that role ambiguity, high production and sales goals and effect of leader have a significant effect on unethical behaviors. In order to lessen unethical behaviors researchers suggested setting forth job descriptions clearly, giving reachable goals, supporting and encouraging personnel as well. Engelbrecht et al. (2005) and Sagnak (2010) determined that transformational leadership directly affects ethical climate and the more characteristics of transformational leadership of managers increase, the more powerful the ethical climate become. Effelsberg et al. (2014) found that employees easily tend to unethical behaviors for “the interest of organization and group” especially because of high organizational identification and stated that transformational leadership may increase unethical behaviors in such circumstances. In the same study, writers put forward that transformational leadership actually does not push employees out of ethics; however, workers help universal values of ethics to be evolved into principles of organization. Therefore, it is possible that, in an environment where duties of ethics have been defined clearly and unethical behaviors have been banned, effect of transformational leader will be positive.

Hypothesis 2: Transformational leadership affects unethical behavior negative and significantly.

Liu et al. (2013) revealed that there is a reverse relationship

between unethical behavior and job satisfaction, and if employees are satisfied with their work, unethical behaviors reduce. Elçi et al. (2015) found that ethical climate has a partial mediating effect on the relation between organizational justice performance and burnout. On the other hand, Baek and Kim (2016) determined that burnout has a moderating effect on the relation between job commitment and unethical behavior. Within the framework of the matters above, it is probable that unethical behaviors may increase burnout levels of individuals. It has also been predicted that unethical behavior can be mediator variable between transformative leadership and burnout.

Hypothesis 3: Unethical behavior affects burnout positively and significantly.

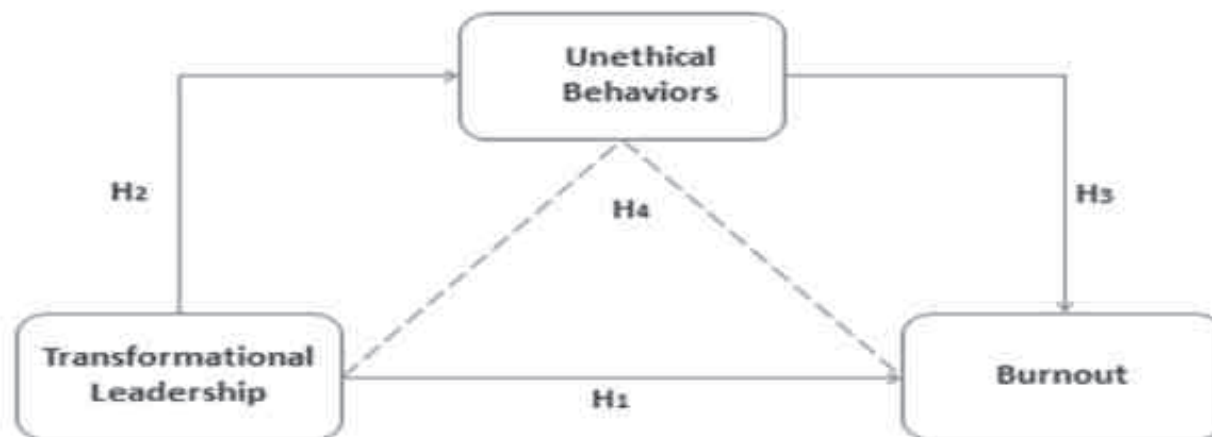
Hypothesis 4: Transformational leadership affects burnout, unethical behaviors mediates this relationship.

Method

Model of the research prepared towards the hypotheses mentioned above, which were formed on the basis of theory and empirical studies, is shown below (Figure-1). Making confirmatory factor analysis of the scales AMOS program was used. To calculate reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of the scales SPSS software was used.

Sampling

Individuals chosen with simple random sampling method from private health sector employees, comprise the sampling of the research. The study was carried out on the workers of two private hospitals. Sample size was calculated as 217 people taking 5% margin error within 95% reliability limits from the universe (Yazıcıoğlu and Erdoğan, 2007). 228 of questions were returned. Total of 21 data sets of variables, which are out of normal distribution, were taken out from the analysis in the outliers analyze performed and total 217 questionnaires were included in the analyses. Average age of participants is 33, 68% of those are women, 45% of them are nurses, and samples are predominantly (n=44) high school graduates and average term of service at workplaces is 9 years.

Figure-1 Research Model and Hypothesis

Scales of the Research

Determining levels of burnout of the participants 22-item with 3 dimensions Burnout Inventory developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981) has been used. Answers were taken with 5-point Likert scale (1: strongly agree, 5: strongly disagree). Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients made by Ergin (1993) were found to be .83, .65 and .72 respectively.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) shows that data adapted to 3-factor structure of the scale. Therefore, in the analysis handled in a single dimension, 9 items having factor load less than .35 were removed from the scale (T4, T5, T7, T9, T12, T17, T18, T19, and T21). It was seen that factor loads of the items in the model changed between .40 and .80. So single factor model was used in the study ($X^2/sd=2.6$, $GFI=.90$, $IFI=.92$, $CFI=.92$, $RMSEA=.08$). Reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be high ($\alpha=0.87$).

