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An Examination of Creative Leadership Skills of Preschool Administrators and Teachers¹

Banu Dikmen Ada², Rengin Zembat³

The purpose of this study is to determine whether creative leadership characteristics of administrators and teachers working at state and private preschools and institutions with a preschool vary based on their post types. A survey was conducted to examine the aforementioned relationship. The study group consisted of administrators and teachers working at state and private preschools and institutions with a preschool in central districts of Eskişehir. The study used the following data collection tools: 'Personal Information Form' to gather information about demographic characteristics of administrators and teachers, and 'Creative Leadership Scale' designed by the researcher to examine the creative leadership skills of administrators and teachers. The study results are as follows: exploratory factor analysis values for the Creative Leadership Scale (CLS) KMO=.964, x2 Bartlett's test (5671) =40508,971 p=.000, and Cronbach alpha coefficient of the total scale is .986. The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant difference in favour of teachers in the scores from the scales and subscales of teachers and administrators according to their post types. It was observed that teachers' characteristics in the scale and subscales are higher than the administrators.

Keywords: Creative leadership, preschool education, administrator, teacher

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INTRODUCTION

The formation of flatter structure in organisations through empowering the personnel in the institutional structures or through delegating authority has brought the concept of leader to the fore instead of a manager employing position-based formal authority (Seabright & Delacroix, 1996, p.141; cited in Aksay, 2015, p. 111; Koçel, 2007, p.445). Leadership is an important concept in organisations reaching their targeted vision and achieving success; it is also important for organisations to show their differences.

Leadership is the most frequently studied human behaviour (Jacobsen, 2009, p.29), and it is a highly compelling topic in the relevant literature (Çelik, 2007, s.1). Several theoretical leadership models were discussed in the literature (Jacobsen, 2009, p.29). Leadership is defined as the power to gather a group of people around certain objectives using personal, psychological, and interpersonal relation skills (Sisk, 2000, p.1-3), as the totality of the skills and knowledge to move these people to realise these aims (Eren, 2008, p. 465) or the ability and power to determine personal or group aims under certain circumstances and to influence a group in the most effective way so that these aims can be fulfilled (Efil, 1996, p.5; Tekarslan et al., 2000, p.121; cited in Avci & Topaloğlu, 2009, p.3).

Changes in the way people learn in the 21st century necessitate new approaches to leadership and learning leadership (Stoll & Temperley 2009, p. 17). Evidently, these new approaches to leadership are about the creativity process, and creativity is at the centre of leadership (Csikszentmihalyi, 2001; Sternberg, 2002; Sternberg et al.,2004; cited in Nwachukwu & Vu; 2020; Sisk, 2000, p.1-3). Institutions need creative leadership to support innovative approaches and individual creative behaviour (Sisk, 2001, p.16). Creative leadership is the ability to deliberately engage one's imagination to influence a group and direct them towards a new goal or direction (Mumford et al., 2000; Sternberg, 2002; cited in Nwachukwu & Vu; 2020). In addition to this, creative leadership is characterised by the ability to create a supportive environment within the organisation while focussing on developing human and social capital (Mumford et al., 2002; Randel & Jaussi, 2019; cited in Heyns, McCallaghan & Roos, 2021). Creative leadership completes the existing leadership theories

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 $^{^2}$ Eskişehir Osmangazi University, bdada@ogu.edu.tr, orcid.org/0000-0001-7490-2056

³ Professor, Maltepe University, renginzembat@maltepe.edu.tr, orcid.org/0000-0002-2377-8910

(transformational and transactional leadership theory, visionary leadership theory) while representing much better the essence of strategic leadership (Makri & Scandura, 2010:77; cited in Roos, 2016). Creative leadership as a concept is based on the philosophy of structuralist theory such as 'mutually sharing research' and 'focusing on working together' (Lambert et al., 1995; cited in Katz-Buonincontro, 2005, p.29). It also includes participation in the group, increasing the capacity for school leadership, successful planning, and distributing leadership (Stoll & Temperley, 2009, p.17). Depending on scientific innovations and technological developments, institutions need creative leadership to survive and improve in times of widespread change (Puccio et al., 2013: 2; cited in Roos, 2016). In initiating and maintaining a process of innovation, the positive participation of the rest of the personnel is as important as the participation of the leaders. Research findings revealed that there is a reciprocal cycle between a leader and his/her employees in the initiation of the innovation process. First, creative thinking leaders should put employees' views at the centre and encourage them (Zuckerman, 1974; cited in Mumford et al., 2003, p.427). Creative leaders define new approaches using their expertise and exploration skills and contribute to their organisations employing their visions (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990; cited in Mumford et al., 2002, p.735). Creative leaders positively affect their workplace, society, school, and families. They proactively research and use the opportunities inherent in change (Mumford et al., 2000; cited in Nwachukwu & Vu, 2020). Moreover, creative leaders promote employees' sense of loyalty, motivation, growth, and learning; these are the key elements of improvement for a workplace (Dutton et al., 2010; cited in Heyns et al., 2021).

