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MORAL DISENGAGEMENT, ORGANIZATIONAL BROKEN WINDOW, PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT AS AN ANTECEDENT: MACHIAVELLIAN LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

Leadership is the use of power to influence to motivate. In the literature, there are a good number of researches examining the relationship between leadership and work behavior. Mostly, these deal with positive leadership characteristics. The leader can direct his/her followers in a way that can cause positive or negative outputs. This research has focused on Machiavellianism, which is one of the negative leader characteristics. The main purpose of this research is to determine whether Machiavellian leadership is an antecedent of moral disengagement, broken window in organizations, and person-organization fit behaviors. Another purpose of the research is to reach the results related to the concept of the broken window. In organizations which never been addressed as a research topic in the literature. The research has been conducted on workers in the manufacturing and service industries. The scope of the research consists of 205 people. Leadership is the Quantitative approach that has been preferred in line with the research question. Confirmatory factor analysis has been applied to the data. In consequence of the analyses, goodness of fit, structural, convergent and discriminant validity and reliability values have been also measured. The proposed hypotheses have been tested by SEM. It has been determined that leader Machiavellianism is an antecedent of moral disengagement, broken window in organizations, and person-organization fit. The results of the findings have been interpreted and suggestions have been made for future research.

Keywords: Machiavellian leadership, Moral disengagement, Organizational broken window, Person-organization fit.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership is the determination of how power is used to influence others. There are many studies on the determination of the role of leadership in business behavior (Yang & Wei, 2018). Organizationally, when the leader's behaviors are to be perceived positively, positive reflections reveal themselves, and when these are to be perceived negatively, the negative ones appear. The leader's behaviors, in that sense, can cause organizationally expected or unwanted outcomes. Authors are having examined the dark origins of the leadership related to personality (Furter *et al.*, 2017), having dealt with the leader and follower fit within the framework of honesty (Do *et al.*, 2021), having researched ethical level of leadership styles (Kerse, 2021), and Machiavellian leadership in interpersonal ethical relationships. In addition to these, researchers have aimed to find the reasons that distract the leaders from ethical behavior, due to the

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administrative scandals (Gkorezis *et al.*, 2015). The leader's philosophy of "everything is fair on the way to the goal" can cause unethical behaviors to enter the organizational culture (Jaiswal, 2017). As an example of unethical behavior, few studies deal with the negative consequences of Machiavellian leadership (Gkorezis *et al.*, 2015; Stradovnik & Stare, 2018). The primary purpose of this research is to reveal the effect of moral disengagement, broken window, and person-organization fit, which is the antecedent of Machiavellian leader behaviors, with employee perception. Examining the theory of broken windows, which has not been dealt with much in organizations, is also another aim of this research.

Literature Review

Individuals can act on their self-interests, and it is quite normal. For the Machiavellianists, however, their self-interests come first, and it has become a behavioral strategy to manipulate others for this purpose (Clemper, 2021). According to Belschak *et al.* (2018), Machiavellian individuals focus strongly on their aims, and they try all means to accomplish their objectives. They design future-oriented strategies since there is a purpose behind their behavior (Jones & Paulhus, 2014). It is possible to state that Machiavellianists are rationalists. Profit-oriented planning has an impact on their behaviors, and they affect people by manipulating them for this purpose. This behavior results from a lack of empathy (Miao *et al.*, 2019). They need to reclaim, and they may be hypocritical in line with this purpose. The characteristics of the Machiavellian individual disrupt the balance of social life (Belschak *et al.*, 2018). It is possible to call a leader a Machiavellian leader who exhibits the specified characteristics.

Life history theory can explain strategic behaviors aiming at making more use of available resources and increasing the quality of life. According to this theory, fast or slow strategies may be preferred. It can be expressed that the Machiavellian personality gets involved in the strategy of fast life (Lyons, 2019). According to the fast life strategy, Machiavellianists may exhibit planned behaviors that do not have ethical concerns to have access to resources (Dahling *et al.*, 2009).

