The Effect of Transformational Leadership on Organizational Cynicism: An Application to Tourism Businesses

Hüseyin ÇELİK (iD) ᵃ Serkan NAKTİYOK (iD) ᵇ

ᵃ Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi, Manisa, Türkiye. celikhuseyin051@gmail.com

ᵇ Atatürk Üniversitesi, Atatürk Üniversitesi, İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Çalışma Ekonomisi ve Endüstri İlişkileri Programı, Erzurum, Türkiye. snaktiyok@atauni.edu.tr

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Transformational leadership Organizational cynicism Hospitality industry Received 11 August 2025 Revised 13 February 2026 Accepted 25 February 2026 **Article Classification:** Research Article	**Purpose** – The aim of the study is to determine the effect of transformational leadership on organizational cynicism. By addressing the relationship between these two variables, this research seeks to offer insights that can guide businesses operating in a competitive and rapidly changing environment. **Design/methodology/approach** – In this study, data were collected from 326 employees working in 4- and 5-star hotels affiliated with the Provincial Directorate of Tourism in the Didim district of Aydın, using the survey method. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was conducted to analyze the data, using SPSS, a quantitative data analysis software. **Results** – The analysis results showed that the transformational leadership approach has an adverse effect on organizational cynicism. The correlation analysis showed a significant relationship between transformational leadership and organizational cynicism. As a result, it was concluded that the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational cynicism is negative, and the strength of the relationship is at the 99 percent significance level (r=-0,193). **Discussion** – Based on the outcomes of the interaction between transformational leadership and organizational cynicism and given the importance of both for businesses, it is vital for companies to employ strategies that enhance transformational leadership practices and reduce organizational cynicism among employees to gain competitive advantage over their competitors in terms of sustainability. Businesses should have their management approaches with change- and competition-oriented to remain viable in an increasingly competitive environment, while also placing an emphasis on professional development.

1. Introduction

Uncertainty, instability, and change are among the key concepts that best describe today's business life. Additionally, technological developments and globalization lead to interconnected changes that continuously reshape the conditions in which organizations operate. In this environment where change, uncertainty, and discontinuity are experienced intensely and relentlessly, achieving organizational success becomes increasingly difficult, especially when competition is also taken into account. It is unthinkable for organizations, which are seen as fundamental components of societies, to operate without being affected by the ongoing trend of change. Human resources are one of the most important advantages that organizations operating within a social system can provide over their competitors. Therefore, ensuring effective satisfaction of human resources and maintaining continuity within the organization and operating in line with the goals and objectives of the organization are especially important for the sustainability of organizations. This is where the concept of organizational cynicism emerges. In today's business world, organizations are required to take various measures, recognizing that human resources are a valuable capital and that ensuring their satisfaction and retention is essential for businesses. Moreover, as organizational conditions become increasingly challenging, managers are expected to possess certain leadership qualities in addition to their legal authority. Additionally, in today's globalized world, organizations need leadership behaviors that encourage and enable

employees to embrace forward-looking change and development, more than conventional leaders, to ensure sustainability. Transformational leadership is precisely that, a leadership approach capable of anticipating large-scale change, grounded in a clear vision for the future, and effective in convincing followers that they are both essential to and active participants in the transformation. To date, the concepts of transformational leadership and organizational cynicism have been extensively examined. Organizational cynicism is not merely an individual attitude, but a critical element that disrupts the overall functioning of an organization. Literature emphasizes that cynicism weakens employees' organizational commitment (Mousa, 2017) and plays a directly negative role in job performance (Akdemir et al., 2016). Transformational leadership offers a constructive solution to managing this negative situation. It is highlighted that transformational leaders increase employee job satisfaction (Boamah et al., 2018) and positively influence motivation processes (Ahmad et al., 2014). However, they are generally evaluated independently of each other. By leveraging this independence, the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational cynicism can be explained through Leader-Member Interaction (LMI) theory. It is stated that Leader-Member Interaction theory draws upon Blau's (1964) Social Change Theory and the concept of trust (Çalışkan, 2017). Accordingly, there is a situation of mutual expectation in the dyadic relationship between leader and subordinate. This interaction builds the bond between the parties on a foundation of trust. Therefore, the existence of interaction represents the presence of a trust-based, high-level, and good communication between the leader and subordinate (Schriesheim et al., 2001). As a result, this dynamic both creates a solution-oriented approach and establishes a strong leader-subordinate relationship that contributes to the functioning of the organization.

