

# **The Relationship between Perceived Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement**

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## **Abstract**

White-collar employees working in the textile industry work in a dynamic, intense and stressful environment that requires effort to present the most accurate and completed work outputs to their internal stakeholders, teams and company. The workload and pressure in this stressful environment require a positive and open-minded leadership style that can motivate and guide textile workers. Based on the stated assumption, the relationship between toxic leadership and work engagement was examined in this study. As a result of the research; it is expected that the toxic leadership behaviors of managers will negatively affect the work engagement of white-collar employees working in the textile industry. Based on this purpose, some hypotheses were developed to investigate the relationship, and data were obtained from 201 white-collar individuals working in the textile sector through an online survey. In order to collect data, the toxic leadership scale and work engagement scale were used together with demographic questions. All data analyzes were performed using the statistical program SPSS. As a result of the analysis of the data, it has been determined that toxic leadership is a type of leadership that negatively affects the work engagement levels of white-collar workers in the textile industry. Since the research was conducted specifically for the textile industry and white-collar workers, it contributes to the literature and is important.

**Keywords:** Textile industry; toxic leadership; white-collar; work engagement

## INTRODUCTION

The act of guiding and influencing a group to accomplish its objectives is known as leadership (Robbins & Coulter, 2012). According to this definition, leaders are those who have the skills and traits to influence others' thoughts and behaviors in order to achieve shared goals and get them committed to moving in the same direction (Mills, 2005).

The ability of leaders to lead followers effectively and engage them to remain committed as key partners in the growth of their organization is one of the major issues facing the successful management of corporate entities in the twenty-first century. The management of human capital was very important to modern organizations (Mendes & Stander, 2011). Although it was true that the act or process of leading necessitates leaders, followers, and the environment or situation (Allio, 2013), the leadership conduct becomes increasingly important to manage the workforce. The evolution of organizations may be impacted differently by the various leadership philosophies. Yet, toxic leadership has been identified as a negative tendency that is widespread in many organizations (Tavanti, 2011).

The combination of an egotistical mindset and destructive behavior that has a negative impact on the followers and the organization were known as toxic leadership (Erickson, Shaw, Murray, & Branch, 2015). If unchecked, toxic leadership is poor leadership that will damage the organization's culture and have a negative impact on its personnel (Akça, 2017). Leaders play a crucial role in creating a positive workplace culture that motivates workers to stay on the job (Mendes & Stander, 2011). The premise that leaders' behavior affects employees' intentions to leave the company arises from the notion that workers depart their manager, not the company (Pieterse-Landman, 2012).

In addition, “as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” is referred to as work engagement (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, & Bakker, 2002). The term engagement “refers to a persistent and pervasive affective–cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior.” Vigor “is characterized high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one’s work, and persistence also in the face of difficulties.” Dedication “is characterized by a sense of

significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge.” Absorption “is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one’s work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work” (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Personal engagement, defined by Kahn (1990) as the harnessing of an organization's members' identities to their professional roles, is when people use and express their bodies, minds, and emotions while acting out their responsibilities.

This study examined the relationship between “PTL” (Perceived Toxic Leadership) and “WE” (Work Engagement). Both of them were written shortly with the name of “Toxic Leadership” and “Work Engagement” in details of thesis. I would like to point out that “toxic leadership” have the same meaning as “perceived toxic leadership” and toxic leadership was mentioned in the context of perceived toxic leadership. In addition, in some parts of the research, different synonyms like “commitment” were used instead of the word “engagement”. Contents were divided into six sections. The purpose and importance of the study were emphasized in the first section. Idea of “toxic leadership,” along with its definition, subscales, results, causes, studies and more specific information were analyzed in second section. In addition, an interpretation of the term “work engagement,” along with its definition, subscales, researches, theories, models, results, and more are offered in second section. Described the study's methodology and scales in the third section. Findings were detailed in fourth section. The discussion were offered in the fifth section and conclusion and final remarks were offered in sixth section.

### **The Purpose of the Study**

Many studies have been conducted on leadership theory, but only a handful of them have anything to do with modern methods. On the other side, in recent years, topics like work engagement and toxic leadership have become popular. Past studies have revealed that toxic leadership has a strong detrimental impact. Although research on the association between toxic leadership and work engagement style have been published, they did not specifically target white-collar workers in the textile industry. In light of this, the purpose of this study is to explain how toxic leadership and work engagement are related each other. In addition, this subject is chosen to clarify the importance of the toxic behaviors of leaders effects on white-collar employees’ work engagement who works in textile industry.

Because, nowadays working standards and working schedules are very hard and long for employees who are working in an industry like textile which continues to produce nonstop. Therefore, understanding employees' emotions are more important than before to sustain employees' productivity and success of both company and employee.