Determining transformational leadership perception of employees 5-item scale developed by Podsakoff et al., 1990; 1996) was used. Answers were taken with 5-point Likert scale (1: strongly agree, 5: strongly disagree). Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was found to be .91 (Bettencourt, 2004). Results of KMO analysis of the scales was found to be .89 respectively and Barlett test was significant ($p=.000$). According to EFA results, it was determined that data adapted to single-factor structures of the scales ($X^2/sd=2.2$, $GFI=0.99$, $IFI=0.98$, $CFI=0.99$,

$RMSEA=0.03$). Factor loads of items changed between 0.80 and 0.90 and reliability coefficient of the scale was high ($\alpha=0.91$).

In order to determine workers' perceptions of unethical behavior 6-question scale developed by Ferrell and Skinner (1988) and adapted by Fraedrich (1993) has been used. Reliability coefficient of the scale has been calculated as 0.80 (Turunç et al., (2013). Two items (E1 and E2), which reduce adaptive values of the scale removed. Single-factor model was used, measurement values of goodness of fit were found to be good ($X^2/sd=4.3$, $GFI=0.96$, $IFI=0.95$, $CFI=0.95$, $RMSEA=0.08$). Factor loads of the items were found to have changed between 0.41 and 0.71 and reliability coefficient of the scale is at mid-level ($\alpha=0.81$).

Findings

Because data must fit normal distribution for parametric analysis tests (Yazıcıoğlu and Erdoğan, 2007), analysis of normal distribution was made and found that data fitted normal distribution. Correlations (Pearson) were calculated to test the relationship between variables (Table-1).

Table-1 Means, SD and Correlations

Variables	Mean	S. D	1	2	3
1. Burnout (B)	2.54	0.78	(.87)		
2. Unethical Behaviors (UB)	2.16	0.86	.48***	(.91)	
3. Transformational Leadership (TL)	3.35	1.05	-.241***	-.25***	(.81)

*** $p \leq .001$, Alpha reliability coefficients are shown in parentheses.

It was observed that there is a negative relationship between transformational leadership and burnout ($r = -.24$, $p < .001$) and negative relationship between transformational leadership and unethical behavior ($r = -.25$, $p < .001$). Therefore, it was concluded that the more transformational leadership characteristics that individuals observe on their leader increase, the less their burnout perceptions and unethical behaviors become. It is thought

that this may have resulted from positive effects of transformational leadership applications. When relationships between unethical behavior and burnout was examined in the study, it was seen that there is a positive relationship ($r = .48$, $p < .001$) between the two variables. Therefore, it was found that the more unethical behaviors of individuals increase, the higher their burnout levels increase.

Table-2 The mediating role of unethical behaviors in the relationship between transformational leadership and burnout

Models	Dependent Variable		<i>t</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>
Test 1 (<i>Hypothesis 1</i>)				.45	.21	19.5***
Age	Burnout	-.10	-1.07			
Tenure		.28	2.88**			
T. Leadership		-.34	-5.53***			
Test 2 (<i>Hypothesis 2</i>)				.34	.12	10.2***
Age	Unethical B.	-.33	-3.32***			
Tenure		-.37	3.66**			
T. Leadership		-.18	-2.67**			
Test 3 (<i>Hypothesis 3</i>)				.53	.28	28.7***
Age	Burnout	-.03	-0.38			
Tenure		.24	2.71**			
Unethical B.		.43	7.29***			
Test 4 (<i>Hypothesis 4</i>)				.58	.34	28.6***
Age	Burnout	.02	0.31			
Tenure		.13	1.46			
T. Leadership		-.27	-4.56***			
Unethical B.		.39	6.68***			
Sobel test (z)		-4.6***				

*** $p < .001$, ** $p < .01$

Investigating effects of interaction between transformational leadership and unethical behaviors on burnout, it was found that transformational leadership affects burnout negatively, but the degree of its effect decreases ($\beta = -.27, p < .001$) and that the effect of unethical behaviors continue on burnout ($\beta = .39, p < .001$). That is, when unethical behaviors, which is a mediating variable, were added to the model, the effect of transformational leadership on burnout decreases from $\beta = -.34 (p < .001)$ to $\beta = -.27 (p < .001)$. Confirming mediating effects, Sobel test showed that unethical behaviors has partial mediating role in the relation between transformational leadership and burnout perception and Hypothesis 4 was supported.

Testing hypotheses effects of independent variables on dependent variable were calculated one by one in hierarchic regression analyses. In the analyses, age and employment time, which are among demographic variables, were taken under control. In order to mention mediating effect of a variable three conditions respectively must exist. Therefore testing mediating effect four-stage regression analysis suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986) and “Sobel Tests” were performed. Within this scope, independent variable must have an effect on mediating variable. Regression analyses (Table-2) showed that transformational leadership has negative and significant effect on burnout ($\beta = -.34, p < .001$), and unethical behaviors ($\beta = -.18, p < .01$). In addition, unethical behaviors have positive and significant effect on burnout ($\beta = .43, p < .001$). So the first three hypotheses were supported.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, effects of burnout that is undesirable output for employees, on transformational leadership and effects of unethical behavior on this syndrome were scrutinized. Data collected from workers of private health sector were analyzed and hypotheses related to relationship between transformational and burnout and the role of unethical behavior in this relationship were supported. It was determined that transformational relationship has a negative effect on both burnout and unethical behavior. The findings match up with other studies. Just like similar studies there is a negative relationship between transformational leadership and burnout (Stordeur et al., 2001; Eghdamy et al., 2013, Seltzer et al., 1989; Syrek et al., 2013). Findings show that transformational relationship has an important effect on reducing burnout level of transformational leader.

