

An Examination of Leadership Competencies of School Principals in Turkey and the United States*

Türkiye ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'ndeki Okul Müdürlerinin Liderlik Yeterliklerinin Cinsiyet Değişkenine Göre İncelenmesi

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Abstract

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine if perceptions of the leadership skills of principals in both Turkey and the United States were influenced by the gender of the principal and the gender of teachers for whom they lead. In 2009, the researchers conducted surveys in both Turkey and the United States. In Turkey, a convenience sampling of 1076 teachers and 144 principals took place and a cross-sectional survey of 198 principals and 706 teachers took place in the United States. No statistically significant differences, according to gender, in the mean were found among the groups of principals and teachers in Turkey. However, in the United States, statistically significant differences in the means were found in two domains-*Encouraging the Heart*, in which male teachers had significantly higher scores than female teachers in the rating of their principals, and in *Inspiring Shared Vision*, where female principals had significantly higher self-ratings than male principals.

Keywords: School principal, gender, leadership.

Öz

Bu nicel araştırmanın amacı, Türkiye'deki ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'ndeki okul müdürlerinin liderlik algısının hem müdürlerin cinsiyetine hem de öğretmenlerin cinsiyetine göre farklılık gösterip göstermediğini ortaya koymaktır. Bu çalışma 2009 yılında yapılmıştır. Araştırmanın örneklemini Türkiye'de çalışan 144 müdür ve 1076 öğretmen ile Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde çalışan 198 müdür ve 706 öğretmen oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmada Türkiye'deki öğretmen ve müdürlerin algılarının cinsiyete göre anlamlı fark göstermediği sonucuna ulaşılmıştır. Fakat Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde iki boyutta anlamlı fark bulunmuştur. *Yürekte Cesaretlendirmek* boyutunda erkek öğretmenlerin müdürlerinin liderliğine ilişkin algı ortalamaları kadın öğretmenlerin kendi müdürlerine ilişkin algı ortalamalarından yüksek iken, *Ortak Vizyon Oluşturmak* boyutunda kadın müdürlerin kendi liderlik algılarına ilişkin puanları erkek müdürlerin kendi liderlik algılarından yüksek çıkmıştır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Okul müdürü, cinsiyet, liderlik.

Introduction

During the past half-century, there has been a significant increase in the amount of globalization throughout the world. There is more international trade, cultural exchange, and an increase in the amount of instant communication throughout the world. As Friedman (2005) suggests, "globalization is shrinking the world and flattening the playing field at the same time and is the newfound power of individuals to collaborate and compete globally" (p. 10). This transformation has had an impact on the economics, politics and culture of every nation in the

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world, which according to House and Javidan (2004), has also brought about a need to understand how leadership, including educational leadership, can be affected by the cultural norms of not only a leader's own country, but the culture of other nations and regions of the world.

House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, and Gupta (2004) published the *GLOBE Study of 62 Societies* in which nine cultural dimensions were identified and quantified from 10 different regions (clusters) of the world, including the Middle East (Turkey and four other nations) and Anglo (United States and six other nations). According to the researchers, there existed a significant difference between the Middle East cluster (lower) and the Anglo cluster (higher) in the area of gender egalitarianism.

Turkey and the United States are located in different and distinct regions of the world. Furthermore, there exist cultural differences between the two countries as well, including but not limited to language, religion and gender roles. However, in spite of such differences, Turkey and the United States have been political allies since 1947 and share a common belief in the critical importance of educating the young people of their respective countries. Both nations have compulsory educational systems, and within the system, have both public and private schools for students to attend. In Turkey and the United States, the individual schools are structured in a manner in which the leadership and management duties are primarily found within the position of the school principal.

No individual is more important to the success of a school than the principal. Effective principals, particularly in the role of instructional leader, make critical decisions that impact both the curriculum and instructional programs of a school, which can directly effect student achievement (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). In both Turkey and the United States, the percentages of principals who are female are much lower than the percentage of teachers who are female.

Furthermore, a factor that impacts the principal's ability to lead a school is often shaped by their own perceptions and the perceptions of their teachers (Hoff & Mitchell, 2008). Past research has found that gender often impacts how principals perceive their own ability to lead (Herndon, 2002), and that teachers, both male and female, are more inclined to accept the leadership of a male principal than that of a female principal (Lee, Dedrick & Smith, 1991). As the demographic landscape of the principalship continues to evolve in both Turkey and the United States, this research examined if such perceptions continue today or if the perceived leadership abilities of a principal are impacted by gender.

Theoretical Framework

The works of Eagly, Wood, and Diekman (2000) and McGee-Banks, (2007) provided the theoretical framework for this study regarding gender and leadership. Leaders are expected to function in certain ways in order to provide leadership necessary for the success of the organization. The roles of a leader (principal), like other roles within an organization (school), do impact behaviors. These behaviors may be perceived by the leaders themselves and their followers (teachers) in terms of gender roles, which prescribe certain behaviors for leaders based upon their identified gender. Eagly et al.(2000), describe these roles as agentic and communal. Agentic qualities are commonly identified with male behavior more than female, and include being assertive, aggressive, confident and competitive. Conversely, communal qualities, such as empathy, affection, nurturing, collaboration and dependence, are more likely associated with women instead of men.