### **The Importance of the Study**

A deeper comprehension of these connections will advance theory and offer additional details about how toxic leadership affects employee engagement. It will be easier to assess if toxic behaviors have an adverse impact on employee engagement. Importance of this study is that it is a rare study that look at the connection between toxic leadership and work engagement among white-collar employees in the textile sector. Also, another importance of this study is that it is a rare study that examines the differences between men and women in terms of the relationship between toxic leadership and work engagement among white-collar employees in the textile sector. As a result, it makes a significant contribution to the literature in this field. Employees can find the study's findings useful in understanding how toxic leadership styles affect their level of work engagement and in assessing toxic behaviors.

The leader can try to modify their own behavior in a good way by more clearly noticing their own negative and toxic behaviors, and the employees can observe the development of negative emotions and behaviors as a result of the leader's own actions in terms of their work engagement. Also, since modern management and change management are both compressed treatments of the concepts of organizational behavior, leadership behavior, agile management, toxic leadership style, and work engagement, this research can be helpful and valuable for individuals who study or teach these topics.

## **RESULTS**

### **Descriptive Analysis**

Employees participating in the research consist of white-collar employees working in the textile sector.

The distribution of the genders of the participants was given in Table 1 below.

**Table 1**

*Distribution of Participants by Gender*

<i>Gender</i>		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	102	50,7	50,7	50,7
	Male	99	49,3	49,3	100,0
	Total	201	100,0	100,0	

Accordingly, 50,7% (102) of the participants are female and 49,3% (99) are male.

The distribution of the participants according to their Marital Status was shown in Table 2.

**Table 2**

*Distribution of Participants by Marital Status*

<i>Marital Status</i>		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	83	41,3	41,3	41,3
	Married	118	58,7	58,7	100,0
	Total	201	100,0	100,0	

Accordingly, 41,3% (83) of the participants are single and 58,7% (118) are married.

The distribution of the participants by age was given in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Distribution of Participants by Age*

<i>Age</i>		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20-30	46	22,9	22,9	22,9
	30-40	77	38,3	38,3	61,2
	40-50	64	31,8	31,8	93,0

50+	14	7,0	7,0	100,0
Total	201	100,0	100,0	

Accordingly, 22,9% (46) of the participants are 20-30 years old, 38,3% (77) are 30-40 years old, 31,8% (64) are 40-50 years old and 7,0% (14) are 50+ years old.

The distribution of the participants according to their educational status was given in Table 4.

**Table 4**

*Distribution of the Participants According to Educational Status*

<i>Educational Status</i>		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High School	25	12,4	12,4	12,4
	University	138	68,7	68,7	81,1
	Master Degree	32	15,9	15,9	97,0
	Doctorate	6	3,0	3,0	100,0
	Total	201	100,0	100,0	

Accordingly, 12,4% (25) of the participants are high school graduates, 68,7% (138) are university graduates, 15,9% (32) are master graduates, and 3,0% (6) are doctoral graduates.

The distribution of the participants according to their working time in the institution was given in Table 5.

**Table 5**

*Distribution of the Participants According to Working Time in the Institution*

*Working Time in the Institution*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0-1 Years	15	7,5	7,5	7,5
1-3 Years	47	23,4	23,4	30,8
3-5 Years	50	24,9	24,9	55,7
5-7 Years	32	15,9	15,9	71,6
7-10 Years	16	8,0	8,0	79,6
10+ Years	41	20,4	20,4	100
Total	201	100,0	100,0	

Accordingly, 7,5% (15) of the participants are working in the institution for 0-1 years, 23,4% (47) are working for 1-3 years, 24,9% (50) are working for 3-5 years, 15,9% (32) are working for 5-7 years, 8,0% (16) are working for 7-10 years and 20,4% (41) are working for 10+ years.

### **Reliability Analysis**

The consistency of a variable or collection of variables in what they are meant to assess is what is known as reliability. If several measurements are made, the values of the trustworthy measures will remain constant. It varies from validity in that it focuses on how an observation is made rather than what should be measured (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010).

The researcher should always analyze the variables being used and, if valid alternative measures are available, choose the variable with the higher reliability. For example, if the same measure is asked repeatedly, more reliable measures will show higher consistency than less reliable measures (Hair et al., 2010).

Cronbach's alpha has a commonly accepted lower limit of (.70), while exploratory studies, it can may see a drop to (.60) (Hair et al., 2010, p. 124).

Additionally, with relation to the Cronbach alpha reliability analysis in another source;

The homogenous structure of the scale's items is either supported or refuted by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient, a measurement of the items' internal consistency. High Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Uzunsakal & Yıldız, 2018).

The scale's items are understood to be composed of things that measure the same attribute and are consistent with one another. It is widely employed in scales of the Cronbach alpha Likert kind. Cronbach's alpha is written as follows: (Uzunsakal & Yıldız, 2018).