Evidently, characteristics creative leaders are expected to possess overlap with the skills necessary to adapt to the experience of rapid change in today's world (Zuckerman, 1974; cited in Mumford et al., 2003, p. 427). Some values and special behaviours necessary for creative leaders to ensure the desired change are as follows (Guinn, 1997, p. 226-227; cited in Tunçer, 2011, p. 63; Steyn, 2008: 27; cited in Roos, 2016): they are aware of their personal characteristics and the effect of such characteristics on others; they do not distort the collected information. Instead, they pay attention to both the positive and the negative critiques on them and their leadership; their values correspond to their intentions and actions; they openly share information with their employees; they have open communication; they act ethically; they know what they are doing; they are team players; they pay attention to internal and external customer satisfaction; they have global awareness; they focus on constant development, strategic marketing, and improving the employees.

Apostolidou (2012, p.2) claimed that creative leadership in business can be related to innovation, meaningfulness, and transparency at all infrastructure levels, and argued that such creative leadership characteristics as having a creative and goal-oriented vision, developing an effective global mentality, developing a creative work environment, and increasing inner motivation are important (cited in Roos, 2016). Hunter et al.,(2011) contended that creative leadership necessitates a unique behavioural repertoire that frequently contradicts traditional management styles and organisational processes (cited in Mainemelis et al., 2015). Stoll and Temperley (2009, p. 12) suggested that creative leaders need positive differences and that administrators focus on creative energy to reach the common objectives of their leadership and affect change in their institutions. Similarly, Sisk (2001) emphasised that creative leadership and creative energy are necessary for organisations to be successful.

Creative leaders play a key role in managing institutions and structuring creative processes and innovations by developing institutional capacities. According to DuPont (2002), leaders should inspire the personnel for the institution to grow and the mission to be accomplished. Such work environments enable creativity while effective and creative leaders ensure their followers become effective and creative leaders themselves (Agbor, 2008, p. 41-42). Leadership frequently dwells upon an issue not only in administrative science literature but also in education management (Şişman, 2004, p.2). According to Wolfolk (1990), among the tasks and responsibilities of a teacher in a classroom are leadership, management, motivation, and being a role model (Gürkan, 2005, p.77). Leadership is important in students' learning, creating a school culture, increasing the quality of teaching, and ensuring and differentiating the conditions that enrich learning (Leithwood et al., 2006; cited in Stoll & Temperley, 2009, p.12). In this respect, it is considered important that educators and universities prepare today's education leaders to manage the changes and innovations of the 21st century (Katz-Buonincontro, 2005, p.29); it is equally important that creativity and creative leadership are conceptualised at schools (Vandenberghe, 1995, p. 50). Important responsibilities befall administrators and teachers with creative leadership characteristics at every education-related institution at every education level

so that these changes and innovations are managed. Moreover, administrators and teachers have responsibilities to help students, and therefore to society, itself develop leadership characteristics. Leadership is a teachable quality, and new leadership approaches give comprehensive coverage to this idea.

Some of the characteristics that people are considered to have in the 21st century are as follows: being able to adapt to the changes and developments in the 21st century, dealing with problems, having the ability to solve problems creatively, critical thinking skills, ability to analyse and synthesise, scientific thinking skills, rational thinking, systematic thinking, being able to focus on creative thinking, being able to manage creativity and new initiatives, and being able to self-motivate as well as motivate others. To affect change and ensure that educators adapt to the future and institutions reach their objectives, it is also important to create an environment in which educators are motivated to learn, to form new knowledge and applications together (Moolenaar et al.,2009; cited in Moolenaar et al.,2010, p.627).