Since gender roles may influence the behavior of the leader, female and male leaders may have different expectations as to how to fulfill the required leadership tasks (McGee-Banks, 2007). Female leaders may adapt their leadership behaviors, either to accommodate gender role expectations or to fight against societal prejudice that suggests how female leaders should behave. Thus, the female leader can be faced with the dilemma of failing to meet the requirements of their

particular leadership position by either conforming to such expectations or by being perceived in a negative manner by followers and other leaders. The female leader's gender role is more likely, therefore, to not be aligned to expected leadership roles and thus can lead to prejudice and sanctions. Either way, the female leader is often faced with additional burdens that can significantly hinder chances of success.

The work of Northouse (2009) and Bass (1990, 1998) provided the theoretical framework regarding leadership style. According to Northouse (2009), "leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 3). During the past century, a number of leadership theories have evolved in attempting to determine what makes a leader effective. One of the first theories that was developed was referred to as "great man" theories because it focused on the certain qualities, traits and characteristics that were exemplified by great social, political and military leaders (Bass, 1990, Jago, 1982). According to the trait theory, leaders were believed to possess traits such as self-confidence, intelligence, dependability, fairness, extroversion, enthusiasm, and good appearance.

Leadership style is defined as how a leader behaves when providing an organization with leadership, including what the leader does, and how they act (Bass, 1990, 1998). According to Northouse (2009), the style approach is formed through a range of two leadership behaviors: task behavior, which relates to the emphasis placed by the leader on the attainment of organizational goals, and relationship behavior, which emphasizes the interpersonal relationships between the leader and the subordinates within the organization. Included within the style theory is the extent to which the leader allows the subordinates to participate in organizational decision-making. Researchers such as Vroom and Yetton (1973) and Blake and Mouton (1964, 1978, 1985) have identified a range of behaviors of a leader, from democratic, which encourages subordinates to participate in decision-making, to autocratic, which discourages subordinates from participating in organizational decision-making.

Principals, Leadership and Gender in Turkey

In Turkey, the number of female principals is extremely low. Only about 9% of all school principals and 11% of all assist principals are female (Kadının Statüsü Genel Müdürlüğü, 2009). Similarly, in Burdur, the city where the surveys were first administered to principals and teachers, only three of the 173 school principals are female. However, Turkey's Statistical Yearbook (2008, p. 103-104) data shows that in 2008-09, 50.4% of elementary teachers in Turkey were female, and 41.5% of secondary teachers in Turkey were female.

With regards to women becoming principals in Turkey, there are no legal barriers nor lack of training but there exists a very low proportion of women as principals. For example, Çelikten (2004) found that women are often assigned to principalship positions in an unintentional manner or simply, out of necessity. Furthermore, female principals have stated that, because of social and cultural norms, they are not accepted as readily as male principals. As a principal in Turkey, a female is often faced with societal demands and traditions that males do not have to face, including housework, marriage, children, and negative attitudes towards females who become principals. Altınışık (1988) found in her research that the reasons for women to not become a principal in Turkey is that many female teachers simply do not want to become principals and leaders in school districts actually prefer males over females. Çelikten and Yeni (2004) concluded that the reasons that there are so few female school principals were that cultural traditions of Turkey often prevented women from obtaining these positions, including but not limited to traditions such obligations to the family and home, and a lack of incentives to become a principal.

According to Boydak Özcan, and Akpınar (2002), the leadership styles of principals in Turkey are not influenced by gender, according to the perceptions of teachers, vice-principals and principals themselves. Turan and Ebiçlioğlu (2002) indicated that there were no differences between female elementary school principals' leadership characteristics and male elementary school principals' leadership characteristics, according to perceptions of the teachers. Furthermore,

Anafarta, Sarvan and Yapıcı (2008) concluded that 72% of female principals were exposed to gender discrimination and that 74% of female principals felt that they were frequently impacted by the glass ceiling syndrome, which is an invisible barrier in organizations which makes it very difficult for women to obtain higher positions (Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995). Can (2008) found that, since female principals in Turkey are also expected to complete their family responsibilities as well as their duties as principal, upper managers prefer males as principals.

Erçetin and Çalışkan Maya (2005) found that aspiring female principals face many intense barriers in Turkey, including men who do not want women to be principals, women not feeling appreciated for their accomplishments, and a reluctance of those being supervised to accept the authority of the female principal. These responsibilities include taking care of their husband and children, family care for elders, household duties, and not having support from their husband. Finally Erçetin and Çalışkan Maya (2005) state that these social causes are important barriers for female to become a principal, and also cause hardships for women in Turkey who in fact have become principals. Bayrak and Mohan (2001) concluded that male principals agreed that female principals often faced barriers because of stereotypes found throughout the Turkish culture. The researchers found that such prejudice has been a disadvantage for women in job opportunities, housing and other areas.