Not reliable if  $0 < R2 < 0.40$

Low reliability if  $0.40 < R2 < 0.60$

Very reliable if  $0.60 < R2 < 0.80$

High reliability if  $0.80 < R2 < 1.00$

The 30-item Toxic Leadership scale's reliability coefficients reveal that the scale's Cronbach's Alpha value was determined to be (.98). This result demonstrates the scale's extremely high level of reliability. The 17-item Work Engagement scale's reliability coefficients reveal that the scale's Cronbach's Alpha value was determined to be (.97). This result demonstrates the scale's extremely high level of reliability. Subscales of toxic leadership and work engagement were evaluated and all of subscales are higher than (.70). This means that all subscales for both scales are also reliable. The details of the reliability analysis were shown in Table 6.

**Table 6**

*Reliability Analysis of Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement Scales and Subscales*

Scale	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
Toxic Leadership	4.023	.656	.98
Ungratefulness	4.387	.867	.97
Sordidness	4.136	.962	.97
Selfishness	3.616	.667	.93
Negative Mood	3.950	.911	.94
Work Engagement	4.566	.280	.97

Vigor	4.650	.258	.93
Dedication	4.742	.433	.94
Absorption	4.307	.326	.94

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### Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was used to evaluate factor loadings for both scales.

Guadagnoli and Velicer (1988), on the other hand, stated that if the factor loads of 4 or more items or variables are greater than (0.60), reliable results can be obtained regardless of the sample size. Additionally, It is desirable that the factor loads of the variables/items in a factor be (0.45) and above. This situation can be interpreted as the items under the relevant factor measure the relevant structure (Büyüköztürk, 2018).

KMO coefficient indicates whether the sample size is suitable for factor analysis. Sample for its size to be sufficient, the KMO value must be at least (0.60) and above; Bartlett's test must be significant ( $p < .05$ ) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Table 7 displays all of the factor analysis's precise findings.

**Table 7**

#### *Factor Analysis Results of Toxic Leadership Scale*

<b>FACTOR 1: Ungratefulness</b>	<b>% Variance: 65.305</b>	<b>Factor Loadings</b>
1. My manager behaves condescendingly to his / her employees.		.665
4. My manager unpleasantly reminds his/her employees of his past mistakes		.750

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6. My manager doesn't value his / her employees much	.718
8. My manager hardly allows his / her employees to try new ways / approaches / innovations.	.656
10. My manager's communication is in the form of orders.	.687
18. My manager talks to other people in a pessimistic / complaining manner about their employees.	.768
21. My manager humiliates his / her employees in the eyes of the public.	.812
23. My manager is hardly inflexible with his / her employees.	.736
25. My manager tells her employees that they are incompetent at their jobs.	.822
27. My manager takes a stand against his / her employees without listening to them in an incident.	.680
30. My manager does not want to be in contact / connection with his / her employees outside of work.	.843

<b>FACTOR 2: Selfishness</b>	<b>% Variance: 7.263</b>	<b>Factor Loadings</b>
7. My manager believes that he / she is a person deserves much.		.722
9. My manager believes that he / she deserves her position (even higher authorities).		.708
20. My manager thinks he / she is more talented than others.		.857
22. My manager believes that the future and course of the institution will only improve with him / her		.738
24. My manager believes he / she is an excellent person.		.702

<b>FACTOR 3: Negative Mood</b>	<b>% Variance: 4.785</b>	<b>Factor Loadings</b>
2. My manager's current mood determines the climate of the work environment.		.839
5. In my manager's negative moods (angry, distressed, depressed), no one wants to approach his / her.		.711
13. My manager reflects negative moods / states in tone / volume of voice.		.643

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26. Employees act according to the mood of my manager.	.614
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FACTOR 4: Sordidness	% Variance: 4.624	Factor Loadings
3. My manager only gives privilege to people who pay his / her.		.784
11. My manager has arbitrary behavior and / or decisions.		.687
12. My manager takes on himself / herself the pros / returns of successes that do not belong to his / her.		.808
14. My manager pretends to be nice to his / her superiors.		.891
16. My manager just tries to do his / her job perfectly for her next benefit.		.919
17. My manager blames his / her own failures on her employees.		.880
19. My manager refuses to share responsibility for the mistakes made by his / her employees.		.822
28. My manager puts personal interests first.		.791

While applying the factor analysis, the “Direct Oblimin” method was used because a correlation was expected between the factors.

In the factor analysis, 28 Toxic Leadership (TL) measure items were used. The discovered Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value of (.945) is higher than the accepted norm. This result indicated that the variables had a homogenous structure, and the Bartlett Test result (Sig: .000, Chi-Square: 7642.805, df: 378) indicated that the variables were appropriate for factor analysis.

In order to get the best representation of the data, just a few rotations were performed, and two items ((15(negative mood) and 29(sordidness)) with cross loadings were not included in the study.

If there is a load on different factors for any item, when the difference between factor loads is less than (0.10), these are called overlapping items and the item (problem) that is considered as an overlapping item and imposes a load on different factors should be

removed from the analysis. If there is a load on different factors for any item and the difference between them is greater than (0.10), the data belonging to the factor with a high factor loading can be accepted (Büyüköztürk, 2011). Therefore, other cross loaded items which have at least (.10) difference with the other factor were included in the study. The remaining 28 items were loaded on four factors that together accounted for 81.976% of the cumulative variance. Taking the initial considerations into account (“ungratefulness”, “selfishness”, “negative mood” and “sordidness”) discovered by Çelebi, Güner and Yıldız (2015) all of the items (subscales) which were given above were loaded in this study.