According to the studies on creative environments in schools, schools' improvement processes need to be supported by innovation in order for schools to be successful (Moolenaar et al., 2010, p.627). According to Vandenberghe (1995, p.32), creative leadership or the power behind the formation of creative administrations denotes redefining the environment and the school within an acceptable balance (Moolenaar et al., 2010, p.627). School administrators use their knowledge, proficiency, and experience to create visions of change and to support their employees. Focussing on their success, according to the set objectives, it is necessary to improve the employees to keep up with the changes taking place in the world (Purahong, 2006). What is necessary for innovation is to identify, internalise, and apply creative ideas (Stasser & Titus, 1987; cited in Somech, 2005, p.791). Institutions require creative and effective leaders to apply and manage strategies and support innovation (Agbor, 2008, p.41). Stoll and Temperley (2009, p.16) listed what needs to be done for the development of creative leadership characteristics of individuals and groups as follows: renewing the curriculum; structuring internal and external capacities; using the obtained data as new approaches in children's education, group participation, increasing capacity of school leadership, successful planning, and distribution of leadership. Creative leaders enable them to promote change in the organisation, encourage their followers, explain the reasons for what needs to be done for the organisation, and find alternative ways (Agbor, 2008, p.43). For instance, teachers should be motivated to invite other teachers to their classes or share their creative ideas and applications (Moolenaar et al., 2010, p.631).

Managing educational institutions with a creative leadership approach is important for an effectively shaping the future. Creative leadership cannot emerge merely by the efforts of a department, person, or group but it requires the synergy they create together. For this to happen, administrators and teachers with creative leadership characteristics are needed. Educational approaches that aim to bring creative leadership characteristics to children and young people can only be applied by administrators and teachers who have such characteristics.

Any education employing the creative leadership approach is believed to enable people to solve problems creatively and effectively, adapt to change and affect their preparedness for life positively. Based on all this, it would be safe to say that creative leadership is an important factor for educational institutions to achieve what is expected of them. Leadership and creative leadership are considered important concepts in today's world for an individual to cope with problems, to identify these problems effectively and solve them creatively and critically.

Asin other units of the education system, it is an important factor for administrators and teachers working at preschool educational institutions to develop creative leadership skills. In other words, preschool educational institutions have important roles and responsibilities in helping people acquire creative leadership characteristics. Education provided during the preschool period should be performed in a serious, scientific, and systematic organisation (Arı, 2005, p.31). Administrators and teachers have an indispensable place in preschool institutions (Taymaz, 2003) and are responsible for providing a quality education for their students. A quality education at the preschool level would increase a child's learning and motivation to learn and ensure life-long success (Zembat, 2005, p.27; 2001, p.10). Studies showed that leadership qualities are teachable. It was also suggested that modelling and mimicking are important in the formation of learning in preschool children. From this point of view, it can be argued that it is important for administrators and teachers in these establishments to be positive role models for the preschool children, so that leadership characteristics are

permanently acquired. Studies showed that limited studies focus on creative leadership, although there are various studies examining creativity and creative characteristics. In this sense, this study aims to contribute to the literature as it aims to determine 'creative leadership' characteristics of preschool administrators and teachers. Moreover, the findings of this study would contribute to the Ministry of National Education's and Education Faculties' preparation of pre-service and in-service creative writing training programmes to bring about creative leadership characteristics, which are necessary in preparing the administrators, teachers, and students in preschool educational institutions to the rapidly changing world. They are also believed to contribute to the preparation of educational approaches and educational programmes aiming for children to acquire creative leadership skills. These findings will ultimately contribute to future studies.

In this respect, this study aims to determine creative leadership characteristics of administrators (principals and assistant principals) and preschool teachers working at state-run and private educational institutions (i.e., primary, secondary and high schools), providing preschool education. To this end, this study aims to answer the following research question: 'Do creative leadership characteristics (focussing on change and transformation, mentoring, working as a team, problem solving, critical thinking, and personal and professional growth) of preschool administrators and teachers vary by their post types'?

RESEARCH METHOD

This section discusses the information about the study model, study group, data collection tools and their application, and the analysis of data.

Research Model

This study aims to determine creative leadership characteristics of administrators (principals and assistant principals) and preschool teachers working at state-run and private educational institutions. A quantitative descriptive survey model was used in the study. The survey model denotes research approaches that seek to describe as a past or still-existing case. Persons, objects, or events are defined within their terms. The important point is to be able to observe it appropriately (Karasar, 2012). Process steps used in quantitative research are used in survey research to describe the selected sample's attitudes, views, characteristics, or behaviours (Creswell, 2012). A survey model was used in this study as the purpose of the study is to determine whether creative leadership characteristics of administrators (principals and assistant principals) and teachers working at state-run or private preschools and institutions with a preschool vary by their post types based on the information obtained from the 'Creative Leadership Scale' applied to these administrators and teachers.

Study Group

The study group consists of administrators (principals and assistant principals) and teachers working at state-run or private preschools and institutions with a preschool in central districts of Eskisehir. Participants of the study consist of 366 teachers and 188 administrators. The findings of demographic characteristics of the participants revealed that 137 of the participating administrators were male, while 51 were female. Reversely, three of the participating teachers were male, and 364 were female. One hundred four of the administrators were 41 years old and over, 40 were in the 31–35 age range, 38 were in 36–40 age range, and six were in 26–30 age range.