This study is significant because it aims to contribute to the business world by examining the relationship between transformational leadership behaviors and organizational cynicism, particularly in light of negative experiences employees encounter in the workplace. Its inclusion in a limited number of studies addressing these two concepts specifically within the tourism sector, and the fact that the data was obtained from the Didim region, enhances the study's unique value. Therefore, this study contributes to the literature by offering insights into creating a more positive work environment for both employees and organizations in today's business world.

2. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership has been a key concept in organizations for the past 25 years. The importance of motivating members of the organization towards their goals has made it a leadership style of significant interest among leaders (Kearney, 2008). Transformational leadership is an approach that inspires leaders and followers to exceed their capabilities and improve their performance. It provides confidence to deliver the best service or product by utilizing resources effectively and efficiently and supports social and emotional needs (Cheung & Wong, 2011). In times of crisis, transformational leadership emphasizes the ability to cope with transformations within the organization. It considers individual perspectives and emphasizes the active involvement of top management. During challenging periods, it provides employees with a vision that they can act together against the difficulties arising from changes in the business environment (Walker, 2005). Transformational leaders emphasize achieving long-term goals and the vision of the organization. They encourage their followers to work towards this vision and increase the trust of employees in the organization. These efforts enable followers to realize their duties and to put the goals of the organization ahead of their personal targets. Transformational leaders motivate employees to perform beyond their expectations (Nigmetullina, 2011).

The process of change varies for each organization. Generally, it is defined as taking action to implement necessary changes. In today's globalized world, collective action must be taken to mitigate potential challenges and transform them into opportunities. During the transformation process, groups experience significant changes, and the smooth progression of this process depends on the presence of the leader (Özalp and Öcal, 2000). as

Transformational leadership is defined in its most abstract form as an individual who has a future-oriented vision, has an effective addressing style, and has developed good communication skills with subordinates (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders influence their followers by focusing on their professional development, aiming to enhance success within the group through individual growth. Transformational leaders aim to increase the self-confidence of their followers both in their business and personal lives (Horner, 1997).

3. Organizational Cynicism

The concept of organizational cynicism gained recognition through the work of Mirvis and Kanter (1991), whose book on employees in America contributed significantly to its visibility. The book addresses the question of why cynicism has become widespread in organizational settings (James, 2005). Dean et al. (1998) define organizational cynicism as a persistent attitude among employees characterized by distrust and disappointment toward their organization, accompanied by consistently derogatory behavior directed at it. The literature review reveals that organizational cynicism is structurally detailed in three dimensions: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. The cognitive dimension can be defined as employees' perception that there is a lack of integrity within the organization (Kalay et al., 2014). The affective dimension refers to the tendency of employees to develop negative emotions toward the organization based on adverse past experiences (Abraham, 2000), while the behavioral dimension is the most prominent aspect of cynical attitudes. It involves making sarcastic and critical remarks toward the organization. In organizations where such behaviors are present often also exhibit humor that reflects events based on honesty and sincerity (Brandes, 1997).

Lastly, a review of the literature on organizational cynicism reveals that the factors influencing it can be classified into two categories: individual and organizational. This study examines these factors separately under the categories of individual and organizational influences. The individual and organizational factors influencing organizational cynicism are as follows: Individual factors include gender, hierarchical position, income level, marital status, education level, and length of service. The main organizational factors, on the other hand, include leader-member exchange, organizational politics, psychological contract violation, and organizational justice (Cartwright & Holmes, 2006).

4. Research Purpose

In today's world, the ability to adapt to the innovations and changes required for achieving success is considered highly valuable. Based on this understanding, the perception of transformational leadership plays a guiding role for leaders in navigating this process. The competitive environment today, characterized by constant change, can be effectively navigated through an understanding of transformational leadership, which is rooted in adaptability and innovation. This leadership approach is particularly beneficial for leaders in managing employees across the organization, and its growing importance is reflected in the increasing number of studies focused on transformational leadership. Another important concept for organizations and leaders striving for success is organizational cynicism. Organizational cynicism represents a process that often results in failure for both businesses and leaders. This concept, which stems from employees' negative feelings toward their organizations, should not be overlooked by leaders and must be addressed as an issue that needs to be replaced with more positive attitudes. In light of these perspectives, the concepts of transformational leadership and organizational cynicism are considered important in the process of achieving organizational success and gaining competitive advantage, constituting the focus of this study. Accordingly, this study aims to examine the impacts of transformational leadership on organizational cynicism.