The detailed results of the factor analysis were shown in Table 8.

**Table 8**

*Factor Analysis Results of Work Engagement Scale*

<b>FACTOR 1: Vigor &amp; Dedication &amp; Absorption</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Factor Loadings</b>
<b>Variance: 71.527</b>		
1. At my work, I feel bursting with energy		.836
2. I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose		.871
3. Time flies when I'm working		.882
4. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous		.838
5. I am enthusiastic about my job		.911
6. When I am working, I forget everything else around me		.870
7. My job inspires me		.822
8. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work		.855
9. I feel happy when I am working intensely		.865
10. I am proud of the work that I do		.871
11. I am immersed in my work		.903
12. I can continue working for very long periods at a time		.851
13. To me, my job is challenging		.777
14. I get carried away when I'm working		.813
15. At my job, I am very resilient, mentally		.841
16. It is difficult to detach myself from my job		.807
17. At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well		.749

In the factor analysis, 17 Work Engagement (WE) measure items were used. The discovered Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value of (.956) is higher than the accepted norm. This result indicated that the variables had a homogenous structure, and the Bartlett Test result (Sig: .000, Chi-Square: 3951.049, df: 136) indicated that the variables were appropriate for factor analysis.

In order to get the best representation of the data, just a few rotations were performed, no items were excluded from the data. Cross loading values were not identified as a result of analysis. All items were loaded on one factors explaining 71.527 % of the total variance.

Considering the original factors (“vigor”, “dedication”, “absorption”) that Schaufeli et al., (2002) was developed as a result of their study, items were loaded differently in this study. Vigor, dedication and absorption items loaded on a single factor. So the resulting factor was named as ‘*Vigor & Dedication & Absorption*’.

### **Normality Test**

Before performing the regression analysis, it is useful to apply a normality test to cover each of the subscales of our scales. Average of subscales were calculated and applied in to the normality calculation. In regression analysis, it is effective to analyze the distribution status of the data, since Pearson or Spearman is chosen in accordance with the normal distribution or non-normal distribution. The skewness and kurtosis data results should be looked at to decide whether the relevant data is normally distributed. If the skewness and kurtosis values are between +2.0 and -2.0, the data result is considered normal (George & Mallery, 2005). A kurtosis value of  $\pm 1.0$  would be considered excellent for most psychometric purposes, but a value between  $\pm 2.0$  is in many cases also acceptable, depending on the particular application." (George & Mallery, 2012).

As a result of the normality analysis, skewness and kurtosis values for both toxic leadership and work engagement subscales were accepted as normal as they were between +2.0 and -2.0.

## Correlation Analysis

In order to evaluate hypothesis 1, correlations were used. Correlations related to independent variable and all factors of dependent variable were detailed in Table 9.

**Table 9**

*Correlations between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement*

	<b>1</b> <b>TF1</b>	<b>2</b> <b>TF2</b>	<b>3</b> <b>TF3</b>	<b>4</b> <b>TF4</b>	<b>5</b> <b>WF</b>
1	1				
2	.829**	1			
3	.669**	.670**	1		
4	.733**	.705**	.682**	1	
5	-.486**	-.475**	-.350**	-.386**	1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Variables are represented by the following symbols:

Toxic Leadership Factors; **TF1**: Ungratefulness, **TF2**: Sordidness, **TF3**: Selfishness, **TF4**: Negative Mood

Work Engagement Factors; **WF**: Vigor & Dedication & Absorption

As a result of an analysis, correlation between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement were found as (-.495). All significant correlations for subscales are ranging from -.486 ( $p < .01$ ) to .829 ( $p < .01$ ). Hypothesis 1 was tested using correlation analysis. Results showed a negative and significant correlation between “*Toxic Leadership*” and “*Work Engagement*”. It specifies that the more toxicity that leaders showed, the less work engagement that an employees demonstrate. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was supported.

## 2.2. Independent Sample T-Test

Independent sample T-test was applied to investigate whether there were differences between men and women with respect to the level of Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement.

The Independent Samples T-Test analyzes the means of two separate groups to see if there is statistical support that the population mean values are statistically substantially different. A parametric test is the Independent Samples t Test.

Independent sample t-test was used to analyze hypothesis 2 stated that “ *There is a difference between men and women (in the Textile Industry) in their relationship between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement.* ”

In order to evaluate a variable as homogeneous, p. value must be ( $p > .05$ ). However, only looking at p. value is not enough. In order to analyze and interpret in detail. It is also necessary to examine the value Sig. (2-tailed) because Sig. (2-tailed) value shows whether there is any difference depending on the value for both variables, based on the value we have determined. The value must be less than ( $p < .05$ ) in order to say that there is a significant difference.

