



THE LINK BETWEEN TEACHERS' LEISURE SKILLS AND ORGANIZATIONAL HAPPINESS

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between teachers' organizational happiness levels and their leisure skills. A quantitative correlational survey design was employed. The study population comprised 5,467 public school teachers working in Çanakkale province during the 2023–2024 academic year. The sample consisted of 480 teachers selected through convenience sampling. Data were collected using the Leisure Skills Scale (Sürücü & Ertan, 2020) and the Organizational Happiness Scale for Teachers (Çakır & Yavuz, 2022), and analyzed using SPSS 26. Findings revealed a positive, statistically significant, albeit modest correlation between the two variables ($r = .22, p < .001$). The regression model indicated that leisure skills explain 4.6% of the variance in organizational happiness ($R^2 = .046, F_{(1, 478)} = 23.25, p < .001$). It is recommended that in-service training programs and social activities supporting leisure skills be expanded.

Keywords: Leisure skills, organizational happiness, PERMA model, serious leisure.

INTRODUCTION

In today's digital era, the boundaries between professional and personal life have become increasingly blurred due to rapid digitalization, remote work, and AI integration. Escalating job demands, continuous information flow, and heightened cognitive load generate structural pressures that challenge employees' psychological well-being and resilience. Within this context, the quality and structuring of leisure time emerge as critical determinants of individuals' overall life quality and sustainable well-being (United Nations, 1948).

Leisure is conceptualized as a self-determined time domain in which individuals voluntarily engage in activities beyond obligatory roles and responsibilities (Arslan, 2011; Aytaç, 2017; Karaküçük, 2014). Meaningful engagement in leisure activities has been shown to enhance stress-coping capacities and strengthen psychological resilience (Harmon & Kyle, 2016). Theoretically, leisure aligns closely with the core components of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model, suggesting that structured and meaningful leisure experiences contribute significantly to flourishing.

The leisure literature has advanced substantially at both theoretical and empirical levels. Structured leisure participation has been associated with improved mental health outcomes (Tsaur et al., 2021). Longitudinal evidence indicates that leisure-based physical activities contribute to public health



(Whitfield et al., 2019), and meta-analytic findings reveal that engagement in leisure activities reduces the risk of dementia (Su et al., 2022). These findings collectively position leisure as a protective psychological resource with long-term individual well-being benefits.

In parallel, the organizational happiness literature conceptualizes employee happiness as an integrated construct encompassing cognitive evaluations, affective experiences, and overall psychological functioning within the workplace (Warr, 2011). Empirical studies demonstrate that positive affect is strongly associated with life satisfaction (Diener & Seligman, 2004), while organizational happiness contributes to enhanced performance and organizational commitment (Warr, 2007). Within teacher populations, longitudinal studies indicate that psychological happiness strengthens professional commitment through the mediating role of self-efficacy (Yin et al., 2023).

Contemporary perspectives, particularly the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model, emphasize that employee happiness is shaped not only by job demands but also by personal resources. In this framework, leisure skills—defined as individuals’ proactive ability to plan, organize, and engage in meaningful leisure activities—can be conceptualized as a critical personal resource facilitating recovery and replenishing psychological energy. Despite the growing evidence on general leisure benefits, empirical evidence on the predictive role of leisure skills in relation to organizational happiness remains limited. The teaching profession is characterized by high levels of emotional labor and cognitive intensity, rendering teachers particularly vulnerable to psychological strain. Accordingly, this study examined whether leisure skills significantly predict organizational happiness among teachers.

METHOD

The present study employed a correlational survey model to examine the relationship between teachers’ leisure skills and their organizational happiness without intervention (Karasar, 2019).

Population and Sample

The population consisted of 5,467 teachers across 187 public schools in Çanakkale’s central district and the districts of Çan, Biga, Ezine, and Lapseki during 2023–2024. Based on the formula by Baş (2005) (95% confidence, 5% margin of error), the minimum required sample size was 367 participants. The resulting sample of 480 teachers exceeded this threshold. Data collection was carried out through face-to-face distribution at 42 schools between May 1 and June 30, 2024.