5. Research Hypotheses

In today's ever-changing world, it is evident that the only constant is change itself. Norms that fail to adapt to change undergo transformation or gradually lose their functionality and disappear. Based on this view, leadership approaches have also been subjected to change as a result of ongoing transformations, creating a need for a leadership style that differs from existing models, one that meets evolving requirements and earns the trust of its followers. The incorrect application or lack of implementation of transformational leadership can lead to employee inefficiency, absenteeism, detachment from organizational commitment, and the emergence of various negative emotions, thereby increasing perceptions of organizational cynicism. Therefore, transformational leadership is regarded as a key determinant of organizational cynicism. Existing research in the literature shows that transformational leadership has a important and adverse impact on organizational cynicism (Rabie et al., 2016; Penava & Šehić, 2014; Güçlü et al., 2017; Gövez, 2013; Alagöz, 2019).

In their study, Rabie et al. (2016) examined the effects of transformational leadership and organizational culture on the development of organizational cynicism. The research population consisted of 1,022 employees working at a branch of the Agricultural Bank in Tehran. In this study, transformational leadership was

measured across four dimensions: idealized influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Organizational culture was also assessed in four dimensions: participation, consistency, adaptability, and vision. Lastly, organizational cynicism was measured across three dimensions: negative emotions, destructive thoughts, and critical attitudes. According to the study's results, transformational leadership did not have a important effect on the development of organizational cynicism, while a significant negative relationship was found between organizational culture and cynicism. Penava & Šehić (2014) aimed to examine the significance of transformational leadership in guiding employee attitudes during organizational change. The study investigated styles across three dimensions: transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. Resistance to change factors were analyzed in three dimensions as well: cognitive, affective, and behavioral cynicism. The data obtained show that there is a important and negative relationship between transformational leadership and cynicism.

In their study titled 'the relationship between school principals' leadership styles and organizational cynicism according to the perceptions of vocational and technical secondary school teachers,' Güçlü et al. (2017) collected data through surveys administered to 210 teachers working in vocational and technical secondary schools within Ankara during the 2012-2013 academic year. The findings indicated a significant negative relationship between transformational leadership and all dimensions of organizational cynicism. In a study by Alagöz (2019) titled 'the relationship between transformational leadership, organizational cynicism, and organizational identification: A study,' data were collected through surveys administered to 193 employees working in the energy sector in the city of Kars. The analyses revealed a significant negative relationship between transformational leadership and organizational cynicism. In the study titled 'the relationship between organizational cynicism and transformational/transactional leadership: An application,' Gövez (2013) collected data by administering a survey to 129 employees working in the logistics sector in the city of Eskisehir. The results revealed that both transformational and transactional leadership styles reduce levels of cynicism; however, transformational leadership was found to have a stronger (reducing) impact on organizational cynicism.

Based on the results of the studies mentioned above, transformational leadership behavior has been identified as an important determinant of organizational cynicism, and the following hypotheses have been developed:

H1: There is a significant negative relationship between transformational leadership and organizational cynicism.

H1a: There is a significant negative relationship between transformational leadership and the cognitive dimension of organizational cynicism.

H1b: There is a significant negative relationship between transformational leadership and the affective dimension of organizational cynicism.

H1c: There is a significant negative relationship between transformational leadership and the behavioral dimension of organizational cynicism.

In this context, the model developed in alignment with the purpose of the study and to present the findings is shown in Figure 1.
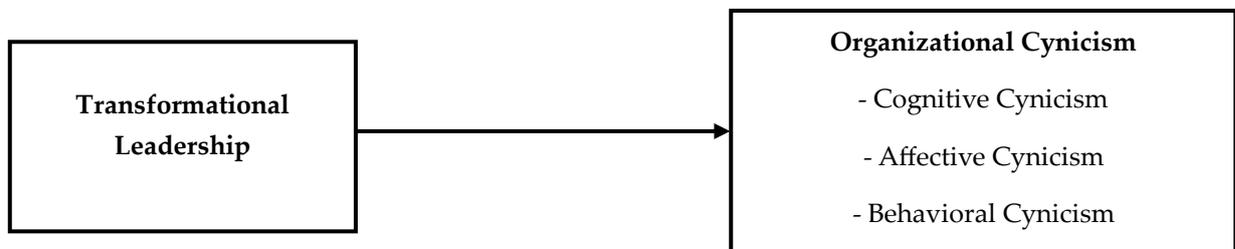

Figure 1. Research Model

6. Methodology

This section outlines the processes of sampling, instrument development, and data collection.