Descriptive results of independent sample t-test (gender) were shown in Table 10.

**Table 10**

*Descriptive Analysis of T-Test (Gender)*

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Toxic Leadership	Female	102	3.8929	1.75324
	Male	99	4.3817	1.60981
Work Engagement	Female	102	3.5952	1.29102
	Male	99	3.2876	1.24803

Sig. and Sig. (2-tailed) values of Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement (Gender) were shown in Table 11.

**Table 11**

*Results of T-Test (Gender)*

		Sig.	Sig. (2-tailed)
Toxic Leadership	Equal variances assumed	.337	.041
	Equal variances not assumed		.041
Work Engagement	Equal variances assumed	.938	.088
	Equal variances not assumed		.087

As seen in the Table 11, p. value for toxic leadership is (.337), which shows that it is homogeneously distributed, likewise p. value for work engagement is (.938) and this result shows that it is homogeneously distributed.

When the (2-tailed) values are examined, it is seen that the value for toxic leadership is (.041), which shows that there is a difference between the women and men who answered the questions in terms of experiences related to toxic leadership. For work engagement, the value is (.088), indicating that there is no difference between men and women in terms of work engagement.

According to the difference between men and women in terms of toxic leadership, it was determined that the toxic leadership scores of men (4.3817) were significantly higher than the toxic leadership scores of women (3.8929). The difference between men and women in terms of toxic leadership may be due to cultural differences or sectoral differences.

Considering the result, hypothesis 2 was partially supported. While a significant difference between men and women in terms of toxic leadership supports hypothesis 2, the absence

of a significant difference in terms of work engagement does not support hypothesis 2 in terms of work engagement.

### Regression Analysis

According to the Ozili (2022), in social science research, an R-squared between 0.10 and 0.50 (or between 10% and 50% when stated in percentage) is only acceptable when some or most of the explanatory variables are statistically significant.

Regression analysis was used to see whether TL contributes to WE or explains the variance in them or no. Out of a number of independent factors that are supposed to affect the dependent variable, this analysis identifies the independent variable that has made the highest contribution. The findings revealed that:

In order to evaluate the data in the Table 12 below as meaningful, p. values are expected to be lower than ( $p < .05$ ).

**Table 12**

*Results of Regression Analysis between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement*

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**Dependent Variable:** Work Engagement

Independent Variable:	Beta	t value	p value
Toxic Leadership	-.495	-8.027	<.001

R=.495; R<sup>2</sup>=.245; F value=64.440; p value=<.001

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P values which are lower than (.05) were examined: “*Toxic Leadership*” has a negative effect on “*Work Engagement*” as a result of an analysis, p. value is found as (<.001) and this means it is significant,  $\beta$  value is found as (-.495) and this means there is a negative

relationship between dependent and independent variable. For this reason, hypothesis 1 is stating “*There is a negative and significant relationship between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement*” and hypothesis 1 was supported. As a result, the result of the regression analysis shows that the relationship between toxic leadership and work engagement is significant and negative. In addition, independent variable (toxic leadership) explains %24.5 of the change on dependent variable (work engagement).

All of the subscales of Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement values are analyzed. Results of an analysis were shown below;

**Table 13**

*Results of Regression Analysis between Ungratefulness and Work Engagement*

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<b>Dependent Variable: Work Engagement</b>			
Independent Variable:	Beta	t value	p value
Ungratefulness	-.486	-7.843	<.001

R=.486; R<sup>2</sup>=.236; F value=61.518; p value=<.001

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“*Ungratefulness*” has a negative influence on “*Work Engagement*” as a result of an analysis, p.value is found as (<.001) and this means it is significant,  $\beta$  value is found as (-.486) and this means relationship is negative. Also, independent variable (Ungratefulness) explains %23.6 of the change in the dependent variable (Work Engagement).

**Table 14**

*Results of Regression Analysis between Sordidness and Work Engagement*

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**Dependent Variable:** Work Engagement

Independent Variable:	Beta	t value	p value
Sordidness	-.475	-7.619	<.001

R=.475; R<sup>2</sup>=.226; F value=58.056; p value=<.001

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“*Sordidness*” has a negative influence on “*Work Engagement*” as a result of an analysis, p. value is found as (<.001) and this means it is significant,  $\beta$  value is found as (-.475) and this means relationship is negative. Also, independent variable (Sordidness) explains %22.6 of the change in the dependent variable (Work Engagement).

**Table 15**

*Results of Regression Analysis between Selfishness and Work Engagement*

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**Dependent Variable:** Work Engagement

Independent Variable:	Beta	t value	p value
Selfishness	-.350	-5.264	<.001

R=.350; R<sup>2</sup>=.122; F value=27.714; p value=<.001

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“*Selfishness*” has a negative influence on “*Work Engagement*” as a result of an analysis, p. value is found as ( $<.001$ ) and this means it is significant,  $\beta$  value is found as (-.350) and this means relationship is negative. Also, independent variable (Selfishness) explains %12.2 of the change in the dependent variable (Work Engagement).