Table 1. Gender distribution/

Gender	n	%
Female	266	55.4
Male	214	44.6
Total	480	100.0

Table 1 shows the gender distribution of the study sample. The total sample consisted of 480 participants; 266 (55.4%) were women and 214 (44.6%) were men. The distribution reveals a moderately female-dominated structure, with female participants outnumbering male participants by approximately 10.8 percentage points. Although complete gender parity was not achieved in the sample, the proportional representation of both groups indicates a reasonable distribution that can be considered acceptable for generalizing to the target population.

**Table 2.** Age distribution.

Age	n	%
22–30	59	12.3
31–40	203	42.3
41–50	139	29.0
50+	79	16.5
Total	480	100.0

Table 2 illustrates the age distribution of the study sample across four age groups. The largest proportion of participants fell within the 31–40 age range ($n = 203$, 42.3%), followed by the 41–50 age group ($n = 139$, 29.0%), participants aged 50 and above ($n = 79$, 16.5%), and those aged 22–30 ($n = 59$, 12.3%). These findings indicate that the sample was predominantly composed of mid-career professionals, with approximately 71.3% of participants being between the ages of 31 and 50. The relatively limited representation of younger teachers (22–30) may reflect the structural characteristics of teacher recruitment and tenure processes in Turkey, where entry into permanent positions often occurs in the late twenties or early thirties.

Table 3. Distribution by professional seniority.

Professional Seniority	n	%
0–5 years	33	6.9
6–10 years	54	11.3
11–15 years	129	26.9
16–20 years	113	23.5
21+ years	151	31.5
Total	480	100.0

Table 3 presents the professional seniority distribution of the study sample. The data reveal that the largest group of participants had 21 or more years of professional experience ($n = 151$, 31.5%), followed by those with 11–15 years ($n = 129$, 26.9%), 16–20 years ($n = 113$, 23.5%), 6–10 years ($n = 54$, 11.3%), and 0–5 years ($n = 33$, 6.9%). The sample was heavily skewed toward experienced teachers (81.9% with 11+ years of service). The underrepresentation of early-career teachers (0–5 years, 6.9%) aligns with the age distribution reported in Table 2 and is consistent with the broader demographic profile of the teaching workforce in Turkey, where a significant proportion of currently active teachers were recruited during large-scale hiring periods in the 1990s and early 2000s.

Table 4. Distribution by educational status.

Educational Status	n	%
Bachelor's Degree	400	83.3
Master's/Doctorate	80	16.7
Total	480	100.0



Table 4 displays the educational status distribution of the study sample. The data indicate that the substantial majority of participants held a bachelor's degree as their highest level of educational attainment ($n = 400$, 83.3%), while the remaining 80 participants (16.7%) had completed postgraduate education at the master's or doctoral level. This distribution reflects the prevailing educational profile of the teaching workforce in Turkey, where undergraduate-level preparation has historically constituted the primary entry requirement for the profession, and postgraduate qualification rates among practicing teachers remain comparatively modest (MoNE, 2023; Yükseköğretim Kurulu [YÖK], 2022).

The relatively low proportion of participants with postgraduate degrees may have implications for the study variables. Prior research suggests that advanced educational attainment is associated with enhanced capacity for self-directed learning, reflective practice, and proactive engagement with professional development activities — all of which are conceptually aligned with leisure time resourcefulness as examined in the present study (Merriam & Bierema, 2014). Moreover, teachers with postgraduate qualifications may demonstrate differential patterns of organizational happiness and job satisfaction, given their potentially elevated professional expectations and self-efficacy perceptions (Caprara et al., 2006; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014). These considerations suggest that educational status warrants careful attention as a control variable in the hierarchical regression analyses conducted in subsequent sections of this study.