Social cognitive theory is another concept helping explain social behavior. According to the theory, the environmental conditions of which it is a part are also included in the scope of the evaluation while exhibiting behavior towards a determined target. Evaluation includes the process of making comparisons with people taken as references (Yavuz-Birben & Bacanlı, 2017). Social conformity finds a place within the moral values system allowing the individual to control his/her behavior. Morality offers an insight into distinguishing between "good and bad" for the individual. Every individual can control himself by his/her moral values in social life. Values, norms and rules, which make social life livable and keep the individual away from selfishness, constitute the moral system (Ellemers *et al.* 2019). Moral values may not always be followed, and the individual may choose to ignore his/her moral obligations, due to environmental conditions. Today, the eight socio-cognitive mechanisms, which makes moral disengagement possible, have become a phenomenon used to explain human behavior (Marquardt *et al.*, 2021). Social life is maintained by accepted behaviors having taken their place. This set of behaviors is expressed as tradition and custom. These behaviors do not attract attention, and these are socially considered as "appropriate". Social conformity is related to the acceptance by society rather than



focusing on whether a behavior is "good" or "bad". To put it simply, disorderliness is also as much a socially acceptable phenomenon as order.

Many leaders have cognitive and intellectual capacities, however, what makes them special is their moral character (Kotze & Nel, 2017). Also, immoral behaviors occur when leaders accept unethical behaviors "as normal according to social conformity". In other words, the Machiavellian leader exhibits the attitudes that support moral disengagement. As stated, this type of behavior also permeates the organizational culture.

H₁: Machiavellian leadership enhances moral disengagement.

The broken window is a theory that sheds light on the research of "the relationship between the increase in crime rates, such as violence and theft in a neighborhood and physical spaces" (Wilcox *et al.*, 2004). According to this theory, some individuals break the windows of abandoned buildings. Even if other individuals sharing the same environment do not adopt this behavior, they, later, start breaking other windows by describing this behavior as "appropriate". Thus, even a single case may cause social collapse by mobilizing the society (Bektaş *et al.*, 2019). The broken window begins to increase when individuals do not consider the disorderliness as a problem (Gau & Pratt, 2010). Criminologists state that people in the same environment, especially in areas that lack control mechanisms, can also adapt to behaviors that harm abandoned buildings. The attitude and behavior of the leader, who is a role model, will also affect the behavior of the followers.

Machiavellian leaders exhibit less ethical behavior (Belschak *et al.*, 2018a). Strautmanis (2008) claims that ethical leadership behaviors will contribute to the repair of the broken window. In the exact opposite situation, a broken window can increase since a broken window includes deliberate actions, and whether it increases or decreases is related to the socio-psychological effects of individuals in the same environment (Williams, 2019).

The Machiavellian leader may negatively affect his/her employees, and they may stop acting in the interests of the organization. The hypothesis worked on, according to this view, is as follows:

H₂: Machiavellian leadership increases broken windows.

Person-organization fit can be expressed as "the harmony or fit between the employee and the organization" (Hamstra *et al.*, 2019). Person-organization fit also emphasizes the similarity of organizational and individual purposes. This similarity has an impact on results such as dependence and performance (Özkan & Tosun, 2020). In the literature, there is evidence that person-organization fit affects positive organizational behavior. According to Mandalaki *et al.*, (2019), personality or other psychological characteristics also have an impact on person-organization fit. In other sayings, it is possible to see negative behaviors as a reaction in environments where there is no person-organization fit. Leadership behaviors impact the workfare of followers (Hamstra *et al.*, 2019). According to research results by Wijewardena *et al.* (2017), followers feel positive emotions when they perceive managers' sense of humor positively, whereas the followers feel negative when the managers' sense of humor is negative. Emotions are reflected in behaviors. Negative leader qualities create negative work behaviors (Stradovnik & Stare, 2018). It is thought that Machiavellian leadership, which is evaluated as self-interested and manipulative, may have negative effects on employees. Ambrose *et al.* (2008) express that ethical values protect and develop the moral integrity of employees and cause an increase in person-organization fit. Person-organization fit of employees who exhibit attitudes



according to the qualities of ethical values positively affected (Valentine *et al.*, 2002; Ruiz-Palomino *et al.*, 2013). It can be assumed that Machiavellianism, which ignores ethical values, will reduce person-organization fit. The hypothesis designed in line with this view is as follows:

H₃: Machiavellian leadership reduces the person-organization fit.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is based on the relational screening model, and it is a causal type of research in terms of its purpose. Within this scope, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, reliability analysis, validity analysis were used to analyze the data in the research, and lastly structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to test causal relations.

The population consists of full-time employees in the production and service sector in Sakarya. The research sample, on the other hand, consists of 205 personnel actively working in production and service enterprises.

The questionnaire technique was used as a data collection method in the research. That five times the number of items in the scale suggested by Coşkun *et al.* (2019) and Hair *et al.* (2017) was taken into consideration, to determine the sample size.

Accordingly, 229 of the questionnaires, handed to 300 people, were sent back (the return rate is 76%), and 22 questionnaire forms, not answered completely, were not added to the research. 2 questionnaire forms having extreme value were also excluded from the analysis, and thus the research sample consists of 205 employees reached by convenience sampling method. While 79.5% (163) of the participants were male, 20.5% (42) were female, and 71.7% of them are married (147), 28.3% (58) are single. 40% (82) of them were high-school graduates, 15.1% (31) have an associate degree, 37.6% (77) have bachelor's degree, 7.3% (15) have a postgraduate degree, and the average of their professional experience is 12.92. According to Kline (2016), for saying that the distribution of the data set is normal, the skewness and kurtosis values of the items in the scale should not be greater than absolute 3 and 10 values, respectively. It can be said that the data set is normally distributed because the skewness and kurtosis values of the questions in the scale are within reasonable limits.

Measures

Various scales in the literature that were previously developed were examined in the determination of the scales used in the research, and a questionnaire form was created with scales among which reliability and validity scores were consistent in many studies. The demographic characteristics of the participants, leader Machiavellianism scale, moral disengagement scale, organizational broken window scale, and person-organization fit scale are included in the questionnaire, respectively. All of the scales within the scope of the research were arranged in a 5-point Likert format (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree).

Leader Machiavellianism Scale: The leader Machiavellianism scale, used in the study of De Hoogh *et al.* (2021) and consisting of eight items, was used. The five-stage technique introduced by Brislin (1980) was used in the translation process of the scale. After these stages, the scale



was used in the research being evaluated for the last time by academicians who are two Turkish and three foreign language experts supporting the research.

Moral disengagement Scale: The seven-item moral disengagement scale, which was developed by Moore *et al.* (2011) and was adapted into Turkish by Erbaş and Perçin (2017), was used in the research.

Organizational Broken Window Scale: The organizational broken window scale, developed by Bektaş *et al.* (2019) and comprising of thirteen items, was used.

Person-Organization Fit Scale: A four-item person-organization fit scale, which was developed by Netemeyer *et al.* (1997) and was adapted into Turkish by Elçi *et al.* (2008), was used in the research. To be sure about whether the survey tool is reliable and valid, one pilot test was conducted on 50 participants, and the questionnaire was terminated.

Common Method Bias Test

For minimizing the common method variance in this research, the recommendations of Podsakoff *et al.* (2003) were taken into account. Accordingly, the statements about the dependent variables have been included in the questionnaire form before the independent variables, and it has been taken into consideration they not to be made of long statements, along with the reliability of the scales used. Harman's single factor method was used to confirm whether there is a common method variance trend in the study (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). The number of factors that emerged as a result of factor analysis without using any rotation technique is nine, and the total amount of variance explained by these factors is 56,048%. In case the number of factors is compelled to 1, the total amount of variance explained by the factor in which all observed variables are collected in a single factor is 24.115%. It can be said that there is no common method variance error in the research data as this rate is lower than 50% variance.