**Table 16**

*Results of Regression Analysis between Negative Mood and Work Engagement*

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**Dependent Variable:** Work Engagement

Independent Variable:	Beta	t value	p value
Negative Mood	-.386	-5.904	$<.001$

R=.386; R<sup>2</sup>=.349; F value=34.860; p value= $<.001$

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“*Negative Mood*” has a negative influence on “*Work Engagement*” as a result of an analysis, p. value is found as ( $<.001$ ) and this means it is significant,  $\beta$  value is found as (-.386) and this means relationship is negative. Also, independent variable (Negative Mood) explains %34.9 of the change in the dependent variable (Work Engagement).

## **DISCUSSION**

The act of guiding and influencing a group to accomplish its objectives is known as leadership (Robbins & Coulter, 2012). According to this definition, leaders are those who have the skills and traits to influence others' thoughts and behaviors in order to achieve shared goals and get them committed to moving in the same direction (Mills, 2005).

The ability of leaders to lead followers effectively and engage them to remain committed as key partners in the growth of their organization is one of the major issues facing the successful management of corporate entities in the twenty-first century. The management of human capital was very important to modern organizations (Mendes & Stander, 2011). Although it was true that the act or process of leading necessitates leaders, followers, and the environment or situation (Allio, 2013), the leadership conduct becomes increasingly important to manage the workforce. The evolution of organizations may be impacted differently by the various leadership philosophies. Yet, toxic leadership has been identified as a negative tendency that is widespread in many organizations (Tavanti, 2011).

The combination of an egotistical mindset and destructive behavior that has a negative impact on the followers and the organization were known as toxic leadership (Erickson, Shaw, Murray, & Branch, 2015).

In addition, “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” is referred to as work engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2002). The term engagement “refers to a persistent and pervasive affective–cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behavior.” Vigor “is characterized high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one’s work, and persistence also in the face of difficulties.” Dedication “is characterized by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge.” Absorption “is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one’s work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work” (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Within this context, this research purposed to analyze and show the relationship between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement empirically. Also,

researches were purposed to evaluate negative influences of Toxic Leadership on Work Engagement.

When the results of studies on Toxic Leadership and work engagement are examined in literature;

1. According to Amutenya (2019), decrease in toxic leadership can cause decrease in intention to leave.
2. According to Çeken (2020) negative and weak relationship between toxic leadership and work engagement was found.
3. According to Çeken (2020) significant difference between men and women in terms of toxic leadership was found, women has higher toxic leadership scores than men.

In this study, statistical analysis was started with reliability analysis and secondly factor analysis conducted for TL and WE. As a result of the factor analysis of TL, four factors were found consistent with Çelebi et al.,'s (2015) findings. These are “ungratefulness”, “selfishness”, “negative mood” and “sordidness”. However, work engagement items loaded on three separate factors originally which were named as “vigor” “dedication” and “absorption” by Schaufeli et al., (2002). While the first one included items regarding the leader’s toxic behaviors, the second one contained items regarding employees’ behaviors and emotions. As a result of an analysis 28 out of 30 items of the toxic leadership scale was evaluated and loaded on four factors explained the %81.976 of the total variance and 17 out of 17 items of work engagement scale was evaluated and loaded on one factor explained the %71.527 of the total variance and loaded on one factor as opposed to the three factors on which it was originally loaded, a new factor which were appeared after an analysis was called “*Vigor & Dedication & Absorption*”. In addition, correlation, regression and t-test were used to test hypothesis. As a result of a related analysis, it has been determined that toxic leadership has a negative effect on work engagement and significant and negative relationship between men and women in terms of toxic leadership, leadership scores of men were found significantly higher than the toxic leadership scores of women.

## **Limitations**

One of the study's limitations was the sample size. White-collar workers in the textile industry make up the target audience. Limitations on sector, organization, and collar have all but removed the possibility of comparing employees from other sectors, organizations, and collars. Additionally, participation in the study was voluntary, and this group as well as others like assistant specialists, specialists, and managers who report to managers made up the sample. The target population's restrictions made it challenging to generalize the findings and get them accepted generally.

Regarding the study's time frame, there is yet another limitation. Data were gathered for the cross-sectional investigation at a particular point in time. Longitudinal research might yield better outcomes.

Finally, the survey could not be conducted under any company name or company (brand) with special permission, due to the thought that toxic leadership scale which applied to understand the emotion, behavior and attitudes of leaders would threaten the confidentiality and the fear of leaking. In addition, since work engagement is a scale to be evaluated together with toxic leadership scale, the answers to the questions of the toxic leadership can reveal the result of dissatisfaction with the answers to the questions of work engagement, and the undesirable information that can observe. For this reason, since the two triggering aspects of the questionnaire could be deciphered under the name of the company and leaked outside the company, it was not deemed appropriate for permission and this resulted in a completely restrictive situation for the process.