One hundred two teachers were in the 21–-25 age range, 95 were in the 26–30 age range, 63 were 41 years old and over, 56 were in the 36–40 age range, and 51 were in the 31–-35 age range. Based on the level of the participants' educational level, 106 administrators had associate degree,36 of them had undergraduate degree, 17 had BEds in child development/preschool education, nine had associate degree diplomas in child development/preschool education, four of them completed an undergraduate degree after taking the required courses on top of their associate degree, four of them graduated from a training institute, three of them had MEd degrees, two of them had MEd degrees in child development/preschool education, two graduated from the department of preschool education at the Open Education Faculty of Anadolu University, and two were graduates of girls' vocational school.

Of the teachers who participated in this study, 183 received a BEd in child development and preschool education, 93 of them had an associate degree in Child Development/Preschool Education, 43 had a BEd in child development and preschool education at the Open Education Faculty of Anadolu University, 34 of them

graduated from a girls' vocational school, and nine had an MEd in child development and preschool education at the Open Education Faculty of Anadolu University. Of the administrators who participated in the study, 85 were from various disciplines, 71 were form teachers, and 32 were preschool teachers.

All the teacher participants of the study were preschool teachers. According to their tenure, 69 of the administrators served 21 years or more, 46 of them served for 11–15 years, 37 served for 16–20 years, 27 served for 6–10 years, seven served for 1–5 years, and two served for less than one year as teachers. When it comes to teachers, 131 of them served for 1–5 years, 66 served for 6–10 years, 49 served for less than one year, 47 served for 11–15 years, 38 served for 21 years or longer, and 36 served for 16–20 years as teachers. As for their tenure as administrators, 56 of the administrators served for 1–5 years, 40 served for 6–10 years, 29 served for 16–20 years, 26 served for 11–15 years, 20 served for 21 years or longer, and 17 served less than one year/

Three hundred sixty-one teacher participants reported that they did not have any experience as an administrator, two had experience of 1–5 years, two had experience of 6–10 years, and one had experience of 11–15 years. Based on institution type they work, 139 of the administrators worked at a state primary school, 21 at a Ministry of Education independent preschool, 16 at a private preschool, six at a private primary school, four at the practice preschool of a girls' vocational school, and two at a university crèche.

As for the teacher participants, 185 of them worked at a state primary school, 110 at a Ministry of Education independent preschool, 47 at a private preschool, nine at a private primary school, nine at a university creche, and seven at the practice preschool of a girls' vocational school.

Data Collection Tools

The study utilised the following self-constructed questionnaires 'Creative Leadership Scale (CLS)' and 'Personal Information Form'. The Personal Information Form was used to identify the study group's demographic characteristics and provided information about the participants' gender, age, position, subject, education level, length of service as a teacher, length of service as an administrator, and the type of the institution they worked for.

CLS is a 107-item 4-point Likert scale designed for self-evaluation of administrators and teachers. Some of the scale items are as follows: 'aware of the importance of his/her job, enjoys his/her task, takes leadership, gives effective responsibility, gets things done effectively, makes effective self-evaluation, dedicates himself/herself to his/her task, expresses his/her views clearly, impresses with his/her presentation, has effective communication skills, builds strong working relationships, receives feedback, cares about the feedback, takes risks in his/her work, can change existing rules for progress and can go against existing practices for progress'.

Cronbach alpha coefficient of the scale is .986. Cronbach alpha coefficients of the sub factors are .947 and .967. The scale has the following four subfactors: , 'Focusing on Change and Transformation', 'Focusing on Problem Solving and Critical Thinking', 'Focusing on Mentoring and Collaboration', and 'Focusing on Personal and Professional Growth' with 43, 25, 19, and 20 items, respectively. There are 107 items in this 4-point Likert scale. Participating administrators and teachers score how frequently they perceive the creative leadership quality specified in each item. The 4-point Likert frequency gradation of the scale is as follows: never (1), sometimes (2), often (3), and always (4). The lowest possible score to get from the 'Focusing on Change and Transformation' subfactor is 43, while the highest score is 172. The lowest possible score in the 'Focusing on Mentoring and Collaboration' subfactor is 19, while the highest score is 76. The lowest possible score is 100. Finally, the lowest possible score to get in the 'Focusing on Problem Solving and Critical Thinking' subfactor is 25 and the highest score is 20 while the highest score for the same subfactor is 80.