Findings

The mean, standard deviation, correlation, and reliability values of the variables are shown in **Table 1**. That the Cronbach Alpha coefficients of the structures are between .70 and .91 demonstrates that the scales used in the research have sufficient internal consistency. It was detected that leader Machiavellianism, moral disengagement and organizational broken window ($r=.34$, $p<.01$; $r=.24$, $p<.01$, respectively), moral disengagement and organizational broken window ($r=.54$; $p<.01$) were positive, person-organization fit, leader Machiavellianism and organizational broken window ($r=-.30$, $p<.01$; $r=-.17$, $p<.05$, respectively) were negative, when the correlation values were examined.

Table 1. Mean, standard deviation, corelation and internal consistency values.

Variable	Mean	S. D.	1	2	3	4
Leader Machiavellianism	2.52	.74	(.75)			
Moral Disengagement	2.25	.72	.344**	(.70)		
Organizational Broken Window	1.84	.71	.248**	.546**	(.91)	
Person-Organization Fit	3.13	.97	-.305**	-.127	-.177*	(.88)

Note. N=205; * $p<.05$; ** $p<.01$; r=Pearson Correlation; (Cronbach Alfa)

Measurement Model

The measurement model used in the research was tested by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) by using the AMOS 21 program. Within this framework, it was analyzed whether the predicted structures of the scales were supported by the collected data using the maximum likelihood method.

The fitness of the measurement model to the available data was evaluated, in line with the fit indices proposed by Kline (2016). These are Absolute Fit Indices (χ^2/df), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) ve Comparative Fit Index (CFI). That χ^2/df value χ^2/df value is below 3, RMSEA and SRMR values are below .05, TLI and CFI values are above .95, among these indices shows that the model has high goodness of fit (Byrne, 2016; Kline, 2016).

It was determined that the TLI and CFI values in the measurement model were not at a reasonable level in consequence of DFA. It was detected that AVE values of leader Machiavellianism and organizational broken window were below the threshold value (.50), the AVE and MSV values of moral disengagement were low and the square root of AVE was smaller than the correlation values between the factors. Therewith, Item 1, 2, and 6th in the leader Machiavellianism scale, Item 3, 4, 6, and 7th in moral disengagement scale, Item 1, 2, and 6th in the organizational broken window scale were removed from the measurement model to increase the fit indices and MSV and AVE values. After this proceeding, it is seen that the fit index values are at a reasonable level and it meet the criteria specified for the indices, and the AVE values (leader Machiavellianism and moral disengagement) get closer to the threshold limit.

In the research, convergent and divergent validity were tested after the structural validity analysis. It is recommended that convergent validity is $CR > .70$; $AVE > .50$; $CR > AVE$, for discriminant validity is $MSV < AVE$; $ASV < AVE$, and the correlation between factors are $< \sqrt{AVE}$ (Hair *et al.*, 2017).

Fuller *et al.* (2016) also state that an AVE less than .5 but CR greater than .6 is sufficient for convergent validity. This view is also supported by various scientific studies (Çalışır *et al.*, 2016). According to the values in the table, it is seen that CR values for each factor are greater than AVE, and AVE values are higher than MSV and ASV. In addition, the condition that the square root of the AVE values is greater than the correlation values between the factors has also been met (Hair *et al.*, 2017; Xia & Yang, 2019).

It has been demonstrated that the model has sufficient construct, convergent and divergent validity when all these findings and results are evaluated together.