## **Managerial Implications and Suggestions for Future Researches**

As underlined by the research, the studied literature provides evidence that toxic leadership affects both organizational and individual levels. Negative consequences on organizational performance, unproductive work habits, and a higher inclination to leave the company are examples of organizational outcomes (Mehta & Maheshwari, 2014, p. 21). Toxic leadership is bad for people and ultimately for the business (Aubrey, 2012). Interdepartmental friction, a high turnover rate, declining productivity are the all common results of toxic leadership (Wilson-Starks, 2003, p. 3).

In addition, when the behavior of the toxic leader is considered in general, it does not provide a positive effect on the employee in any way. Since the behavior of the toxic leader directly affects both the mental and physical condition of the employee, it causes a negative picture.

Essentially, the management style that the manager is expected to implement is expected to be more supportive, encouraging and appreciating the success of his employees. If a negative comment and criticism is to be made as a result of a mistake or an undesirable situation, it is recommended to contribute with a constructive and positive attitude that supports the development of the employee in a positive way, instead of exhibiting a completely negative. Moreover, situations where the manager supports the employees to reach better levels, trigger the perception of value in the eyes of the employee and make the employee feel more positive. Thus, positively affecting their engagement to work, contributing to the fact that they find their work with added value and full of purpose.

The concept of toxic leadership is an interesting but not directly focused topic in literature. A wide range of significant literature has been written about each of these factors separately. But, no direct relationship between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement in which includes only a dependent and independent variable without mediator role observed in researches. It has been investigated how “Toxic Leadership” and “Work Engagement” are related thus far.

Additional research can be valuable to better understand the relationships between the important areas this study looked at. The only people included in this study were white-collar workers in the textile industry and demographic questions were prepared by forming a certain group of questions. However, it might be fruitful to compare how employees of private organizations, public companies, blue collar workers, and other sectors perceive toxic leadership and their dedication to their jobs. Also, different types of demographic questions can be asked in future researches. The researcher was unable to draw generalizations across cultures because this survey was limited to Turkish-speaking staff. However, the way that various cultures react to TL dimensions may vary. As a result, future studies can examine the same factors in various cultures.

Different cross-cultural generalizations and/or differences could not be reached because this survey was only given to employees who working in Turkey. People from different cultures or traditions can respond differently to the Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement dimensions. Future research can examine the same factors in various cultures and structures.

The primary and critical one is the effect of the leader's toxic behavior on job engagement, which is also mentioned in the research topic. A few different scenarios can be mentioned as a result of the unpleasant behaviors of managers. Before making a general evaluation according to the results of the research, I would like to state that; the study was evaluated in terms of toxic leadership behaviors and the effect of toxic leadership behaviors on employees' engagement. For this reason, the substances and contents specified in relation to the possible effects of employee attitudes and behaviors on managers are indicated only in order to provide an institutional idea and support. The aim here is to provide a perspective to the managers or employees who work in the corporate field and want to make a research about related area.

If it is necessary to make a general evaluation based on the results of the research;

1. It can be said that the negative behaviors of the managers have a negative effect on the work engagement of the employees.
2. If the manager has positive attitudes and behaviors, especially if the manager supports the employees to carry out projects and studies that contribute to the added value, this situation can contribute to the employee's self-confidence and sense of self-worth.
3. Although it is important to evaluate the behavior of the manager on its own, it can be important to analyze and evaluate the corporate culture in order to determine whether there is any basis for the behavior of the manager or not.

Finally, it has been determined that different toxic leadership behavior patterns are related to each other. As a result of the related analyses, it was determined that the work engagement of the employees who work together with toxic managers is low.

## CONCLUSION

To summarize all the analysis results briefly, the analysis results of the relevant hypotheses were briefly explained below.

The relationship between variables was tested by correlation analysis and regression analysis. With regard to relationship between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement, the findings evidenced that there is a negative and significant correlation between “*Toxic Leadership*” and “*Work Engagement*”. In other words, the more toxicity that leaders show causes less work engagement employees perceive. Therefore, H1 proposing “*There is a negative and significant relationship between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement*” was supported.

Independent sample t-test was used to understand differences between men and women based on their answers for Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement. Therefore, H2 proposing “*There is a difference between men and women (in the Textile Industry) in their relationship between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement*”. As a result of an analysis, the findings evidenced that there is an significant difference between men and women in terms of toxic leadership supports hypothesis 2 but the absence of a significant difference in terms of work engagement does not support hypothesis 2. Thus, hypothesis 2 was partially supported.

All these findings show that the work engagement of employees exposed to toxic leadership is negatively affected.

Consequently, additional research on the effects of negative leadership styles on employee engagement can be essential. As far as is known, no totally evaluable and completely acceptable research has been found to investigate how toxic leadership affects employees work engagement. Consequently, when the level of toxic leadership practices is high, the consequences of toxic leadership on employee engagement are strong and effective.