6.1. Research Population, Sample and Limitations

Prior to the distribution of the surveys, participants were informed that the items included in the data collection instrument would not place them in a vulnerable or uncomfortable position. It was also clarified that the instrument did not contain any questions pertaining to confidential or proprietary information about their organizations. Moreover, participants were assured that all data would be used strictly for statistical purposes and analyzed collectively, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. It is believed that participants' concerns were alleviated through assurances that names would not be recorded on the questionnaires, along with other related measures. In line with this, it is assumed that employees did not respond with bias, understood and interpreted the questions correctly, and provided honest and accurate information. As with all research, this study also has certain time-related limitations. This research is limited to data collected from employees of 4- and 5-star hotels operating in the tourism sector in the Didim district of Aydın. The population of this study consists of 1,300 employees employed in 4- and 5-star hotels operating in Didim. The sample size was calculated using the following formula, assuming a 5% margin of error within a 95% confidence limit from the research population (Sancar, 2012; Korucuk, 2025). In addition, data was collected using the convenience sampling method, as it would facilitate accessibility and completion. Using the formula, the sample size for this universe was determined to be n = 297. Survey forms were distributed to a total of 340 participants; however, 14 surveys were excluded due to incorrect or incomplete entries, resulting in 326 surveys being analyzed.

6.2. Data Collection Instruments

Since this study employs a quantitative design and measurement approach, data were collected using the survey method. Accordingly, it was deemed necessary to first develop a scale that could encompass the variables to be used in the study. The survey employes in the study consists of demographic questions as well as items measuring transformational leadership and organizational cynicism. The demographic section includes questions regarding sex, marital status, educational background, and years of professional experience. The second section of the survey comprises items measuring perceptions of transformational leadership. The Global Transformational Leadership Scale, developed by Carless et al., was used to measure employees' transformational leadership behaviors. The seven-item scale is a single-dimensional measure of transformational leadership, encompassing complex leadership behaviors (Carless et al. 2000). High means obtained from the scale indicate a high prevalence of transformational leadership behaviors. The researchers who developed the scale found a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of ,93 (Carless et al. 2000). These data support the conclusion that the scale provides a reliable measure of transformational leadership. A key benefit of the scale is that it is easier to assess due to its small number of items.

The third section of the survey consists of questions aimed at measuring organizational cynicism. A 14-item organizational cynicism scale was developed by Dean et al. to determine the level of organizational cynicism. The scale, adopted from their 1998 study, encompasses three dimensions: cognitive, affective, and behavioral cynicism. The cognitive cynicism dimension includes five items, the affective cynicism dimension includes six items, and the behavioral cynicism dimension includes three items. All items in the scales were rated on a 5-point Likert Scale (1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Undecided, 4- Agree, 5- Strongly Agree).

7. Results

This section presents the results related to demographic variables, as well as the results of reliability and validity analyses for the transformational leadership and organizational cynicism scales. Accordingly, to thoroughly test the construct validity of the scales used, exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the dimensions in the first stage, followed by confirmatory factor analysis to detail the statistical significance.

7.1. Participant Demographics

Based on Table 1, the majority of participants are male (66%), with 48,3% aged between 21 and 30, while 17,5% fall within the age groups of 20 and below or 31 to 40 years. Regarding educational background, the largest group consists of high school graduates (36,1%), followed by middle school graduates at 18,3%. In terms of tenure at their workplace, the majority of participants (80,4%) have worked between 1 and 5 years. Additionally, 65,3% of the participants are single, while 34,7% are married.

Table 1. Participant Demographics

Variable	Category	N	%
Sex	Female	128	34
	Male	249	66
Age	20 and younger	66	17,5
	21-30	182	48,3
	31-40	66	17,5
	41 and older	63	16,7
Marital Status	Single	246	65,3
	Married	131	34,7
Educational Status	Elementary School	59	15,6
	Middle School	69	18,3
	High School	136	36,1
	Associate's degree	54	14,3
	Undergraduate	59	15,6
Tenure (years)	1-5	303	80,4
	6-10	36	9,5
	11-15	22	5,8
	16-20	15	4,2