Table 5. Branch distribution ($n = 480$)

Branch	n	%
Primary School Teacher	99	20.6
Turkish	36	7.5
English	49	10.2
Literature	31	6.5
Social Studies	24	5.0
Mathematics	37	7.7
Science	27	5.6
Physics	11	2.3
Biology	10	2.1
Music	9	1.9
Preschool	18	3.8
Other*	129	26.9
Total	480	100.0

*Other includes: History, Geography, Chemistry, Philosophy, Physical Education, Visual Arts, Guidance, Religious Culture, Technology, Computer Science, German, and other branches.

Table 5 presents the distribution of participants according to their teaching branch or subject specialization. The sample encompassed a broad range of disciplines, reflecting considerable professional diversity. The largest single category was the "Other" grouping ($n = 129$, 26.9%), which comprised teachers from branches including History, Geography, Chemistry, Philosophy, Physical Education, Visual Arts, Guidance, Religious Culture, Technology, Computer Science, German, and additional specializations. Among individually reported branches, Primary School Teachers constituted the most represented group ($n = 99$, 20.6%), followed by English language teachers ($n = 49$, 10.2%),



Mathematics teachers ($n = 37$, 7.7%), Turkish language teachers ($n = 36$, 7.5%), Literature teachers ($n = 31$, 6.5%), Science teachers ($n = 27$, 5.6%), Social Studies teachers ($n = 24$, 5.0%), Preschool teachers ($n = 18$, 3.8%), Physics teachers ($n = 11$, 2.3%), Biology teachers ($n = 10$, 2.1%), and Music teachers ($n = 9$, 1.9%). The wide disciplinary spread of the sample is a notable methodological strength, as it enhances the representativeness of the findings across the broader teaching workforce rather than confining the study to a single subject domain.

Table 6. Branch group distribution.

Branch Group	n	%
Verbal (Social Sciences & Language-Based)	258	53.8
Quantitative (Mathematics & Science-Based)	99	20.6
Other Branches*	123	25.6
Total	480	100.0

Table 6 presents the distribution of participants according to aggregated branch groupings, in which individual teaching specializations were consolidated into three broader categories to facilitate comparative analysis. The largest group consisted of teachers from verbal disciplines, encompassing social sciences and language-based branches ($n = 258$, 53.8%), followed by teachers classified under other branches ($n = 123$, 25.6%), and those from quantitative disciplines, including mathematics and science-based branches ($n = 99$, 20.6%).

Data Collection Tools

A three-part questionnaire was distributed face-to-face to voluntarily participating teachers. Ethical approval was obtained from Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University Ethics Committee, and official permission was granted by the Çanakkale Provincial Directorate of National Education.

Organizational Happiness Scale for Teachers

The Organizational Happiness Scale for Teachers (Çakır & Yavuz, 2022) consisted of 31 items across three sub-dimensions: Managerial Behaviors (18 items), Human Relations (5 items), and Feelings Toward the School (8 items). Response options range from *Not at All* (1) to *Completely* (5). Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .984, .893, .935, and .967 for the sub-dimensions and overall scale, respectively.

Table 7. Organizational Happiness Scale score interpretation ranges.

Score Range	Level	Interpretation
1.00–1.80	Very Low	Not at All
1.81–2.60	Low	Very Little
2.61–3.40	Moderate	Partially
3.41–4.20	High	Mostly
4.21–5.00	Very High	Completely

Table 7 presents the score interpretation ranges adopted for the Organizational Happiness Scale in the present study. The scale operates on a five-point Likert-type response format, with total mean scores classified into five discrete levels: Very Low (1.00–1.80), Low (1.81–2.60), Moderate (2.61–3.40), High (3.41–4.20), and Very High (4.21–5.00). Each level is accompanied by a qualitative descriptor reflecting



the degree to which organizational happiness is experienced, ranging from "Not at All" at the lowest end to "Completely" at the highest.

Table 8. Descriptive statistics for the Organizational Happiness Scale.