Data Collection

Personal Information Form and Creative Leadership Scale were applied by the researchers to the participants in line with the permission no B.30.2.MAR.0.45.00.00/1169 of the Eskisehir Provincial Directorate of National Education. The study does not have a research ethics committee approval, as it was conducted before 2020. The researchers went to the institutions included in the research study group, and they briefed the participants (administrators and teachers), through interviews, about the aim and importance of the study

and the data collection tools. During these interviews, the participants were guided on how to fill in the scales on a sample item; an explanatory note and a thank you letter were given to the participants along with the measuring tools. The forms were collected immediately after they were filled in by the participants. Collection of data took approximately one month.

Data Analysis

The study data were analysed through a statistical package programme. Frequency and percentage values were used in the analysis of demographic characteristics of the participants. Bartlett's test of sphericity was conducted to see whether data came from a multi-variable normal distribution (KMO=,964, x² Bartlett's test (5671) = 40508,971 p=.000), and as data were not in a normal distribution. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results and skewness and kurtosis coefficients were examined. The results showed that the data did not show normal distribution. Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to see whether the scores administrators and teachers received in the Creative Leadership Scale and its subfactors vary according to their post types; here, .5 and .01 were set as the significance level.

FINDINGS

As data were not normally distributed, the Mann-Whitney U test was utilised to see whether the scores of administrators and teachers varied according to the post type. Table 1 shows significant and insignificant differences.

| | | Mean | Sum of rank | s | | |
|---------------|-----|--------|-------------|-----------|--------|---------|
| Groups | n | rank | | u | Z | p |
| Administrator | 153 | 191,51 | 29301,00 | 17520,000 | -4,168 | .000*** |
| Teacher | 301 | 245,79 | 73984,00 | | | |
| Total | 454 | | | | | |

Table 1: Mann-Whitney U test results concerning Creative Leadership Scale of administrators and teachers

***p< .001

As Table 1 shows, there is a statistically significant difference in the mean ranks of groups based on the Mann-Whitney U test performed to see whether the 'Creative Leadership' scores of the participating administrators and teachers differ by 'post type (U = 17520,000; z = -4,168; p < .001). This difference is in favour of teachers. 'Creative Leadership' levels of teachers are higher than those of administrators.

| Table 2: Mann-Whitney | U | test | results | of | the | subscale | 'Focusing | on | Change | and | Transformation | in |
|---------------------------|------|------|---------|----|-----|----------|-----------|----|--------|-----|----------------|----|
| administrators and teache | ers' | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | | Mean | Sum of ranks | | | |
|---------------|-----|--------|--------------|-----------|--------|---------|
| Groups | n | n rank | | u | Z | р |
| Administrator | 157 | 201,85 | 31691,00 | 19288,000 | -4,260 | .000*** |
| Teacher | 323 | 259,28 | 83749,00 | | | |
| Total | 480 | | | | | |
| ***p< .001 | | | | | | |

rmp< .001

Table 2 shows that there is a statistically significant difference in the groups' rank averages according to the Mann-Whitney U test results (U = 19288,000; z = -4,260; p<.001). This difference is in favour of teachers. Teachers' levels of 'Focusing on Change and Transformation' are higher than those of administrators.

| | | Mean | Sum of ranks | | | |
|---------------|-----|--------|--------------|-----------|--------|--------|
| Groups | n | rank | | u | Z | p |
| Administrator | 172 | 229,90 | 39542,00 | 24664,000 | -3,046 | .002** |
| Teacher | 343 | 272,09 | 93328,00 | | | |
| Total | 515 | | | | | |
| **n< 01 | | | | | | |

| Table 3: Mann-Whitney | U test Results of the subscale ' | 'Focusing on Mentoring and Collaboration' |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| | | |

**p<.01

Table 3 shows that there is a statistically significant difference in the groups' rank averages according to the Mann-Whitney U Test results (U = 24664,000; z = -3,046; p<.01). This difference is in favour of teachers. Teachers' levels of 'Focusing on Mentoring and Collaboration' are higher than those of administrators.

| Table 4: Mann-Whitney | y U test results of the subscale | 'Focusing on Problem Solv | ing and Critical Thinking' |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| | J | | |

| n rank | rank | | u | Z | р |
|--------|--------|------------|---------------------|---------------------|---|
| 167 | 227,75 | 38034,50 | 24006,500 | -3,120 | .002** |
| 346 | 271,12 | 93806,50 | | | |
| 513 | | | | | |
| | 346 | 346 271,12 | 346 271,12 93806,50 | 346 271,12 93806,50 | 167 227,75 38034,50 24006,500 -3,120 346 271,12 93806,50 -3 |

As shown in Table 4, there is a statistically significant difference between the groups' rank averages according to the Mann-Whitney U Test results (U = 24006,500; z = -3,120; p < .01). This difference is in favour of teachers. Teachers' levels of 'Focusing on Problem Solving and Critical Thinking' are higher than those of administrators.