7.2. Results on the Validity and Reliability of the Scales

7.2.1. Results on the Validity and Reliability of the Transformational Leadership Scale

The second phase of the reliability and validity analyses of the transformational leadership scale was conducted to identify its underlying dimensions and to test the reliability and validity. To this end, varimax rotation was applied in the exploratory factor analysis performed using the principal components method. Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) and Barlett's tests of sphericity were conducted to determine whether the data were suitable for factor analysis. The Barlett test was used to test the significance of the correlation between variables**.** For the transformational leadership dimension in the questionnaire, the Bartlett's test value was calculated as 1364,664 with p = 0,000. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test is used to assess the adequacy of the sample size for factor analysis. The KMO value was found to be 0,872. Since the KMO value is above 0,60 and the significance level of Bartlett's test is 0,000. no limitations were identified in terms of suitability for factor analysis (Leech et al., 2005). Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the data are suitable for factor analysis. The exploratory factor analysis conducted in this study revealed that none of the six items had a factor loading below 0,40, and all items loaded onto a single factor. As shown in Table 2, this single factor accounts for 67% of the total variance. The factor loadings of the single-factor structure after rotation are presented and classified in Table 2.

Table 2. Exploratory Factor Analysis on the Transformational Leadership Scale

Factor Loadings						
Factor: Transformational Leadership (TL)	Factor Loadings	Eigenvalue	Explained Variance	Total Variance	Cronbach's Alfa	
DL5	,866	4,021	67,009	67,009	,901	
DL1	,832					
DL6	,820					

DL4	,802				
DL7	,797				
DL2	,792				

7.2.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Transformational Leadership Scale

Confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the transformational leadership scale in order to test the validity of the factor structure that emerged in the exploratory factor analysis. Initially, the estimation results of the transformational leadership measurement model were examined. Subsequently, the standardized regression weights of the items obtained from the model were evaluated to determine whether any fell below the threshold of 0,50. The regression weights of the items were found to be above 0,50. However, according to the confirmatory factor analysis, applying modification indices between items TL1 and TL2, as well as TL6 and TL7, was found to increase the chi-square value and improve model fitness. After applying these changes, the model's fit indices were examined. The CMIN/DF value was calculated as 2,259, which fell within the required range of 0 to 3, demonstrating a good fit. The TLI value was ,986, falling within the accepted range of ,95 to 1, demonstrating a good fit. The RMSEA value was measured as ,058, falling between ,05 and ,08, indicating an acceptable level of of fit. The CFI value was ,994 and the GFI value was ,986, both values falling between ,95 and 1, demonstrating a good fit. The univariate normality of the items was assessed based on skewness and kurtosis values. Since all items fell within the range of -1.5 to 1.5, the scale was determined to conform to a normal distribution.

Figure 2 presents the results of the factor loadings obtained from the analysis conducted on the transformational leadership scale.
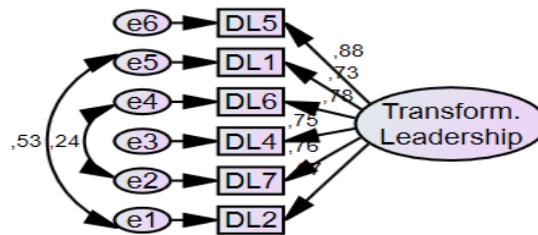

Figure 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Transformational Leadership Scale

7.2.3. Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Organizational Cynicism Scale

As part of the second-stage validity and consistency assessment of the organizational cynicism scale, exploratory factor analysis was conducted using the principal components method and varimax rotation. In this process identified the fundamental dimensions of organizational cynicism were identified, and the reliability and validity of the scale were examined. Additionally, the Barlett test and KMO values were evaluated to assess the suitability of the data for factor analysis. For the partial organizational cynicism dimension used in the study, the Bartlett's test value was calculated as 3143,504 with a significance level of $p = 0,000$. The KMO value was found to be 0,903. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the data are suitable for factor analysis. According to the exploratory factor analysis conducted in this study, the factor loadings of all 14 items in the scale are above 0,40. It was also found that the items were grouped under three factors: Cognitive Cynicism, Affective Cynicism, and Behavioral Cynicism. The three-factor structure explains approximately 69% of the total variance. The first factor accounts for 28% of the variance, the second for 26%, and the third for 16%. The factor loadings of the three-factor structure obtained after rotation are presented and classified in Table 3.