Statistic	Value	SE
Mean	3.77	.044
Variance	.922	—
Standard Deviation	.960	—
Skewness	.152	.111
Kurtosis	-.713	.222

Table 8 presents the descriptive statistics for the Organizational Happiness Scale obtained from the full study sample ($n = 480$). The mean score of 3.77 ($SE = .044$, $SD = .960$) indicated that participants reported a generally **high** level of organizational happiness, as determined by the score interpretation framework presented in Table 7 (3.41–4.20 range). The obtained variance of .922 suggests a moderate degree of dispersion around the central tendency, reflecting meaningful individual variation in participants' organizational happiness perceptions despite the overall positive orientation of the distribution.

Assessment of distributional normality was conducted through examination of the skewness and kurtosis statistics. The skewness value of .152 ($SE = .111$) indicates a negligible positive skew, while the kurtosis value of $-.713$ ($SE = .222$) reflects a slightly platykurtic distribution. Both values fall well within the conventionally accepted thresholds for normality (skewness and kurtosis values within the ± 2.0 range are generally considered indicative of acceptable normality for parametric analyses; Field, 2018; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). These findings confirm that the distributional assumptions underlying the parametric statistical procedures employed in subsequent analyses — including Pearson correlation and hierarchical multiple regression — are satisfactorily met.

Taken together, the descriptive statistics presented in Table 8 suggest that the teacher participants in the present study experienced organizational happiness at a level above the scale midpoint, which may reflect relatively favorable perceptions of workplace well-being within the sampled school contexts. Nevertheless, the notable standard deviation (.960) warrants attention, as it indicates that a non-trivial proportion of participants reported substantially lower or higher scores than the sample mean, underscoring the importance of examining potential demographic and organizational predictors of this variability in the inferential analyses that follow.

Leisure Skills Scale

The Leisure Skills Scale (Petrou & Bakker, 2016), adapted into Turkish by Sürücü and Ertan (2020), consisted of 9 items with a single-factor structure ($\alpha = .845$; test-retest reliability $r = .811$, $p < .05$).

Table 9 presents the score interpretation ranges established for the Leisure Skills Scale employed in the present study. Consistent with the scoring framework applied to the Organizational Happiness Scale (Table 7), the Leisure Skills Scale utilizes a five-point Likert-type response format, with obtained mean scores classified into five hierarchically ordered levels: Very Low (1.00–1.80), Low (1.81–2.60), Moderate (2.61–3.40), High (3.41–4.20), and Very High (4.21–5.00). The qualitative descriptors associated with each level — ranging from "Not at All" to "Completely" — provide an accessible



interpretive language for situating participants' leisure skill perceptions along a continuum of experiential intensity.

Table 9. Leisure Skills Scale score interpretation ranges.

Score Range	Level	Interpretation
1.00–1.80	Very Low	Not at All
1.81–2.60	Low	Very Little
2.61–3.40	Moderate	Partially
3.41–4.20	High	Mostly
4.21–5.00	Very High	Completely

The classification scheme follows the equal-interval banding convention widely adopted in Likert-scale research within the field of educational sciences, whereby the full response range is partitioned into equal segments of 0.80 scale units to yield interpretable categorical thresholds (Büyüköztürk et al., 2020). The application of an identical interpretive structure across both scales used in the present study enhances the internal consistency of the descriptive reporting framework and facilitates direct comparison of mean score levels between the Leisure Skills Scale and the Organizational Happiness Scale in subsequent analyses.

Table 10. Descriptive statistics for the Leisure Skills Scale.

Statistic	Value	SE
Mean	3.56	.037
Variance	.683	—
Standard Deviation	.826	—
Skewness	-.044	.222
Kurtosis	-.274	.441

Table 10 presents the descriptive statistics for the Leisure Skills Scale obtained from the full study sample ($N = 480$). The mean score of 3.56 ($SE = .037$, $SD = .826$) places the sample within the **high** level of leisure skills, as defined by the score interpretation framework presented in Table 9 (3.41–4.20 range). This finding indicates that, on average, the teacher participants demonstrated a relatively well-developed capacity for leisure time resourcefulness, reporting that they are able to engage in and benefit from leisure activities at a level that largely aligns with the higher end of the scale's moderate-to-high continuum. The obtained variance of .683 and standard deviation of .826 suggest a comparatively narrower dispersion of scores relative to the Organizational Happiness Scale ($SD = .960$, Table 8), indicating somewhat greater homogeneity in participants' self-reported leisure skills.