Principals, Leadership and Gender in the United States

For the past several decades, research has revealed the critical role the school principal plays in improving schools and the achievement of students (Andrews & Soder, 1987, Hallinger & Heck, 1996, Marzano, Waters & McNulty, 2005). This changing environment in education across America has led to higher expectations and increased levels of accountability for principals, including that of instructional leadership (Lashway, 2003, Lucas & Valentine, 2002). As the instructional leader, the principal has the responsibility to lead the school in a manner that emphasizes improving the academic achievement of all students and fostering the professional development of the instructional staff (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996). Stakeholders, including teachers, parents and the community, are being invited to participate in decision-making, strategic planning and formal school improvement initiatives (Fenwick & Pierce, 2001, Institute for Educational Leadership, 2000).

Traditionally, women have made up an overwhelming majority of the number of teachers in America, but have been significantly underrepresented in educational leadership positions, particularly as school principals. In 1905, for example, almost 98 percent of the elementary teachers in America were female, and about 62 percent of elementary principals were female. However, from the middle of the twentieth century to the 1980s, the percentage of women as principals decreased from 55% to less than 20% , even though the number of teachers were overwhelmingly female (McGee-Banks, 2007). Since the 1980s, however, there has been a dramatic shift in the gender of principals. From 1984-85 to 2003-04, the percentage of female principals in elementary schools increased from 21.4% to 49.7% and the percentage of female principals in secondary schools increased from 16% in 1993-94 to 26.9% in 2003-2004 (NCES, 2007).

Research in America indicates that there exists a mythology around women as leaders and attempting to be successful, can be caught between becoming to "male-like" in her leadership, or remain true to her gender, and be perceived as too gentle, nurturing and emotional (Adler, Laney & Parker, 1993, Pigford & Tonnsen, 1993). Lugg (2003) found that when men led organizations with authority and decisiveness, that was seen by the followers as being a positive leadership quality. However, women who led in a similar manner, were perceived in a manner in which their esteem as the leader is often diminished.

A number of studies also suggest that women in leadership (current or aspiring) are often faced with the dilemma of balancing the societal expectations of women regarding their family responsibilities with that of the leadership at the workplace, and to alienation, isolation and exculsion for women educational leaders (Hoff & Mitchell, 2008). Shakeshaft (1987) suggested that women have excellent leadership skills, but often face obstacles that men may not face.

As this evolution continues, the question arises as to whether or not male and female principals lead schools in a similar or different manner and secondly, if the gender of the principal, alone, has an impact on the perceived leadership abilities of the principal. Almost twenty years ago, Shakeshaft, Nowell and Perry stated (1991), "We believe that gender affects both supervisory style and outcome" (p. 339). Tyree (1995) suggested that there exists a perception that women lack support from the staff, parents and community that does not exist with male principals. Bolman and Deal (2001) suggest that leadership through the perspective of a woman is very different from the traditional view of leadership.

Thus, these perceptions and attitudes could play a critical role in how principals perceive themselves as being an effective educational leader, and how the people these principals are leading—primarily teachers—perceive their leadership as well. Shakeshaft (1987) found that teachers preferred working for male principals, regardless of their gender. Recent studies have shown that, in spite of the increasing number of women who become school principals, gender still plays a role in how the leadership abilities of women principals are perceived (Hoff & Mitchell, 2008). Furthermore, teachers' perceptions of the leadership abilities of the principal can impact the climate and performance of both teachers and students in a school. In a study to examine teachers' attitudes toward female principals, Hudson and Rea (1998) found that what both female and male teachers want in a principal is one who is an excellent educational leader, regardless of the principal's gender. Green (1999) found that the differences between the leadership styles of female and male principals was that males appeared to emphasize the managerial side of building leadership, while female principals emphasized the instructional and professional development side of building leadership. Herndon (2002) found that female principals generally perceived themselves as more effective leaders than male principals did, particularly in their ability to inspire others and model appropriate leadership skills.

Since the number of female principals in America has increased significantly during the past two decades, the issue then becomes whether or not these female principals will be judged the same or differently than their male counterparts, and if so, to what extent.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of the leadership skills of principals in both Turkey and the United States. Specifically, the study attempted to determine if perceptions of the leadership skills of principals were influenced by gender—both the gender of the principal and the gender of teachers for whom they lead.

Thus, the following research questions were attempted to be answered, from the perspective of principals and teachers in both Turkey and the United States:

1. Does the gender of a principal influence the self-perception of their leadership skills?
2. Does the gender of a teacher influence their perception of the leadership skills of their principal?
3. Does the gender of both of teacher and principal influence the teachers' perception of the leadership skills of their principal? (Female teacher with female principal, female teacher with male principal, male teacher with female principal, and male teacher with male principal).
4. Is there a difference in the teachers' perception of the principal's leadership skills, according to the gender of the principal?