Table 3. Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Organizational Cynicism Scale

Factor Loadings					
Factor: Organizational Cynicism (OS)	Factor Loadings	Eigenvalue	Explained Variance	Total Variance	Cronbach's Alfa
1. Dimension (Affective Cynicism)		3,750	26,788	26,788	,889
OS7	,812				
OS8	,796				
OS9	,784				
OS6	,725				
OS10	,724				
OS11	,585				
2. Dimension (Cognitive Cynicism)		3,657	26,121	52,909	,897
OS1	,849				
OS2	,848				
OS3	,832				
OS4	,790				
OS5	,672				
3. Dimension (Behavioral Cynicism)		2,297	16,406	69,315	,779
OS12	,861				
OS13	,753				
OS14	,629				
K.M. O= ,903 Degree of Sphericity (Barlett's)= 3143,504 p= ,000					

It was found that the variables forming each factor loaded strongly onto their respective factors (Affective Cynicism = between 0,58 and 0,81; Cognitive Cynicism = between 0,67 and 0,85; Behavioral Cynicism = between 0,63 and 0,86). Accordingly, it can be concluded that the items adequately represent their corresponding factors.

7.2.4. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Organizational Cynicism Scale

To assess the fit of the factor structure identified in the exploratory factor analysis, a confirmatory factor analysis was completed on the organizational cynicism scale. First, the estimation results of the organizational cynicism measurement model were examined. The standardized regression weights (parameter estimates) obtained from the model were evaluated to determine whether any were below the threshold of 0,50. It was found that none of the items had standardized regression weights below 0,50. However, the confirmatory factor analysis indicated that if modifications were applied between items OC7 and OC6, as well as between OC1 and OC2, the chi-square value and fit indices would improve. In the analyses performed, the model's fit indices were examined. The CMIN/DF value was measured as 3,435, which ranged from 3, to 5, indicating an acceptable fit. The TLI value was ,928, which ranged from ,90 to ,94, indicating an acceptable fit. The RMSEA value was calculated as ,080 which ranged from ,80, to ,08, indicating an acceptable fit. the CFI value was ,943, and the GFI value was ,911, both values ranging from ,90, to ,94, indicating an acceptable fit. The univariate normality of the items in the scale was assessed based on their skewness and kurtosis values. Since all items had values within the range of -1,5 to 1,5, it was concluded that the scale conforms to a normal distribution.

Figure 3 presents the results of the factor loadings obtained from the analysis carried out for the organizational cynicism scale
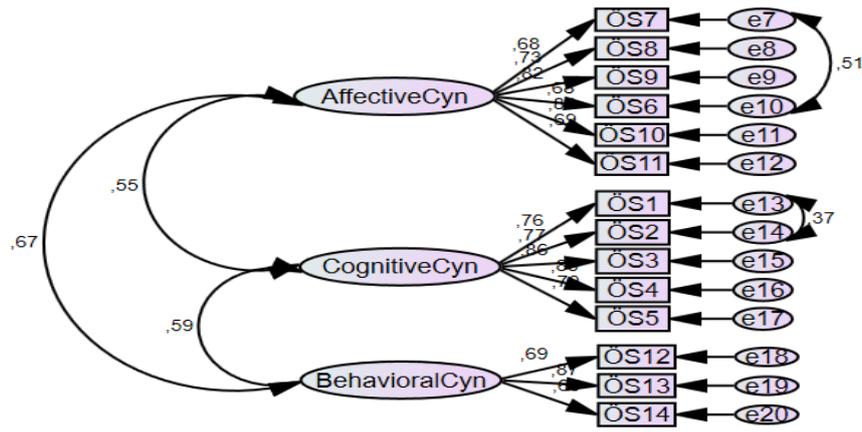
Figure 3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Organizational Cynicism Scale

7.2.5. Results of the Correlation Analysis: The Relationship Between Transformational Leadership and Organizational Cynicism