Examination of the distribution of Leisure Skills scores provides robust support for the assumption of normality. The skewness value of $-.044$ ($SE = .222$) is negligibly close to zero, indicating a virtually symmetric distribution, while the kurtosis value of $-.274$ ($SE = .441$) reflects a marginally platykurtic but essentially normal distributional shape. Both values fall comfortably within the accepted thresholds for normality in parametric research contexts (± 2.0 ; Field, 2018; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019), confirming the appropriateness of employing parametric inferential procedures — including Pearson correlation analysis and hierarchical multiple regression — in the subsequent stages of data analysis.



Taken together, the descriptive findings presented in Table 10 suggest that the participating teachers possessed a meaningful degree of competence in utilizing their leisure time resourcefully. The above-midpoint mean score, combined with a relatively constrained standard deviation, implies that high leisure skill levels were broadly characteristic of the sample rather than attributable to a small subset of participants. This distributional profile provides a favorable analytic foundation for examining the predictive relationship between leisure skills and organizational happiness, as explored in the inferential analyses that follow.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS 26. Normality was evaluated using skewness and kurtosis coefficients. Pearson product-moment correlation analysis and simple linear regression analysis were conducted to examine the relationship between variables.

RESULTS

Relationship Between Leisure Skills and Organizational Happiness

Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between teachers' leisure skills and organizational happiness. Results are presented in Table 11.

Table 11. Correlation between leisure skills and organizational happiness.

Variable	1	2
1. Organizational Happiness	—	.22**
2. Leisure Skills	.22**	—

Note. ** $p < .001$.

Results indicated a positive and statistically significant relationship between organizational happiness and leisure skills, $r_{(478)} = .22$, $p < .001$, indicating that higher leisure skills are associated with greater organizational happiness. According to Cohen's (1988) criteria, this represents a small but meaningful effect size.

Pearson correlation analysis was also conducted for the sub-dimensions of organizational happiness. Results are presented in Table 12.

Table 12. Correlations between leisure skills and organizational happiness sub-dimensions

Sub-dimension	r	p	n
Managerial Behaviors	.21**	< .001	480
Human Relations	.30**	< .001	480
Feelings Toward School	.23**	< .001	480
Organizational Happiness (Overall)	.22**	< .001	480

Note. ** $p < .001$.

The strongest correlation was found between leisure skills and the human relations sub-dimension, $r_{(478)} = .30$, $p < .001$. Significant positive correlations were also found with feelings toward the school ($r = .23$) and managerial behaviors ($r = .21$).

Predictive Power of Leisure Skills on Organizational Happiness

Simple linear regression analysis was conducted to examine whether leisure skills predict organizational happiness. Regression coefficients are presented in Table 13, and the model summary in Table 14.

**Table 13.** Regression coefficients for predicting organizational happiness from leisure skills

Model	B	SE B	β	t	p
Constant	2.86	.17	—	16.50	< .001
Leisure Skills	.26	.05	.22	4.82	< .001

Note. Dependent variable: Organizational Happiness.

Table 13 presents the unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients derived from the simple linear regression model examining the extent to which leisure skills predict organizational happiness among the study participants. The results indicate that leisure skills emerged as a statistically significant positive predictor of organizational happiness ($B = .26$, $SE = .05$, $\beta = .22$, $t = 4.82$, $p < .001$). The unstandardized regression coefficient ($B = .26$) indicates that for each one-unit increase in leisure skills scores, organizational happiness scores are predicted to increase by .26 units, holding all other factors constant. The standardized coefficient ($\beta = .22$) further reveals that a one standard deviation increase in leisure skills is associated with a .22 standard deviation increase in organizational happiness, providing a scale-independent measure of the strength of this predictive relationship.