Methodology

This study is quantitative study which used the survey research design to compare the perceptions of the leadership skills of principals in Turkey and the United States. In 2009, the researchers conducted a convenience sampling of teachers and principals from Turkey, and a random sample of teachers and principals from the United States.

Study Group

In Turkey, the sample consisted of 144 principals and 1,076 teachers. Initially, surveys were sent to teachers and principals in Burdur, Turkey. Since there were only three female principals working in Burdur, the researcher sent surveys to teachers and principals throughout Turkey in order to have a sufficient number in the sample for statistical analysis. In Turkey, all principals and teachers were working in public elementary and secondary schools. Of the principals 52 (36.1%) were females and 92 (63.9%) were males; 96 (66.7%) were from elementary schools and 48 (33.3%) were from high schools. Of the teachers 548 (50.9%) were females and 523 (48.6%) were males. Five (0.5%) teachers failed to specify their gender. 679 (63.1%) were elementary teachers and 393 (36.5%) were high school teachers. Four teachers (0.4%) failed to specify their level of teaching. The sample included 283 female teachers who had a male principal (26.3%), 267 female teachers who had a female principal (24.8%), 401 male teachers who had a male principal (37.3%), and 120 male teachers who had a female principal (11.1%). Five teachers (0.5%) failed to specify their own gender, as well as the gender of their principal.

In the United States, principals and teachers were randomly selected from the metropolitan area of Baltimore, Maryland. A total of 511 surveys were sent to principals, with 198 returned (38.7%). The sample of principals included 142 principals from public schools (71.7%) and 56 (28.3%) from non-public schools. There were 128 female principals (64.6%) and 70 male principals (35.4%). Finally, the sample of principals included 127 elementary school principals (64.1%) and 71 secondary school principals (35.9%).

A total of 1,956 surveys were sent to teachers in Maryland, with 706 returned (35.9%). This sample group of teachers included 531 teachers from public schools (75.2%) and 175 teachers from non-public schools (24.8%). The sample also included 550 female teachers (77.9%) and 156 male teachers (22.1%). There were 330 elementary teachers in the sample (46.7%) and 376 secondary teachers (53.3%). Finally, the sample included 200 female teachers who had a male principal (28.3%), 349 female teachers who had female principals (49.4%), 87 male teachers who had a male principal (12.3%) and 69 male teachers who had a female principal (9.8%). One teacher (0.2%) failed to specify their own gender, as well as the gender of their principal.

Instrument

The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) (Kouzes & Posner, 2001) was used to collect the data regarding the perceptions of principal leadership abilities. The *LPI* has been used in many research studies involving the identification of exemplary practices of effective leaders, including more than three dozen such studies in principal leadership. Furthermore, it is aligned to other leadership theories that suggest leaders need to have certain practices, skills and knowledge to be successful. Bennis & Goldsmith (2003) suggest that effective leaders need integrity, trustworthiness, be a visionary, collaborative and strategic. Stephen Covey (1992) has identified eight habits of highly effective leaders, including being proactive, beginning with the end in mind, putting first things first, thinking win-win, seeking first to understand, synergizing, sharpening the saw and finding one's own voice and the voice of others. Green (2010) offers four dimensions of principal leadership for effectiveness, including understanding self and others, understanding the complexity of organizational life, building bridges through relationships, and engaging in best practices. Finally, the Council of Chief State School Officers (2008) have identified the following leadership practices for effective school leaders: visionary leadership, instructional leadership, managerial leadership, collaborative leadership, ethical leadership, and political/community leadership.

The instrument was modified slightly in order to assess perceptions of both principals and teachers. The instrument contains thirty items, with six questions for each of the following Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership (2001):

- Challenging the Process: leaders search for opportunities to change the status quo.
- Inspiring a Shared Vision: leaders envision the future, creating an ideal and unique image of what the organization can become.

- Enabling Others to Act: leaders foster collaboration and build spirited teams of staff.
- Modeling the Way: leaders create standards of excellence and then set an example for others to follow.
- Encouraging the Heart: to keep hope and determination alive, leaders recognize contributions that individuals make and celebrate accomplishments.

Table 1.