| | | Mean | Sum of rank | S | | |
|---------------|-----|--------|-------------|-----------|--------|---------|
| Groups | n | rank | | u | Z | p |
| Administrator | 172 | 217,65 | 37435,00 | 22557,000 | -4,746 | .000*** |
| Teacher | 351 | 283,74 | 99591,00 | | | |
| Total | 523 | | | | | |

Table 5: Mann-Whitney U test results of the Subscale 'Focusing on Personal and Professional Growth'

**p<.01

Table 5 shows that there is a statistically significant difference between the groups' rank averages according to the Mann-Whitney U test results carried out to determine whether administrators and teachers' scores in the 'Focusing on Personal and Professional Growth' subscale varied according to the type of post variable (U =22557,000; z =-4,746; p<.01). This difference is in favour of teachers. Teachers' levels of 'Focusing on Personal and Professional Growth' are higher than those of the administrators.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study aimed to examine whether creative leadership characteristics of administrators and teachers working at state and private preschools and institutions with a preschool vary according to the post type.

The research question was determined as follows: 'Do the creative leadership characteristics (focusing on change and transformation, focusing on mentoring and collaboration, focusing on problem solving and critical thinking, and focusing on personal and professional growth) of administrators and teachers show a significant difference'?

The data analysis findings revealed that there is a significant difference in the 'Creative Leadership Scale' scores of administrators and teachers in favour of teachers. Analysis of subscales also showed that there is a significant difference, according to the post type, in the 'Focusing on Change and Transformation', 'Focusing on Mentoring and Collaboration', 'Focusing on Problem Solving and Critical Thinking,' and 'Focusing on Personal and Professional Growth' in favour of teachers. The findings revealed that teachers have higher levels

of 'Focusing on Change and Transformation," 'Focusing on Mentoring and Collaboration'. 'Focusing on Problem Solving and Critical Thinking', and 'Focusing on Personal and Professional Growth'.

A study of Yuksel (2021), aiming to examine the ethical leadership behaviours of preschool administrators, found that preschool administrators have a moderate level of ethical leadership behaviour when it comes to communicational ethics, climatic ethics, ethical decision-making, and behavioural ethics. Gurbetoğlu and Genç-Yücel (2019) examined the degree and direction of the relationship between the leadership styles of administrators of education institutes and preschool teachers' internal and external job satisfaction; they reported that the level of teachers' internal job satisfaction is directly proportional to the perception of transformational leadership and interactional leadership of their administrators, the level of teachers' extrinsic satisfaction is directly proportional to the perceived transformational leadership and interactional leadership of their administrators. However, the perception of liberal leadership is inversely proportional to the level of external job satisfaction. Durukan and Bayındır (2018) examined preschool administrators' levels of realising leadership roles according to teachers' views and found that these administrators 'frequently' display leadership roles. According to these views, it can be argued that preschool administrators scientifically realise their leadership roles in their administrations. Benibol (2015) examined the relationship between preschool administrators' leadership styles perceived by the teachers and teachers' job satisfaction and found that there is a moderate positive relationship between transformational and transactional leadership styles and internal satisfaction, and a moderate and strong positive relationship with external job satisfaction. Also, it was observed that there is a low-level negative relationship between liberal leadership style and internal job satisfaction, and a low-level negative relationship with external job satisfaction. Çek's (2011) research's findings on the relationship between independent preschool and primary school administrators' cultural leadership behaviours and preschool teachers' job satisfaction revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between administrators' cultural leadership behaviours and preschool teachers' job satisfaction. Some research examined creative leadership and leadership in different education levels and different institutions. Taşdemir and Atalmış (2021) examined teachers working in kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools and high schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education in Kahramanmaraş and reported that there is a statistically significant, positive and low-level relationship between school principals' paternalistic leadership behaviours and creative leadership characteristics. Chang et al. (2021) examined the relationship between the transformational leadership of school principals and the creative teaching behaviours of secondary and high school physical education teachers. They found that a principal's transformational leadership positively impacts the creative teaching behaviours of physical education teachers at the individual level. At the school level, an innovative school climate positively impacts creative teaching behaviours of physical education teachers (at the person level) An innovative school climate at the school level has no moderating effects on the relationship between a principal's transformational leadership and creative teaching behaviours of physical education teachers. The primary purpose of the research conducted by Roos (2016) to 'exploring the relationship between creative leadership and flourishing employees' is to conceptualise the relationship between the perceived creative leadership dimension and business development. Empirically, a strong statistically significant relationship exists between perceived creative leadership and flourishing at work (Roos, 2016). The findings of a study by Wen et al.(2016) revealed that the leader's emotional intelligence and creativity expectancy are positively associated with creative leader behaviour, which is associated with employee creativity and intrinsic motivation. Wisner (2003) conducted a study and examined supply chain indicators and the relationship between creative leadership measures and performance through innovative strategic relationships. The results of the study showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between innovative management measures and organisational performance (Shepherd & Günter, 2010). Wang (2015) examined the leadership styles of awarded school principals and found that principals who are transformational leaders use their personal charms, inspiration, as well as encouragement of smart growth, self-care and vision sharing to lead. He also found that when principals exhibit more transformational leadership, teachers tend to accept the innovations of schools. Moreover, they were more motivated to use creative teaching in their teaching.