As a result, if we need to evaluate the process briefly and completely, although Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement are two main subjects, permissions were obtained for the questions belonging to both scales. The survey data were shared with the eligible

persons working in the textile industry, operating mainly on the European side of Istanbul, directly or through their managers. The answers were gathered by bringing together the direct answers and the answers received from the teams of the relevant managers.

Toxic leadership scale was developed and translated to Turkish by Çelebi et al., (2015) was used as a survey tool to evaluate the structure of toxic leadership. The Toxic Leadership scale consists of four different dimensions. Dimensions are “Ungratefulness”, “Selfishness”, “Negative Mood” and “Sordidness”. Ungratefulness consisted of 11 items, selfishness consisted of 5 items, negative mood consisted of 5 items and sordidness consisted of 9 items and a total of 30 items.

The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale was developed by Schaufeli et al., (2002) was used as a survey tool to evaluate the structure of work engagement. Turkish (Long) version of Work Engagement Scale was taken from (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2003). The work engagement scale consists of three dimensions. Dimensions are “Vigor”, “Dedication” and “Absorption”. Vigor consisted of 6 items, dedication consisted of 5 items and absorption consisted of 6 items and a total of 17 items.

When the studies done by different people are examined in order to be able to evaluate in terms of work engagement, in some studies on work engagement, it was observed that as a result of factor analysis, a single factor emerged in addition to three factors. One of these studies prepared by Kulikowski (2017) mentions that different results are obtained when evaluated in terms of factor load. According to Kulikowski (2017), The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) is the most widely used work engagement measuring tool. Work engagement as a predictor of health is a new idea in occupational science. Nonetheless, despite its widespread use, there is still debate over the factorial validity of the UWES. In order to determine which of the UWES factorial structures exhibits more validity, this work has analyzed 21 research studies on UWES-9 and UWES-17 factorial validity using the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) method. Six investigations have determined that the UWES's original three-factor structure is preferable. The UWES structure with 1 general factor has been found to be superior in an additional 6 studies. The authors came to the conclusion that the one-factor and three-factor structures could be

compared across eight research. One study was unable to support the UWES's one- or three-factor structure. These ambiguous findings from studies focusing on the UWES factorial validity are perplexing because they may cast doubt on the entire idea of work engagement as a three-factor structure of dedication, vigor, and absorption in addition to indicating a lack of validity for the UWES as a measurement tool. In another study by Köse (2016), the work engagement scale created by Schaufeli et al., (2002) and translated by the researcher into Turkish was subjected to one-dimensional analysis within the context of this research. It was then subjected to exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation technique to determine factor loads, and it was determined that the scale has one factor.

The purpose of this study was to understand and evaluate the effect of toxic leadership on employees work engagement. Both of the scales was analyzed and evaluated as a result of a related analysis. As a result of an examinations about the literature, there were not many theses that directly examine the relationship between toxic leadership and work engagement.

The main conclusions of this study can be summarized by two major results;

First of all, the results of this study ensured a credential for the effects of toxic leadership on the work engagement of employees. Accordingly, results showed that there is a significant and negative relationship between toxic leadership and work engagement. Also, it has been determined that toxic leadership negatively affects work engagement

Secondly, this study was done to evaluate the difference between men and women in their relationship between toxic leadership and work engagement. Results showed that, there is a significant difference between men and women for toxic leadership but there is not a significant difference between men and women for work engagement. As a result of the relevant evaluations; It was determined that men's toxic leadership scores were higher than women's toxic leadership scores.

Generally, the results of this study can support that toxic leadership has an essential effect and role on employees' work engagement. Also, it can be said that the engagement of the employees to the job is directly related to the behavior of the leader. Moreover, the negative

behaviors of the leader can reduce the work efficiency of the employees, and the state of being energetic in their work, enjoying their work and finding their work meaningful can weaken.

When the hypotheses and details which were detailed in the data analysis section were evaluated in terms of their content, the following results were obtained as a result of the researches and analysis.

1. It has been determined that this is a rare study in which the relationship between toxic leadership and work engagement is examined without an intermediary role.
2. The relationship between toxic leadership and work engagement has been evaluated in the “textile sector” and between “white-collar” employees. With this feature, it makes a contribution to the literature.
3. The first hypothesis of the study, “There is a negative and significant relationship between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement.” hypothesis makes a contribution to the literature because hypothesis was tested in textile industry and between the white-collar employees. In addition, the result of “toxic leadership negatively affects work engagement” also contributes to the literature.
4. The second hypothesis of the study, “There is a difference between men and women (in the Textile Industry) in their relationship between Toxic Leadership and Work Engagement.” hypothesis makes a contribution to the literature because hypothesis was tested in textile industry and between the white-collar employees. In addition, the result of “men's toxic leadership scores were higher than women's toxic leadership scores” also contributes to the literature.
5. When the work engagement scale, which originally consisted of three sub-factors, was evaluated by factor analysis, it was seen that three factors were located under a single factor and the resulting factor was named as “Vigor & Dedication & Absorption”. This result makes a contribution to the literature.

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