Leadership Practices Inventor: Raw Score and Percentile Rankings for Each Practices

LPI Practice	Low Raw Score (below the 30th percentile)	Moderate Raw Score (30th-69th percentile)	High Raw Score (70th percentile and above)
Challenge the Process	5.0-19.9	20.0-24.9	25.0-30.0
Shared Vision	5.0-17.9	18.0-23.9	24.0-30.0
Enable Others	5.0-22.9	23.0-25.9	26.0-30.0
Model the Way	5.0-21.9	22.0-25.9	26.0-30.0
Encourage the Heart	5.0-19.9	20.0-24.9	25.0-30.0

$p \geq .05$

Kouzes & Posner, the authors of the *LPI*, suggest that individual scores obtained from those who take the inventory, be ranked into percentiles, according to the individual score obtained for each of the five practices. Raw scores for each practice can range from a minimum of five (5) to a maximum of thirty (30). The percentile rankings are based upon more than 18,000 respondents in their database (2001, p. B-8). Respondents who score at the 70th percentile or higher are considered to be in the “high” range; between the 30th and 70th percentile, respondents are considered to be in the “moderate range; and those below the 30th percentile are considered “low”. Table 1 below shows the three levels of scoring for each of the five practices.

Kouzes & Posner’s *Leadership Practices Inventory* (2001) was adapted into Turkish. Confirmatory and exploratory factor analyses were performed. In order to confirm the authors’ model and findings of previous research, five factor models were examined. It was decided that the five factor model fitted the data for the selected sample. As a result, there were five subscales for both the Turkish and American version. For the Turkish version, $\alpha = .921$ and for teacher survey, $\alpha = .978$, and in the American version, the principal survey, $\alpha = .843$ and for the teacher survey, $\alpha = .959$.

The instrument was slightly modified. The rating scale was reduced from ten possible responses to five possible responses (1-Almost Never, 2-Seldom, 3-Occasionally, 4-Frequently, and 5-Almost Always). Next, teachers were asked to respond to each item with the following prompt: *To what extent does the principal of your school typically engage in the following behaviors?* Principals were given the same items, except their prompt was, *As principal, to what extent do you typically engage in the following activities?*

Analysis

A series of statistical tests were completed to analyze the data in relation to the research questions. Independent sample t-test procedures, one-way ANOVA procedures ($p < .05$) were used to analyze the data.

Mean scores are reported in terms of the sum of the person responding to the six items for each practice. The Likert scale used had a range of 1 to 5 for each item, and there were six items per practice. Thus the range of scores from an individual for each practice could be from 6 (lowest) to 30 (highest).

Results

The results are presented in two parts-the first is from Turkey, followed by the United States.

In response to the first question, female principals in Turkey rated themselves higher than male principals in five practices except for *modeling the way*. As shown in Table 2, the mean difference was not found to be statistically significant.

Table 2.

Leadership Practices Inventory Comparison of Principals' Self Perceptions of Their Leadership Abilities (Female N=52, Male N=92). Turkey

LPI Practice	Female Mean(SD)	Male Mean (SD)	<i>t</i> (2 tailed)	<i>p</i>
Challenge the Process	25.75 (2.51)	25.26 (2.95)	-1.005	.317
Shared Vision	26.50 (2.48)	26.42 (2.72)	-.166	.868
Enable Others	26.57 (1.97)	26.43 (2.45)	-.358	.721
Model the Way	27.25 (1.84)	27.26 (2.52)	.027	.978
Encourage the Heart	27.57 (2.48)	27.43 (2.41)	-.336	.737

$p \geq .05$

Table 3.

Leadership Practices Inventory Comparison of Teachers' Perceptions of Principals Leadership Abilities (Female N=548, Male N=523). Turkey

LPI Practice	Female Mean (SD)	Male Mean (SD)	<i>t</i> (2 tailed)	<i>p</i>
Challenge the Process	23.95 (4.87)	23.92 (5.52)	-.096	.923
Shared Vision	24.79 (4.98)	24.65 (5.16)	-.475	.635
Enable Others	24.65 (5.26)	24.89 (5.10)	.768	.443
Model the Way	25.45 (4.59)	25.42 (4.60)	-.120	.905
Encourage the Heart	24.34 (5.52)	24.88 (5.50)	1.587	.113

$p > .05$

In response to the second question, the researchers in Turkey found that female teachers perceived the leadership skills of their principals to be higher than what male teachers perceived in leadership skills in *challenging the process*, *shared vision* and *modeling the way*. Male teachers perceived the leadership skills of their principals to be higher than what female teachers perceived in leadership skills in *enable others* and *encouraging the heart*. As shown in Table 3, it should also be noted that no statistically significant differences were found between female teachers and male teachers.

As can be seen in Table 4, the researchers found that in Turkey, no statistically significant differences were found regarding the gender of the teacher and the gender of their principal.

Table 4.

