

THE EFFECT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON ORGANISATIONAL
CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOUR THROUGH PERCEIVED PROFESSIONAL PRESTIGE
AND PERCEIVED ORGANISATIONAL PRESTIGE

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Abstract: A leader is someone who has the potential to motivate individuals who want to strive for common goals and shared aspirations. Leaders have some fundamental roles in achieving organizational goals. Today, change and transformation occur much faster than in the past. This change, especially in parallel with innovations in the technological and communication contexts, is an important factor in organizations making parallel innovations to maintain their sustainable competitive advantages. Therefore, the roles of leaders, who are the most important driving force of organizations, are more important than role models in this change and transformation. In this context, this study aims to investigate the effect of transformational leadership on organizational citizenship behavior through perceived professional prestige and perceived organizational prestige.

A review of the literature reveals that there are many studies on the antecedents and outcomes of transformational leadership behaviors. While there are studies examining the effect of transformational leaders on organizational citizenship behavior (Alpkent, 2024; Kışisel, 2021; Abualsuod, 2020), there are no studies on the mediating role of perceived professional prestige and perceived organizational prestige. This study is expected to contribute meaningfully to the literature. In this context, the aim of this study is to examine the effect of transformational leadership behavior on organizational citizenship behavior through perceived professional prestige and perceived organizational prestige. Recent studies have also examined the relationship between perceived professional prestige and perceived organizational prestige (Ebrahimi, 2023).

Keywords: transformational leadership, organizational citizenship behavior, perceived professional prestige, perceived organizational prestige.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Leadership

The Turkish Language Institution defines the concept of leader as "leader, chief" and the concept of leadership as "the leader's duty." Looking at today's literature, leadership is considered a process (Turkish Language Institution, 2025).

A leader is someone who integrates the goals of the organization they work for with their own goals, develops and trains their followers to realize their vision, and prepares them for the future. Even if they lose their legal power, they retain the ability to guide their followers (Demirtaş, 2020).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership behavior challenges the status quo and encourages subordinates to answer their own questions by supporting their individual differences so that they can do their best (Harmancı et al., 2021; Arnold et al., 2007).

Transformational leaders create a willingness among subordinates to do more than what is specified in their job contracts and focus on the individual development and learning needs of each subordinate. However, they provide a sense of mission and a higher vision, act as role models for subordinates, and motivate employees to disregard their personal interests for the organization through the environment of trust they create (Epitropaki and Martin, 2005). Bass (1990) outlines the general characteristics of transformational leaders as follows: charisma (provides a sense of vision and mission, inspires pride, earns respect and trust), inspiration (communicates high expectations, uses symbols to focus efforts, expresses important goals in simple terms), intellectual stimulation (encourages intelligence, rationality, and careful problem solving), and individualized consideration (shows personal interest, treats each employee individually, coaches, advises). These four characteristics (charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) are also cited as components of transformational leadership (Bass and Steidlmeier, 1999).

The cornerstone of transformational leadership is ensuring the best leader-follower fit. When leaders adopt a style that is compatible with their subordinates' expectations and capacities, the chances of transforming organizational behavior, culture, and individuals increase (Kızıl, 2025). Transformational leaders motivate the organization by setting visions and goals and encourage behavioral change by creating ethical values. By aligning individual goals and motivations with the organization's vision, they can create a synergy called "the meeting of minds" (Eriksson et al., 2023).

Transformational leadership is a theoretical approach that emphasizes the importance of having a positive impact on followers' emotions, thoughts, and behaviors. According to this approach, leaders motivate followers to accomplish tasks and goals by inspiring them, challenging them, empowering them, and paying attention to them. This interaction positively changes followers' trust, values, and perceptions, resulting in higher performance and motivation levels (Kim and Cruz, 2022).

Transformational leadership emphasizes that leaders must motivate their followers to work beyond their personal goals (Connie et al., 2022).

The transformational leadership approach is essentially a master of transformation who can influence the needs, desires, values, attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors of their followers and successfully implement profound and lasting changes in the organization (Iraz & Canbolat, 2021).

Perceived Professional Prestige

The concept of a profession is defined as a set of activities based on systematic knowledge and skills acquired through specific education, performed to produce useful goods or services for people and earn money in return, with rules determined by society. A person's profession is the most important source of their identity and is an area of activity that allows them to be respected by those around them, to gain a place in society, and to feel useful (Kuzgun, 2004).

The concept of professional prestige and the perception of a profession's image are topics of interest to those who practice or aim to practice a profession. Professions are generally ranked according to their reputation, power, and prestige within society. The International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) defines a profession as a group of jobs with very similar main tasks and responsibilities.

Image is the impression that an individual, community, or institution wants to create or leaves on others. Professional image is the social status, skills, and behavior model shared by members of a profession. The perceived professional image expresses the ideologies or common beliefs of members of the profession regarding the meaning of professional membership in relation to their social status, abilities, and behavior patterns (Özata et al., 2010). Professional image has been defined as the image formed by the quality of the product or service offered by the organization (Şanlı et al., 2017). This definition establishes a relationship between the quality perception of the outputs produced by the individual's profession and the organizational environment in which the profession is practiced. Professional image is defined as the evaluation of individuals belonging to a profession by society and the widespread acceptance of these values (Özsoy, 2000).

One of the fundamental elements of professional life is professional prestige.

Professional prestige is a social value that is positively evaluated by members of society and is determined by the respect or appreciation individuals have for their job position.