Cerit (2008, p.3) determined the 'principal' perceptions of the students, teachers and administrators through metaphors and observed that there is a significant difference in the participants' views of 'principal' according to the type of their positions. İskele's study (2009, p.271) showed that teachers' views on creative school climate level do not vary significantly in the initiative and motivation, autonomy and productivity, and

removing obstacles dimensions. Findings of Çelebi's study (2009, p.130) also supported this; according to this study, teachers working in the public sector think that principals in the public sector display less academic leadership behaviour than assistant principals. In other words, teachers do not think principals display sufficient academic leadership behaviour. This study also found that teachers' creative leadership characteristics are higher in all dimensions than administrators' according to the post type. However, literature on teacher leadership showed that no study compared the leadership characteristics of teachers and administrators. Thus, the findings of this study would contribute to the extant literature and might be helpful for future studies.

Also, there are some studies contradicting this finding in which teachers' leadership characteristics do not vary by the post type. For instance, Tahaoğlu and Gedikoğlu (2009, p.274) examined primary school principals' leadership roles. They reported that there is no statistically significant difference in teachers' perception of principals' leadership roles according to the teachers' posts. According to Tahaoğlu and Gedikoğlu (2009, s.292), 'primary school teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership roles' do not vary in a significant way according to their post types. Moreover, there is no significant difference, according to of post type, in the participants' perception of the principals' realisation of transformational leadership roles. Yılmaz and Boğa Ceylan (2011, p.277) found a significant difference, in favour of administrators, between the professional and personal leadership behaviour administrators see in themselves, and the professional and personal leadership behaviour teachers see in these administrators. Korkmaz (2003) examined high school administrators' changing role behaviours. The study reported that teachers' perceptions of school administrators' changing role behaviour vary significantly according to their post types (Vural, 2008, p. 49). Among the factors affecting students' academic success at school, there are variables such as intelligence, students' cognitive and learning styles, and organisational and environmental factors (Çakan, 2002). Also among these factors there are other variables such as the leadership of the school administrator (Witziers et al.,2003), common proficiency, academic pressure, socio-economic status (Hoy et al.,2002), academic emphasis (Goddard et al., 2000) quality preschool education (Finn-Stevenson et al., 1998), support of the family (Bean et al.,2003; Maton et al.,1998), the number of students in a class (Boozer & Rouse, 2001; McGiverin et al.,1989; Hedges & Stock, 1983) and the quality of the teacher (Darling-Hammond, 2000), students' motivation, teachers' perception of self-efficacy, and students' attitudes towards learning (cited in Akbaba et al., 2008, pp. 158–159). Effective school studies showed that school administrators affect student success (Brookover et al., 1979; Edmonds, 1979; Stedman, 1987; cited in Balcı, 1993). Moreover, previous leadership studies showed that leadership, especially educational and academic leadership, affect school climate and student success (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1982; cited in Akbaba Altun & Çakan, 2008, pp.158-159). Likewise, in a by Öztürk and Zembat (2015), in which they used the creative leadership scale to examine the relationship between preschool administrators' leadership characteristics and school climate, it was seen that there is a significant relationship between creative leadership and school climate. Where high levels of creative leadership exist in a company it would lead to a supportive organisational culture; an ideal environment to effectively operate and a firm foundation for building an engaged and productive workforce (Worral & Cooper, 2014, 15). Ekvall et al. examined the relationship between creative climate, creative leadership and group innovativeness. Various studies reported that there is a positive relationship between creative climate and innovative outputs (Ekvall, 1990; Ekvall & Tangerberg-Andersson, 1986; Nyström, 1979, 1990; akt. Rickards & Moger, 2000, s.274). According to the findings of Wang & Rode's study (2010, p.1106) research on determining the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' identification with the leader, innovative climate and employee creativity, The study showed that there is a difference between transformational leadership and employee creativity, transformational leadership and employee's identification with the leader. Also, no significant relationship was observed between transformational leadership and creative environment. However, studies found that transformational leadership, employees' identification with the leader, and the creative environment are associated with employees' creativity. Moolenaar et al. (2010, pp.623-624) examined the relationship between the positions of the administrators at school and social networks, transformational leadership and the creative environment in the school. They reported that transformational leadership was positively related to the creative school environment. They found that administrators' positions in social networks are related to the creative environment of the school, professional and personal recommendations of many administrators are related to teachers' desire to learn, and transformational leadership and creative environment are the centre of business relations. Along with the aforementioned studies, the study of

Rautenbach and Rothmann (in press; cited in Roos, 2016) confirmed that creative leadership is an indicator of improvement in the workplace.