Leadership Practices Inventory Comparison of Teachers' Perceptions of Principals Leadership Abilities, According to Gender of Both Teacher and Principal (Female Teacher with Female Principal N=267, Female Teacher with Male Principal N=283, Male Teacher with Female Principal N=120, Male Teacher with Male Principal N=401). Turkey

LPI Practice	Teachers	\bar{X}	SD	df	F	P
Challenge the Process	Female Teacher with Female Principal	23.89	5.06	5	.182	.969
	Female Teacher with Male Principal	24.01	4.69	1070		
	Male Teacher with Female Principal	24.22	4.09	1075		
	Male Teacher with Male Principal	23.84	5.89			
	Total	23.94	5.21			
Shared Vision	Female Teacher with Female Principal	24.76	5.29	5	.440	.821
	Female Teacher with Male Principal	24.83	4.65	1070		
	Male Teacher with Female Principal	25.10	4.26	1075		
	Male Teacher with Male Principal	24.51	5.41			
	Total	24.72	5.08			
Enable Others	Female Teacher with Female Principal	24.01	5.72	5	2.017	.074
	Female Teacher with Male Principal	25.27	4.71	1070		
	Male Teacher with Female Principal	25.14	4.20	1075		
	Male Teacher with Male Principal	24.81	5.35			
	Total	24.76	5.21			
Model the Way	Female Teacher with Female Principal	25.19	5.06	5	.626	.680
	Female Teacher with Male Principal	25.72	4.09	1070		
	Male Teacher with Female Principal	25.75	3.93	1075		
	Male Teacher with Male Principal	25.30	4.79			
	Total	25.43	4.60			
Encouraging the Heart	Female Teacher with Female Principal	24.07	5.91	5	1.146	.334
	Female Teacher with Male Principal	24.63	5.11	1070		
	Male Teacher with Female Principal	25.12	4.90	1075		
	Male Teacher with Male Principal	24.79	5.67			
	Total	24.59	5.53			

$p > .05$

In response to the fourth question, it was found that there is no difference in the teacher's perception of the principal's leadership skills, according to gender of principal (Table 5).

Table 5.

Leadership Practices Inventory Comparison of Teachers' Perceptions of Principals Leadership Abilities, According to Gender of The Principal (Teacher with Female Principal N=390, Teacher with Male Principal). Turkey

LPI Practice	Female Mean (SD)	Male Mean (SD)	t (2 tailed)	p
Challenge the Process	23.98 (4.77)	23.91 (5.45)	-.233	.816
Shared Vision	24.87 (4.97)	24.63 (5.14)	-.733	.464
Enable Others	24.37 (5.30)	24.98 (5.14)	1.823	.069
Model the Way	25.37 (4.73)	25.46 (4.54)	.315	.753
Encourage the Heart	24.40 (5.63)	24.70 (5.47)	.875	.382

In response to the first question, female principals in the United States rated themselves higher than male principals in each of the five practices. As shown in Table 6, the mean difference was found to be statistically significant in only one practice (Shared Vision).

Table 6.
Leadership Practices Inventory Comparison of Principals' Self Perceptions of Their Leadership Abilities (Female N=128, Male N=70). United States

LPI Practice	Female Mean (SD)	Male Mean (SD)	<i>t</i> (2 tailed)	<i>p</i>
Challenge the Process	24.52 (2.99)	24.17 (2.10)	.863	.389
Shared Vision	25.25 (2.62)	24.10 (2.09)	3.13*	.002
Enable Others	27.16 (2.05)	27.04 (1.41)	.436	.663
Model the Way	27.52 (1.88)	26.99 (1.99)	1.87	.062
Encourage the Heart	26.29 (2.88)	25.72 (2.38)	1.39	.165

* $p < .05$

In response to the second question, as shown in Table 7, a statistically significant difference in the means was found between female and male principals, as perceived by teachers, in the practice of *Encourage the Heart*, with female teachers' ratings higher than male teacher ratings.

Table 7.
Leadership Practices Inventory Comparison of Teachers' Perceptions of Principals Leadership Abilities (Female N=550, Male N=156). United States

LPI Practice	Female Mean (SD)	Male Mean (SD)	<i>t</i> (2 tailed)	<i>p</i>
Challenge the Process	20.61 (5.39)	20.40 (5.45)	.637	.525
Shared Vision	20.84 (6.08)	21.38 (6.07)	-.966	.334
Enable Others	22.06 (5.48)	22.71 (5.63)	-1.290	.198
Model the Way	22.78 (5.45)	22.97 (5.08)	-.389	.697
Encourage the Heart	21.04 (6.34)	22.43 (5.86)	-2.426*	.016

* $p < .05$

In response to the third question, the researchers found in the United States that there was no statistically differences were found regarding the gender of the teacher and the gender of their principal. The data can be found in Table 8.

Table 8.