Professional prestige is the public perception of an individual's social status based on their professional position rather than their unique personal characteristics (HR ZONE, 2025). It explains that the social position of a profession is based on a collective belief that it is valuable for other professions. It is socially constructed based on the perceptions and value judgments of people within a social structure (Mandy, 2009; Zhou, 2005). Professional prestige is determined by five factors. These are: income level, education, social status, responsibility, and usefulness to society. These factors are interrelated and are essential for maintaining a stable hierarchy and preserving organizational perceptions of prestige (Turner, 2001).

Scientific studies have been conducted on the perceived professional prestige of occupations such as medicine, nursing, and teaching, and it has been concluded that when this perception is positive, there is a meaningful and positive relationship between it and positive organizational behaviors such as mental health, organizational citizenship behavior, organizational commitment, and job commitment (Thai et al. 2024; Derin, 2017). The reason for the prevalence of such research is that professions such as teaching, medicine, and science have long been considered the most prestigious professions in China and almost all over the world ([Lin and Xie, 1988](#) ; [Chen et al., 2021](#)).

Perceived Organizational Prestige

Organizational image refers to the views of internal and external stakeholders about the organization and the views, attitudes, and impressions of employees toward the organization (Öztürk and Akin, 2021). Organizational image is a term that expresses the general perception of a company or institution. Organizational image is a phenomenon created by businesses, evaluated by the public and stakeholders, and consequently provides insight into the internal and external structure of the business. It is not possible for businesses to create an image in an organizational sense instantly; certain stages must be passed through. During this period, the steps taken by the institution help to create the right image on behalf of the organization (Sak, 2025).

Among the factors that determine the formation of employees' views on organizational images are, in particular, product brand, reputation, corporate identity, and corporate social responsibility. These factors can increase the pride of organization members in their institutions. The full perception of organizational images, which positively affect employees' psychological states and encourage the formation of positive psychological conditions within the organization, will reflect positively on employees' emotional elements such as self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience (Lucia, 2021).

Organizational prestige is used to indicate employees' thoughts about how outsiders view the organization (Öcel, 2013). Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail (1994) refer to employees' perceptions of how the organization is viewed by outsiders as external image interpretation.

Perceived organizational prestige has been defined as "employees' evaluation of the organization based on the opinions of people outside the organization" (Dutton et al., 2014). Perceived organizational prestige is shaped by the individual's perceptions (Chirumbolo et al., 2017). While measurements such as performance are influenced by a wide variety of factors, measurements of variables such as perceived organizational prestige are influenced by the individual's perceptions and the variable to be measured. Therefore, measurements using such scales can provide high reliability and validity values (Chirumbolo et al., 2017).

When studies on perceived organizational prestige are examined, it is seen that when soccer and basketball players have positive ideas about the teams they play for, they experience greater job satisfaction and well-being, and they also have higher expectations of participating in activities such as advertising and promotion that can generate income for themselves (Özdemir, 2023; Erkasap, 2023).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

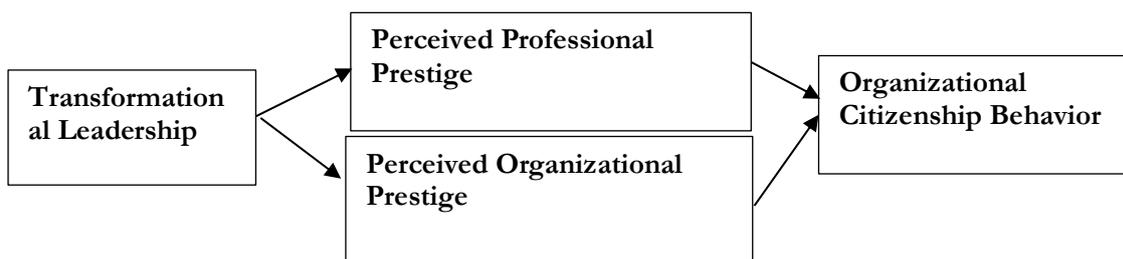
Organizational citizenship behavior has been defined in the literature under various names such as "good soldier syndrome," "extra role behavior," "prosocial organizational behavior," and "contextual performance" (Kobyra, 2023; Tarcan et al., 2019).

Organizational citizenship can be defined as the voluntary exertion of extra effort and labor by the employee, beyond the standard job description of their responsibilities, aimed at enhancing organizational effectiveness and benefit, entirely of their own free will and desire, without expecting any reward or gain (Sungur, 2024; Kurum Mutlu, 2016).

Hypotheses

- H1: Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior.
- H2: Perceived professional prestige has a positive and significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior.
- H3: Perceived organizational prestige has a positive and significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior.
- H4: Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior through perceived professional prestige.
- H5: Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior through perceived organizational prestige.

Research Model



CONCLUSION

There is a relationship between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. Studies examining the effect of transformational leadership on organizational citizenship behavior (Alpkent, 2024; Kişisel, 2021; Abualsuod, 2020) have been identified.

No studies have been found examining the relationship between transformational leadership and perceived professional prestige and perceived organizational prestige. Furthermore, no study has been found on the effect of perceived professional prestige and perceived organizational prestige on organizational citizenship behavior.

For these reasons, it is believed that this study will provide a meaningful contribution to the literature. In this context, the purpose of this study is to examine the effect of transformational leadership behavior on organizational citizenship behavior through perceived professional prestige and perceived organizational prestige.

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