The constant term ($B = 2.86$, $SE = .17$, $t = 16.50$, $p < .001$) represents the predicted organizational happiness score when leisure skills are held at zero, and while not directly interpretable in substantive terms given the bounded nature of the scale, its statistical significance confirms the overall stability of the regression model. The statistical significance of the leisure skills predictor at the $p < .001$ level provides strong evidence against the null hypothesis of no linear relationship between the two constructs, and is consistent with the positive bivariate correlation reported in earlier analyses.

Table 14. Simple linear regression model summary.

R	R ²	Adj. R ²	SE	F(1, 478)	p
.22	.046	.044	.94	23.25	< .001

Leisure skills were a statistically significant predictor of organizational happiness, $F_{(1, 478)} = 23.25$, $p < .001$. The model accounted for 4.6% of the variance in organizational happiness ($R^2 = .046$, adjusted $R^2 = .044$). The positive regression coefficient ($\beta = .22$) confirms that increases in leisure skills are associated with higher organizational happiness.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, and SUGGESTIONS

Quantitative data obtained from 480 teachers in Çanakkale province were analyzed using SPSS 26. Descriptive statistics, t-tests, ANOVA, Pearson correlation, and regression analyses were conducted to examine the research questions.

Leisure Skills Levels

Teachers' leisure skills were generally high. Previous research suggests that the benefits derived from leisure activities may vary depending on the type of engagement. In the present study, ANOVA results indicated no statistically significant differences in leisure skills according to gender, age, educational status, professional seniority, branch, or school type. These findings suggest that teachers' leisure skills are relatively independent of demographic and institutional variables. Randall et al. (2021) reported that physical activity levels among early childhood educators were positively associated with life satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic, suggesting that physical activity may support teachers' organizational happiness.



Teachers were observed to have a tendency toward self-improvement, learning, acquiring new skills, and building social relationships in their leisure time. ANOVA results indicated no statistically significant difference in leisure skills levels according to demographic variables such as gender, educational status, professional seniority, age, district, branch, or school type. While no direct study on teachers' leisure skills was found, Heybet (2024) found significant differences related to leisure barriers according to gender, income, and age. Çelik (2024) reported that young women experienced higher levels of enjoyment and happiness from leisure activities. Uz (2022) found significant differences in daily leisure time and leisure evaluation variety along with gender. Kaya (2020) reported that teachers' participation in leisure activities was low, with unmarried and female teachers participating more, and teachers with children less so. These findings suggest that teachers' leisure skill behaviors are relatively independent of individual and institutional variables.

Organizational Happiness Levels

Teachers reported the highest organizational happiness levels in the “Human Relations” sub-dimension, followed by “Feelings Toward the School” and “Managerial Behaviors.” Analyses revealed a significant difference by age. Post-hoc tests showed that teachers aged 50 and over reported significantly higher organizational happiness than those aged 31–40. This finding suggests that professional experience and seniority may contribute to higher levels of organizational happiness, as well as job satisfaction and organizational belonging. Bayraktar and Girgin (2020) and Fırat (2025) emphasized the ineffectiveness of demographic variables on general happiness levels, while Anastasiou and Belios (2020) found that job satisfaction increases with age, supporting our finding. However, Hasanati and Istiqomah (2024) did not confirm happiness differences between age groups, suggesting that context-specific factors may play a role. Additionally, Aytaç and Usta (2023) emphasized that leadership style and teachers' organizational happiness interact, noting that principals' leadership styles shape the relationship with happiness.

A significant difference was found by district as a post-hoc test result, with teachers in the Lapseki district reporting significantly lower organizational happiness compared to teachers in all other districts. Kaygusuz et al. (2021) reported that teachers' satisfaction levels may differ by district and may stem from physical and social facilities and provincial directorates of national education. Keçeli (2022) reported a positive relationship between teachers' school climate perceptions and their organizational happiness levels. Martínez-Arroyo and Valenzo-Jiménez (2020) noted that school climate influences motivation. This finding points to the effect of organizational climate, administrative practices, and social facilities in the school's location on happiness perceptions.