Leadership Practices Inventory Comparison of Teachers' Perceptions of Principals Leadership Abilities, According to Gender of Both Teacher and Principal (Female Teacher with Female Principal, N=349, Female Teacher with Male Principal N=200, Male Teacher with Female Principal, N=69, Male Teacher with Male Principal, N=87). United States

LPI Practice	Teachers	\bar{X}	SD	df	F	P
Challenge the Process	Female Teacher with Female Principal	20.60	5.63	3	.234	.873
	Female Teacher with Male Principal	20.73	5.14	702		
	Male Teacher with Female Principal	20.43	5.94	705		
	Male Teacher with Male Principal	20.16	5.08			
	Total	20.57	5.46			
Shared Vision	Female Teacher with Female Principal	20.62	6.34	3	.980	.402
	Female Teacher with Male Principal	21.31	5.58	702		
	Male Teacher with Female Principal	20.87	6.37	705		
	Male Teacher with Male Principal	21.67	5.78			
	Total	20.97	6.07			
Enable Others	Female Teacher with Female Principal	21.81	5.79	3	1.51	.210
	Female Teacher with Male Principal	22.53	4.91	702		
	Male Teacher with Female Principal	22.24	6.12	705		
	Male Teacher with Male Principal	23.06	5.12			
	Total	22.21	5.51			
Model the Way	Female Teacher with Female Principal	22.73	5.69	3	.218	.884
	Female Teacher with Male Principal	22.91	5.03	702		
	Male Teacher with Female Principal	22.59	5.46	705		
	Male Teacher with Male Principal	23.18	4.71			
	Total	22.82	5.36			
Encourage the Heart	Female Teacher with Female Principal	20.91	6.67	3	.206	.104
	Female Teacher with Male Principal	21.33	5.77	702		
	Male Teacher with Female Principal	23.38	6.49	705		
	Male Teacher with Male Principal	22.45	5.44			
	Total	23.37	6.28			

In response to the fourth question, it was found in the United States that there is no difference in the teacher's perception of the principal's leadership skills, according to gender of the principal

Table 9.

Leadership Practices Inventory Comparison of Teachers' Perceptions of Principals Leadership Abilities, According to Gender of The Principal (Teacher with Female Principal N=550, Teacher with Male Principal N=156) United States

LPI Practice	Female Mean (SD)	Male Mean (SD)	<i>t</i> (2 tailed)	<i>p</i>
Challenge the Process	20.60 (5.70)	20.52 (5.10)	.197	.844
Shared Vision	20.70 (6.37)	21.36 (5.61)	-1.406	.160
Enable Others	21.90 (5.85)	22.68 (4.97)	-1.840	.066
Model the Way	22.74 (5.65)	22.95 (4.95)	-.535	.593
Encourage the Heart	21.18 (6.63)	21.66 (5.74)	-.998	.318

Discussion

Results show that gender does play a limited role in the perceptions of the leadership roles of principals, with statistical significance only found in two practices in the United States. In many of the statistical tests, female perceptions were different than male perceptions in both countries.

In Turkey, female principals' self-perceptions were higher than males in each of the five leadership practices (Table 2). Female teachers' perception were higher in three of the five practices (Table 3), and female teachers who had a female principal rated their principal lower than female teachers with male principals, male teachers with female principals and male teachers with male principals in each of the five practices, with the practice of *Enabling Others* approaching statistical significance (Table 4). When factoring in only the gender of the principal and not the gender of the teacher, male principals were rated higher in three of the five practices by teachers in Turkey, with *Enabling Others* approaching statistical significance (Table 5).

Similar results were found in the United States. Female principals' self-perceptions were higher than male principals' self-perceptions for each of the five leadership practices (Table 6). Unlike Turkey, statistically significant difference was found in the practice of *Shared Vision* ($t=3.13$) and approached significance in the practice of *Model the Way*. However teacher perceptions were somewhat different than the principals'. As shown in Table 7, male principals were rated higher than female principals by teachers in four of the five practices, with a statistically significant difference found in the practice of *Encourage the Heart* ($t=-2.426$). Similar to Turkey, female teachers who had a female principal rated their principals, for the most part, lower, but not statistically significant difference than the other three groups (female teacher with male principal, male teacher with female male principal, male teacher with male principal) (Table 8). Finally, when the gender of the principal was factored without the gender of the teacher, no statistically significant difference was found in the ratings by teachers between female and male principals, although in four of the five practices, male principals were rated higher with *Enable Others* approaching statistical significance.

These results support the conclusions of Baburto, Fritz, Matkin, and Marx (2007), Boydak Özan and Akpınar (2002) and Turan and Ebiçlioğlu (2002) which explored that gender did not affect leadership. This conclusion supports the research of Barbuto et al. (2007), and of Thompson (2000), which suggests that the culture of leadership is evolving regarding the roles women play. Specifically, the researchers propose that this is occurring because, as women obtain more leadership positions, different types of leadership styles are beginning to emerge. Secondly, traditional female leadership characteristics (e.g., cooperative, supporting, and understanding) continue to be blended with tradition male leadership characteristics (e.g., competitive, demanding, strong), allowing women the opportunity to become even more effective as leaders. Finally, this research suggests, that since women continually demonstrate effective leadership skills, subordinates are becoming more accustomed to this type of leadership, and are less likely to use traditional stereotypes of female leadership in analyzing the skills of these leaders.