We also observed that transformational leadership has negative effect on unethical behaviors. In addition to this, many researches show that transformational leadership directly affects ethics climate (Engelbrecht et al., 2005;

Sagnak, 2010) and reduces unethical behaviors (Effelsberg et al., 2014). In this direction, it was understood that transformational leadership is a critical factor to avoid burnout syndrome, which causes individuals to be functionless and unethical behaviors, which harm the reputation of organizations.

At the next stage, it was concluded that unethical behavior affects burnout positively. Considering that conflict with colleagues and being kept under close follow-up by leader cause burnout (Stordeur et al., 2001), that burnout has a moderating effect on the relationship between unethical behavior and job commitment (Baek and Kim, 2016), this finding is also verified. Indeed, both unethical behaviors and burnout lead to several individual and organizational problems. Therefore, encouragement to be ethical at work may reduce tension resulting from ethical observations and pacify factors causing burnout (Harrison et al., 2017).

Finally it was seen that unethical behavior has a partial mediating effect in the relation between transformational leadership and burnout. Employees, whose leader is transformational, are more satisfied (Medley and Larochelle, 1995; Mahmoud, 2008; Liu et al., 2010; Braun et al., 2013), and committed to their job (Barling et al., 1996; Walumbwa and Lawler, 2003; Pillai and Williams, 2004). In such working conditions, employees display less organizational deviation (Walumbwa et al., 2004) and withdrawal behaviors (Walumbwa and Lawler, 2003; Tse, 2008). This conclusion also supports the literature that leader is a role model for directing ethical behaviors of subordinates (Simola et al., 2010).

In summary, it can be said that transformational leaders have a critical role in reducing burnout levels of employees and transformational leadership must be emphasized. In the model we examined two significant roles of transformational leader on burnout emerged. The first one is leader strengthens his subordinates and increases their participation aimed at work (Bass, 1999), inspires and enables them to reach challenging goals (Schaubroeck et al., 2016), motivates to exert more effort (Arnold et al., 2001; Dvir et al., 2002). These behaviors provide employees welfare and job satisfaction, which blocks burnout. Indirect role of leaders on burnout is that increasing ethical levels of subordinates (Engelbrecht et al., 2005; Zhu et al., 2011) by both being model and controlling them (Crossen, 1993; Simola et al., 2010) and so establishing ethical behavior. As a conclusion, under the leader's support and guidance, an organization where ethical behavior is emphasized burnout cases can be reduced by preventing negative situations that burnout cases can be reduced by preventing negative situations that cause various conflicts and perceptions of injustice.

There are some limitations in our study. First, only effects of transformational leadership and unethical behaviors were analyzed. Within this framework, it is thought that including other variables, which have an effect on burnout in the model, will widen scope of researches. In addition, because the sampling from which we obtained data includes only one sector, the results may not be generalized for other sectors. Therefore, similar researches to be set up on the same model in different models will contribute to generalizing results of the research. Besides moderating effect of ethical behavior should be questioned in the similar studies.

Conclusion and Suggestions.

Avoiding burnout, various precautions for intervention and its mediating elements should be used (Piko, 2006). To exemplify amount of workload can be kept at a reasonable level, employees can be reached and burnout can be prevented by directing them towards realistic goals and meeting their demands (Pines and Maslach, 1978). Organizational support and a good relationship (Vahey et al., 2004), supportive and motivating working environment (Nahrgang et al., 2011; Papathanasiou, 2014) and stress relief resources lessens the burnout level. Therefore, establishing an environment that integrates goals of parties and supports improvement of employees (Leitwood et al., 1996), improves the working conditions (Harrison et al., 2017) and adopts transformational leadership styles (Syrek et al., 2013) will be beneficial for organizations.

On the other side sometimes it is difficult to control unethical behaviors. So, the personnel should learn the importance of ethical behavior and its' effect on careers (Buckley et al., 1998). To avoid from unethical behaviors, it would be better to employ individuals who have the potential to behave ethically. Also trainings related to ethical behavior should be given, ethical people should be awarded, and ethical climate and culture should be established (Brass et al., 1998). Since leader who guide the ethical behavior of employees and become role models (Simola et al., 2010), and ethical behavior within the organization can only be achieved by the establishment of an ethical system by the senior management, managers should adopt to transformative leadership approach. In this context, the responsibility of the leader stands out in supporting the institutional structure that includes ethical policies, rules and processes (Engelbrecht et al., 2005). As transformative leaders spend time with their subordinates, they can successfully change their value systems and have an influence on their moral development (Krishnan, 2005).

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