Table 2. Measurement model

Variable	Items	Factor Load	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV	\sqrt{AVE}
Leader Machiavellianism	LM3	.79	.76	.45	.08	.06	.67
	LM4	.62***					
	LM5	.67***					
	LM8	.58***					
Moral Disengagement	MD1	.67	.72	.46	.44	.16	.68
	MD2	.77***					
	MD5	.58***					

Organizational Broken Window	OBW3	.73	.92	.53	.44	.14	.73						
	OBW4	.70***											
	OBW5	.66***											
	OBW7	.59***											
	OBW8	.80***											
	OBW9	.64***											
	OBW10	.79***											
	OBW11	.74***											
	OBW12	.75***											
	OBW13	.83***											
	Person- Organization Fit	POF1						.70	.88	.65	.08	.05	.80
		POF2						.95***					
		POF3						.74***					
POF4		.72***											
Fit Indexes (Before the item is deleted)													
$\chi^2/df=2.30$; RMSEA=.08; SRMR=.07; TLI=.78; CFI=.79													
Fit Indexes (After the item is deleted)													
$\chi^2/df=1.91$; RMSEA=.06; SRMR=.05; TLI=.91; CFI=.92													

Note. *** $p < .001$; CR=Composite Reliability; AVE=Average Variance Extracted; MSV= Maximum Shared Squared Variance; ASV=Average Shared Squared Variance

Structural Model

SEM was used to test the research hypotheses. The standardized path coefficients, standard deviation, t, and p values of the research model are shown in **Table 3 (Figure 1)**.

Table 3. SEM findings

Hipotezler	Standardize β	Standart Deviation	t value	p	Results
LM \rightarrow MD	.24	.11	2.52	.01**	Accepted
LM \rightarrow OBW	.28	.08	3.21	.001***	Accepted
LM \rightarrow POF	-.32	.09	-3.54	.000 ***	Accepted

Note. ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; LM= Leader Machiavellianism; MD=Moral Disengagement; OBW=Organizational Broken Window; POF= Person-Organization Fit

It is understood that the leader Machiavellianism has a positive and significant impact on moral disengagement and organizational broken window ($\beta = .24$, $p < .01$; $\beta = .28$, $p < .001$, respectively) when **Table 3** is examined. It was observed that the leader Machiavellianism has a negative and significant effect on person-organization fit ($\beta = -.32$, $p < .001$). According to the findings, hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 of the research were supported.



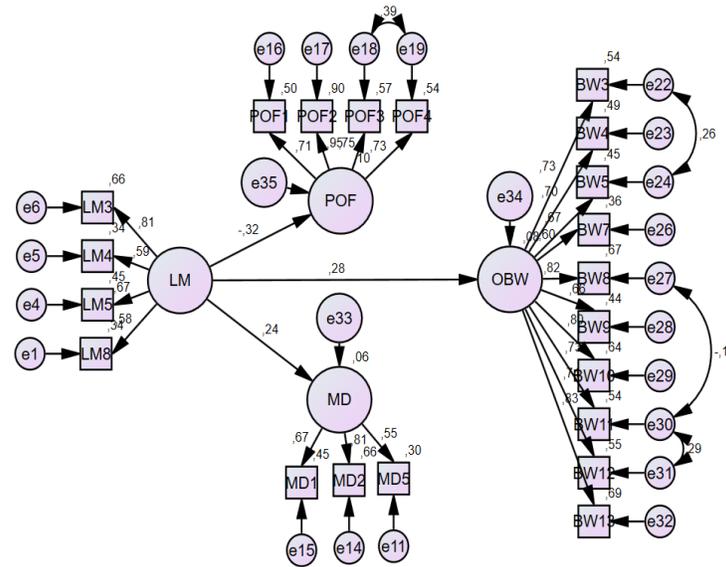


Figure 1. Structural model

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The determined measurement model was analyzed by using the AMOS program. As a result of confirmatory factor analysis, items having low factor burden were excluded from the analysis. Construct validity, on the other hand, was obtained in consequence of repeated analysis. Convergent and divergent validity values are within reasonable limits. CR values that are than Cronbach's Alpha were also calculated for reliability. It was also detected that there was no common method variance error.

The hypotheses were checked by structural equation modeling.