Gender, educational level, professional seniority, branch, and school type variables were found to create no statistically significant difference on teachers' organizational happiness perceptions. These findings are consistent with Bulut (2015), who demonstrated the limited effect of demographic variables on organizational happiness. Similarly, Bayraktar and Girgin (2020) reported that teachers' organizational happiness levels were high and showed no significant difference by demographic variables. Özdemir and Kış (2019) found that teachers' branch, relationships with other teachers, school size, and position within the school could be associated with differences in happiness. Özbilen et al. (2024) explained teachers' psychological happiness and job satisfaction through higher educational levels, while Elmas and Kaya (2021) highlighted that quality of work life is a strong determinant of happiness. Vale et al. (2025) emphasize that organizational factors such as leadership, school culture, personal skills, and sense of belonging shape teacher happiness more than individual characteristics such as gender or seniority.



Correlation and Regression Findings

Pearson correlation analysis revealed a positive and significant relationship between leisure skills and organizational happiness, with a particularly strong relationship observed between leisure skills and the ‘human relations’ sub-dimension. This finding suggests that teachers’ social skills developed outside of work can enhance job satisfaction and happiness through organizational relationships. Simple linear regression analysis confirmed that leisure skills is a significant predictor of organizational happiness. However, the explained variance is low, indicating that leisure skills alone have a limited effect on organizational happiness, and that multiple factors must be considered together (Field, 2018; Çakır & Yavuz, 2022).

The significant and positive relationship between leisure skills and organizational happiness is consistent with positive psychology frameworks. According to Seligman’s (2011) PERMA model, teachers’ engagement in meaningful leisure activities can support the dimensions of positive emotions, engagement, and accomplishment, thereby contributing to their professional well-being. This also supports Keyes’ (2005) theoretical approach, which emphasizes that experiences in non-work life can support work-related happiness.

This finding is consistent with studies reporting similar results in the literature. Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) demonstrated that post-work mental recovery and skill-development-oriented leisure activities significantly support employees’ psychological happiness. Similarly, Caldwell (2005) showed that the therapeutic benefits of leisure result in reduced stress and increased life satisfaction. Abós et al. (2019) experimentally demonstrated that a group-based physical activity intervention positively affected teachers’ work performance, job satisfaction, and happiness.

Theoretical Implications: Serious Leisure Theory

Stebbins’ (2009) Serious Leisure Theory provides an important framework for the results of this research. According to Stebbins (2015), ‘serious leisure’ activities pursued during leisure time with discipline, effort, and deep meaning develop skill, self-efficacy, and social capital in participants. The strong correlation found between leisure skills and the ‘human relations’ sub-dimension suggests that the social networks and collaborative skills acquired through leisure activities also have a positive impact on interpersonal relationships in the workplace. As Stebbins (2009) describes, serious leisure participants develop a shared ‘ethical code’ and community consciousness, reaching higher levels of belonging and happiness even in organizational contexts. Furthermore, the durable benefits of serious leisure, including self-efficacy and psychological resilience, when evaluated alongside high organizational happiness scores, suggest that serious leisure practice produces positive outcomes at both individual and organizational levels. This parallels Luthans et al.’s (2007) findings of a positive relationship between psychological capital components and job satisfaction. Research indicates that sociodemographic variables play a significant role in shaping the relationship between leisure participation and happiness.

Kontogianni et al. (2021) demonstrated that age, education level, and perceived economic satisfaction were significantly associated with the frequency and type of leisure involvement among adults, highlighting the role of structural inequalities in leisure access. Similarly, Ahn and Song (2021) reported that demographic, educational, and economic factors are determinative of individuals’ leisure satisfaction levels, with activity type further moderating these associations. Zeng et al. (2025) confirmed that age significantly moderates the relationship between leisure patterns and happiness among older adults, with distinct patterns of association emerging across different age groups.