To determine the effect of employees' perceptions of transformational leadership on organizational cynicism, a correlation analysis was completed to identify the presence of linear relationships among the sub-dimensions of the study. Correlation analysis is a method used to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables. It can be interpreted in three ways: if there is no relationship between variables, the correlation coefficient (denoted as "r") is 0; if there is a perfect positive relationship, it is +1; and if there is a perfect negative relationship, it is -1. Table 4 presents the correlation coefficients illustrating the relationships between transformational leadership and organizational cynicism. The findings in the table indicate a negative and statistically significant relationship between transformational leadership and organizational cynicism ($r = -0,193$; %99 confidence interval). Furthermore, the correlation between transformational leadership and emotional cynicism, a sub-dimension of organizational cynicism, is also negative and significant ($r = -0,188$; %99 confidence interval). Similarly, the relationships between transformational leadership and the cognitive dimension ($r = -0,187$) and the behavioral dimension ($r = -0,103$) are negative and statistically significant at the 99% confidence level. These findings can be interpreted to suggest that an organization's emphasis on transformational leadership contributes to a reduction in organizational cynicism and its sub-dimensions. From another perspective, it can be argued that the decrease in organizational cynicism—including its affective, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions—is a result of managers exhibiting transformational leadership qualities.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis Results: Examining the Relationship Between Transformational Leadership and Organizational Cynicism

Dimensions	Transformational Leadership	Organizational Cynicism	Affective Cynicism	Cognitive Cynisim	Behavioral Cynicism
Transformational Leadership	1				
Organizational Cynicism	-,193** 0,000	1			
Affective Cynicism	-,188** 0,000	,833** 0,000	1		
Cognitive Cynicism	-,187** 0,000	,808** 0,000	,508** 0,000	1	
Behavioral Cynicism	-,103* 0,045	,829** 0,000	,570** 0,000	,474** 0,000	1
Weak: r<0,30, Moderate: 0,30 < r < 0,70, Strong: r > 0,70, **, *;, p: 0,01, p: 0,05					

7.2.6. Standardized Estimation Results Showing the Effect of Transformational Leadership on Organizational Cynicism
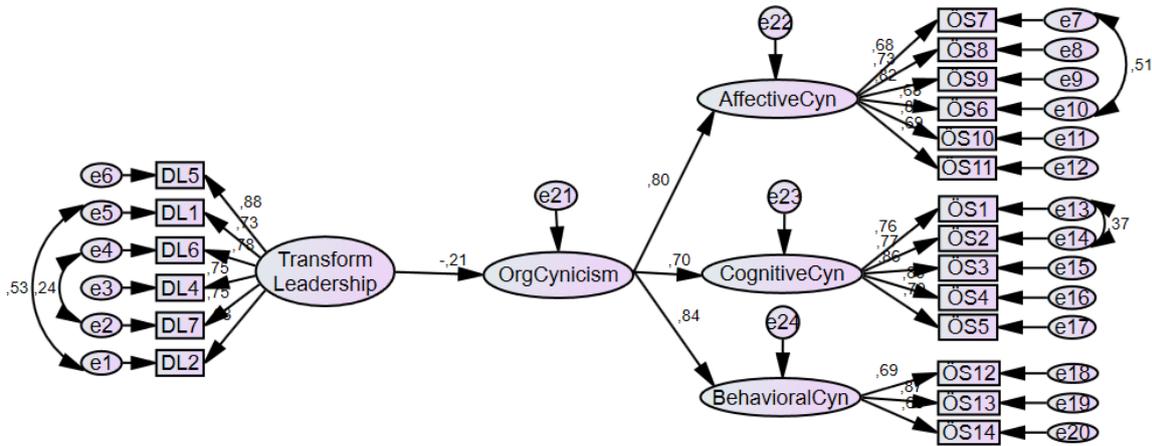

Figure 4. Estimation Results Explaining the Impact of Transformational Leadership on Organizational Cynicism

According to the model results, transformational leadership has a negative effect of 21% on organizational cynicism. Based on this finding, hypothesis H1 is supported. An increase in transformational leadership corresponds with a decrease in employees' perceptions of organizational cynicism. Additionally, the model's fit indices were evaluated based on the analyses. CMIN/DF value was found to be 1,830, ranging from 0 ton 3, indicating a good fit. The TLI value was ,945, indicating an acceptable fit, ranging from ,90 to ,94. The RMSEA value was measured at ,047, ranging from 0 to ,05, indicating a good fit. The CFI value was calculated as ,950 ranging from ,95 to 1 indicating a good fit.

8. Conclusion and Discussion

This study was conducted to examine the theoretical foundations of transformational leadership and organizational cynicism, and to investigate the effect of transformational leadership on organizational cynicism by determining the level of interaction between them. In the following section, the details of this relationship will be discussed based on the results of the study. According to the correlation analysis results, there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership and organizational cynicism.