In today's world where the quality of a school is considered equivalent to the quality of its administrators, school administrators being able to display a modern and democratic administrative approach would increase the quality of administration as well as the quality and success of the school (Okutan 2003; cited in Boydak et al.,2008, p.70). June (2007) Early Childhood Program Director's Leadership Characteristics and Programme quality. The findings of this study contribute to the literature providing better understanding of the highquality programme directors' profile of leadership characteristics, traits, and styles, as described by the teachers from the high-quality programmes. In addition, the study findings also revealed how teachers in high-quality programmes link programme quality with the leadership of the director. School leaders have a special place in providing quality education. After 10 years of research, OECD's conclusion emphasises school autonomy, accountability, sharing of leadership, and academic leadership. Nusche (2009) also emphasised that leadership should be distributed among different people working at the school and that effective school leaders' leadership skills should be improved (OECD, 2009, p.7). In Niazov's (2016) study in which empowering school leadership was examined comparatively across nations, it was stated that administrator leadership is an important factor in teacher outcomes and there is a direct correlation between teacher leadership and empowerment. According to the findings of Duran's (2014) study, which aimed to develop and test the effectiveness of a programme called 'Leaders of the Future' to improve the leadership skills of pre-service preschool teachers, 'Leaders of the Future' programme supports pre-service preschool teachers' leadership skills in the dimensions of basic leadership concepts, self-knowledge and knowing others, group work and collaboration, and communication and problem solving. Based on the opinions of the administrators and teachers who participated in this study, it was observed that the 'Creative Leadership' characteristics of teachers were higher according to the teachers' and administrators' post types. In this respect, it can be suggested that in-service training programmes should be prepared to improve the creative leadership characteristics of administrators.

Moreover, as it is thought that the Ministry of National Education's prioritising the preparation of inservice creative leadership training programmes will contribute to the solution of several problems in the education sector, it can be suggested that to improve the creative leadership of administrators and teachers working in central or provincial posts, the Ministry of National Education prepare theoretical and practical (applied) in-service training programmes so that administrators and teachers can directly participate to acquire the necessary strategies. It is thought that the creative leadership approach, including use of creative problem-solving techniques, will be effective in keeping up with the changes and developments in the 21st century and in coping with the problem situations encountered. It is believed that leadership is teachable, and creative leadership characteristics would greatly contribute to children being prepared for life. In this respect, it can be suggested that education approaches aiming for children and young ones to acquire creative leadership characteristics should be designed, preschool education programmes should be designed in line with these approaches. This study was conducted to determine the creative leadership characteristics of administrators and teachers working at state-run or privately-owned preschools and at education institutes providing preschool service. In this respect, studies aiming to determine the relationship between creative leadership characteristics by using different variables for teachers and administrators at different education levels, and studies aiming to examine the effects of creative leadership characteristics of administrators and teachers working at different education levels on the success of their students can be conducted.

Further studies using quantitative methods can be conducted to compare the creative leadership characteristics of the students in the field of education. Moreover, studies using qualitative methods can be conducted to determine the creative leadership characteristics of smaller groups (administrators, teachers and students) at different education levels. Furthermore, studies aiming to improve a creative leadership model and qualitative and quantitative studies to determine the relationship between creative leadership characteristics and different concepts and variables such as professional burnout, motivation, and organisational culture can be recommended.

This study was limited to examining whether the creative leadership characteristics of education administrators and preschool teachers working in public and private preschool education institutions differ by the task type. Hence, creative leadership characteristics are important for educational institutions to fulfil the expected functions, keep up with change, follow the technology, and solve today's complex problems

using their creative problem-solving abilities and create a qualified society of the future. It is important for educational institutions to acquire creative leadership characteristics for working administrators (principals and assistant principals) and teachers to fulfil the specified functions. Future studies should also examine the antecedents and consequences of the concept of leadership and develop creative leadership, especially at different educational levels and in different branches. In this context, it would be safe to say that this study will contribute to the discussions on creative leadership in education.

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