The hypotheses regarding the dependent variables of moral disengagement, broken window, and person-organization fit, which is the antecedent of Machiavellian leadership, have been tested. It has been seen that Machiavellian leadership is antecedent of moral disengagement ($\beta=.24$, $p<.01$), organizational broken window ($\beta=.28$, $p<.001$), person-organization fit ($\beta=-.32$, $p<.001$). Therefore, hypotheses H1, H2, H3 were accepted.

The tendency of Life History Theory to make greater use of resources explains the behavior of Machiavellian leaders. Machiavellianists do not hesitate to act unethically for their purposes (Pinto *et al.*, 2008; Dahling *et al.*, 2009). The atmosphere originated from the attitudes and behaviors of Machiavellians also affects their colleagues (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Belschak *et al.*, (2018b) draw attention to the interaction of the Machiavellian personality between the leader and the follower. The relational aspect of leadership with ethics shapes the person-organization fit (DeConinck, 2015; Kerse, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Personality is a factor that cannot be changed immediately but determines the direction and framework of social relations. Therefore, it affects people's relationships with other individuals

in their environment. Understanding the consequences of personality to analyze business behavior is significant. The manipulation success of Machiavellianism, which is examined under the concept of personality, may alter at a level that contradicts organizational and social values (Clempner, 2021). In this research, it was determined that the followers of the Machiavellian leader had a maladaptive effect on the person-organization fit when it was remembered that Machiavellian leaders had a lower level of ethical value than other leaders (Kerse, 2021).

It was seen that ethical values protect moral integrity (Ambrose *et al.*, 2008). The fact that Machiavellianism does not take notice of ethical values (Pinto *et al.*, 2008; Dahling *et al.*, 2009) and the Machiavellian leader disrupts moral integrity and causes moral indifference has also been proven by this research.

According to the results of the research, the issue of preventing the Machiavellian followers or leaders from working together should not be ignored. It is recommended that apply the tests which can identify such personalities, and choose from the results for human resources professionals in the selection of people who will adapt to manager and teamwork.

It has been determined that personal and organizational values affect person-organization fit (Andersson *et al.*, 2017). In this point, it is perfectly normal that the followers of the Machiavellian leader negatively affect the person-organization fit if the personal value chain involves focusing on individual purposes.

Behaviors, which individuals consider unethical, can be used to comply with the social order. Compatibly with the research results, Machiavellianism encourages breaking windows to achieve its goals. The broken window starts to increase when there is a lack of control (Wilson, 2017). The supervisory mechanism is expected to be the leader in organizations. Managing unapproved employee behaviors depends on the execution process in which the organizations pursue a n effective control, manager, leader, employee and organizational culture policy.



Limitations and Dimensions for Future Research

The research was limited to broken windows, moral disengagement, and person-organization fit, and Machiavellian leadership was examined as an antecedent of employee attitudes and behaviors. Whether the employees were Machiavellian or not has not been contained in the research. The Machiavellian leader from the perspective of an employee has been examined under this research. Relations include production-oriented business employees. The research sample consists of participants living in Turkey. The data were collected online.

The broken window, which is researched within the scope of criminology, has not been researched much in organizations. This research focuses on the broken window in organizations and reveals the existence of only one antecedent regarding the concept.

Longitudinal research, which allows the effects of Machiavellian leadership to be re-measured over some time, may be conducted in the future. Intermediary or regulatory roles that can reduce or increase the level of influence can be looked at by the outputs of the Machiavellian leadership. Whether the leaders at the administrative levels are Machiavellian leaders with their perceptions can be analyzed. The relation between the five-factor personality structure and political behaviors can be examined. Broken windows cause people to isolate themselves from the outer world and interact (Wilson, 2017). Behaviors such as cynicism, intention to leave, work stress, abnormal workplace behaviors, whistle-blowing may also be outputs of Machiavellian leadership.

Machiavellian leadership may not result in completely negative work behaviors or attitudes when that Machiavellian people act rationally is taken into consideration (Jones & Paulhus, 2014). It can also offer outputs that can be welcomed from an organizational or personal point of view, such as Robin Hood-style (Rego *et al.*, 2017).

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