In contrast, Yoon et al. (2021) reported that despite increasing age and decreasing education and income levels, the relationship between leisure satisfaction and general happiness remained strong. In the present study, demographic variables such as gender, educational level, seniority, and income did not have a significant moderating effect on teachers' organizational happiness; only age and district of service stood out ($p < .05$). This inconsistency may be attributed to several factors. First, teachers are particularly sensitive to organizational processes such as managerial support, workload, and professional solidarity, so demographic differences may be overshadowed by these strong organizational influences. Second, cultural and regional dynamics specific to the school climate in Çanakkale may have neutralized the effect of demographic variables.

According to Deci and Ryan's (2000) self-determination theory, the sense of social belonging is among basic psychological needs, and when this need is met, higher levels of psychological happiness are observed. Therefore, socially oriented leisure activities may increase teachers' satisfaction in their social relationships at work.

Comparative Discussion

The finding that only age and district were associated with significant differences in organizational happiness supports the similar findings of Bayraktar and Girgin (2020). Their study also reported that variables such as gender, branch, and educational level had no significant effect on organizational happiness, but those teachers generally had high happiness levels.

Ataç et al. (2022), in a systematic review analyzing graduate theses on teachers' organizational happiness published in Turkey, emphasized that demographic factors had no significant effect on happiness levels in most studies. Demir and Çobanoğlu (2022) also reported that demographic variables such as gender, age, and seniority did not play a significant moderating role. Tösten et al. (2018) found that organizational socialization perceptions had a strong determining effect on teacher happiness, while demographic differences (gender, years of service) did not lead to significant differences in happiness scores (Vale et al., 2025). These findings suggest that differences in administrative environment and organizational culture across districts may account for the variation in organizational happiness levels observed in the present study.

Findings of Kelly et al. (2020) suggest that time allocated to leisure activities supports career development while simultaneously strengthening individuals' self-efficacy perceptions. Regular participation in structured leisure activities serves as a critical psychological recovery mechanism for working individuals. Sonnentag and Fritz (2007) identified four core recovery experiences during off-job time - psychological detachment from work, relaxation, mastery, and a sense of personal control - and demonstrated that individuals who actively engage in these experiences during leisure report significantly higher levels of psychological well-being, lower emotional exhaustion, and greater capacity to manage occupational stress. Particularly, mastery experiences pursued through leisure activities, such as learning new skills or engaging in personally meaningful challenges, enable individuals to replenish cognitive and emotional resources depleted by work demands. These findings suggest that the quality and intentionality with which individuals structure their leisure time, rather than the mere quantity of free time available, constitutes the decisive factor in deriving psychological recovery and sustained well-being benefits from non-work activities. Moreover, individuals who integrate leisure activities into their daily routines, sustaining them with commitment and enthusiasm, positively affect both their social bonds and their organizational engagement and happiness levels (Tsaur et al., 2021).



Bhatti et al. (2011) demonstrated in a quantitative study of teachers that weekly regular physical activity significantly increased job satisfaction and reduced job-related stress. Denovan and Macaskill's (2017) qualitative research showed that teachers structured their leisure activities under three main themes: (1) serving as a stress buffer, (2) transforming negative emotions into positive ones, and (3) alleviating long-term stress burden through distraction and mental renewal. These thematic findings support the positive relationship identified in this study between leisure skills and organizational happiness.

Conclusion

The present study demonstrated that teachers' leisure skills were positively and significantly related to organizational happiness, with the strongest association observed in the "Human Relations" sub-dimension. Although leisure skills emerged as a statistically significant predictor in the regression model, it explained a modest 4.6% of the variance in organizational happiness. This limited explanatory power is theoretically expected given the multifactorial nature of organizational happiness, which is also shaped by managerial support, school climate, and organizational trust. Future research should employ multilevel, longitudinal, and mixed-methods designs to examine the interplay of individual and structural determinants. It is recommended that practitioners develop in-service training programs and social activities to enhance teachers' leisure skills, and school administrators in districts with lower happiness scores (e.g., Lapseki) should be supported through leadership development and regional improvement initiatives.

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Ethics and Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that ethical guidelines were followed throughout the research process. The authors also declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding this study.

Author Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the research.

Data Availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

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