The relationship between transformational leadership and organizational cynicism was found to be negative and statistically significant at the 99% confidence level (r = -0,193). To examine whether the transformational leadership and organizational cynicism variables analyzed within this research have statistically significant relationships, structural equation modeling (SEM) was employed. The pre-established research model was analyzed using the AMOS software. The model consists of two variables: transformational leadership and organizational cynicism. According to the results of the structural equation modeling, transformational leadership has a negative effect of 21% on organizational cynicism. Thus, it can be concluded that hypothesis H1 is supported. Furthermore, according to this result, hypotheses H1a, H1b, and H1c are accepted. In other words, an increase in transformational leadership corresponds with a decrease in employees' perceptions of organizational cynicism. One of the main findings of our study is that transformational leadership behaviors reduce employees' levels of organizational cynicism. This negative and significant relationship is consistent with the results of numerous studies in the international literature by Rabie et al. (2016), Rubin et al. (2009), and Bommer et al. (2004, 2005), and it appears that studies conducted in Türkiye also confirm this finding. According to studies conducted by Dülker (2019), Korkmaz and Demirçelik (2017), there is a negative relationship between transformational leadership and organizational cynicism. Therefore, it can be said that a well-implemented transformational leadership style in organizations has a positive effect in reducing the negative behaviors that employees may exhibit.

Transformational leadership is fundamentally understood as a continuous process built on the pillars of innovation and development. In this context, organizations that embody transformational leadership are believed to reduce organizational cynicism. This is because such leadership fosters a transparent and fair working environment where employees' needs are identified promptly and accurately, often through close integration with technology. Consequently, these qualities contribute to a dynamic workplace in which problems are either minimized or swiftly resolved when they arise, thereby decreasing employees' levels of organizational cynicism.

This study offers several theoretical contributions to the field. First, variables examined independently are correlated. That is, by examining the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational cynicism in the tourism sector, it broadens the understanding of the leadership phenomenon. Finally, by arriving at a 21% effect size result using structural equation modeling, it provides a current resource for future researchers and managers through an empirical study on the role of leadership attitudes on employees.

The following recommendations can be offered based on the results of the study:

The results indicate that transformational leadership and organizational cynicism hold critical importance for businesses. Therefore, organizations should invest in and actively develop these two variables to ensure both sectoral competitiveness and long-term sustainability. Management approaches should be oriented towards change and competition, with a particular emphasis on career development as a key factor for organizational survival. Specifically, businesses must prioritize the personal and professional development of their unique human resources—assets that cannot be easily replicated by competitors. Within the organization, adopting a transparent management style is essential. Attention should be paid to meeting employees' social needs, implementing consistent and fair performance evaluation criteria, and establishing clear and effective communication systems. Empowering employees, emphasizing the importance of knowledge sharing, and fostering independence can further enhance organizational effectiveness. Instead of targeting select groups, strategic planning should focus on highlighting the overall value of employees to the organization. Additionally, to create a more efficient and productive work environment, it is crucial to involve employees by soliciting their input and ideas.

8.1. Limitations and Future Research

The findings of this study indicate that integrating management approaches with transformational leadership yields success-oriented outcomes in the workplace, and that examining employees' levels of organizational cynicism is valuable for understanding the future trajectory of organizations. Data for this research were collected using surveys and analyzed using quantitative methods, thus limiting the study to a specific sample and scale. Future research could extend this work by employing larger samples or qualitative methods to provide deeper insights. Despite these limitations, the study offers important guidance by highlighting the value of transformational leadership and organizational cynicism for organizations and demonstrating how effectively managing these interrelated variables can benefit workplaces. Inspired by the results, organizations can utilize these findings as a roadmap or framework when developing practices related to planning, policymaking, strategy, human resources, and other operational areas.

In addition, some suggestions as managerial implications are expressed below. According to the results of this research, it appears that the transformational leadership approach plays a significant role in reducing organizational cynicism. Therefore, it is crucial for managers to adopt a transformational leadership approach in their relationships with employees.

In this context,

Managers should create a work environment that facilitates employees' personal and professional development. Supporting employees in ways that contribute to the organization's vision and mission can help reduce organizational cynicism. In this context, holding regular communication and feedback meetings and gathering employee opinions will strengthen participation and increase trust in the organization.

Furthermore, it is important for managers to embrace transparency in organizational decisions. A transparent management approach strengthens employees' trust in their managers and the organization, while also strengthening organizational commitment. Consequently, organizations that adopt a transformational

leadership approach not only reduce organizational cynicism but also prevent the costs of potential problems and develop a sustainable, innovative, and trust-based organizational culture.

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