Contrary to this research's conclusion, Garcia-Retamero, and Lopez-Zafra's (2006) research support the general hypothesis that a stereotyping process automatically activates the concept of leadership as a masculine notion, and leads to a bias against a female candidate's promotion for a leadership post. Rudman and Glick (2001) implied that devaluation of the female applicant's social skills (and not her competence) mediated this gender discrimination effect.

That there is no gender difference in the ability of the principals' leadership is contrary to findings of related researches in the literature such as Çelikten and Yeni (2004), Garcia-Retamero, and Lopez-Zafra (2006) and Shein (2001). For female principals, the conclusion of this research is very important because leadership abilities of the principals are not perceived differently by principals and teachers. The findings may confirm Garcia-Retamero, and Lopez-Zafra (2006)'s suggestion that claims that "there is a light at the end of the tunnel and this prejudice may change over time." Bayrak and Mohan (2001) concluded that male principals have accepted that leadership approach which emerge today are consistent with the leadership traits that females have.

Conclusions

This study's four substantial findings, drawn from across the surveys, go beyond its primary purpose. First, the study revealed that no statistically significant differences were found in five subscale, according to self perceptions of principals gender in Turkey and the United States except for *Shared Vision* subscale in the United States. Female principals, in the United States, rated themselves significantly higher than male principals in *Shared Vision*.

Second, the study found that no statistically significant differences in five subscale, according to gender of teachers' principals in Turkey and the United States except for *encouraging the heart* subscale. Male teachers in the United States perceived the leadership abilities of their principals to be significantly higher than what female teachers' perceived the leadership abilities of their principal for the practice of *Encouraging the Heart*.

Third, it was found in both Turkey and the United States that there were no statistically significant differences found regarding the gender of the teacher and the gender of their principal in terms of leadership abilities.

Fourth, it was revealed that in both Turkey and the United States there was no difference in the teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership skills, according to principals' gender.

School leadership has been a central focus of research in education for many years, including the similarities and differences of leadership style according to gender. Women have been well represented in teaching for a long time in both Turkey and the United States. Yet, traditionally, women have not been equally represented in the position of school principal in comparison to men, although women in America have a much higher percentage of principalship than women in Turkey. Furthermore, it appears that female principals in Turkey face many more obstacles in becoming a principal than their female counterparts in the United States.

As highlighted in Altınışık, (1988), Çelikten (2004), Çelikten and Yeni (2004) and Erçetin and Çalışkan Maya's (2005) research findings, despite the challenges and obstacles arising from social and cultural reasons, there is no difference between the leadership skills of female and male principal is interesting and promising for Turkey. Despite the obstacles female principal faces in Turkey there is no difference in leadership practice according to gender, which suggests that gender, in the final analysis, may not have much impact on the perceptions of the principal's leadership abilities, that female principals may have more obstacles to overcome as they become school leaders and may point out that female principals are faced with more challenges than male principals in Turkey.

This research found that in a number of occasions, gender plays a very limited role how principals and teachers perceive the leadership abilities of the principal. Although there exists a disparity in both countries regarding the percentage of principals who are female, it does not appear that gender is having a significant impact on perceptions of school leadership. On the surface, these findings may appear to reflect a trend to a more gender equitable environment for women who wish to pursue the principalship or for those who are presently a principal in both these countries.

However, a number of the findings suggest otherwise. To the extent that female principals in both countries perceived these leadership practices higher than male principals, but were not, in most cases, perceived higher by other groups, indicates that, to a certain degree that role theory has an impact on gender perceptions of female and male principal leadership effectiveness. The study can conclude that female principals may perceive themselves to favor a more collaborative, participatory type of leadership, but others within the study do not. This supports the research findings of Carli and Eagly (1999) and McGee-Banks (2007) that suggests female principals may face a dilemma that finds an imbalance between leadership roles and expected gender roles. While attempting to have a collaborative and participatory leadership style, female principals may face negativity from those who think such a style is typical of a woman but not desirable to

lead the school, and from those who, if the principal becomes more authoritative, that she is not being feminine enough and true to herself or gender.

Both Turkey and the United States have provided equal education and employment rights for women; however much work needs to be done to ensure full and equal participation of women in the role of school principals. Furthermore, since the research suggests that being a principal in the 21st century is not only critical to improving the achievement of all students, the ever-increasing amount of accountability can lead to a decrease in the number of educators who wish to pursue the principalship-including women. Thus, it is critical that if there is to be an appropriate and proportional number of women serving as principals in both Turkey and the United States, then appropriate support must be provided to ensure that equity exists, and that a concerted effort be made to identify, develop and support aspiring and current female principals. Additionally, educational leaders and policy makers in both Turkey and the United States should take on the challenge of ensuring that educational leadership models, while ever evolving, continue to emphasize gender equity and opportunity for women, and in the process, help improve how leadership is perceived, both by the principals themselves and teachers as well. Ultimately, this will allow all students to have the best principals and provide these students with an even better chance to be successful.

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