

**A STUDY ON THE PERCEPTION OF THE LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTIC
BY THE EMPLOYEES ON THE CONTEXT OF IMPLICIT LEADERSHIP
THEORY**

Akif Tabak

TMA Defense Sciences Institute
atabak@kho.edu.tr

Mazlum Çelik

TMA Defense Sciences Institute
mcelik@kho.edu.tr

Serhat Burmaoğlu

TMA Defense Sciences Institute
sburmaoglu@kho.edu.tr

-Abstract-

Implicit leadership means that different leader profiles are shaped in minds individually. The aim of this study is searching perception of leadership characteristics of defense industry workers and also finding the differences of perceptions up to the gender. Finally by using open-ended questionnaire, 29 leadership characteristics with different frequencies are found. These perceptions of leadership characteristics differentiate in the view of gender and being effective, being even-tempered and being free from bias are demanded by two gender groups with high density.

Key words: *Leadership Characteristic, Implicit Leadership, Demographic Characteristics.*

JEL Classification: M12, M54

1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership features' importance is proposed by Great Man Theory approach and it is believed that leaders' personal and physical features have an important effect on followers until the development of behavioral approaches. Today, expected

features of leaders and which features are more desired by workers are of great importance in changing environment of human characteristics. Leadership can be defined as “gathering a group of people around certain goals, influencing them for realization of those goals and sum of knowledge and personal attributes” although it comes along under the names of chief, coach, mentor, director, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Learning Officer (CLO), Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) today. (Yukl, 2002). So, followers have some expectations from the leader. In other words, people search for a leader portrait, which is in their mind. (Felfe and Peterson, 2007). Here is the point that, implicit leadership is started.

At the beginning of more trials on Leadership from the perspective of followers' is carried out by Eden and Leviatan (1975) and their study implies that person's beliefs about expected behaviors and attributes constitute the implicit theory of leadership.

Lord and his colleagues conducted studies on implicit leadership theories on the most intense and they applied Rosch (1978)'s categorization theory on field of leadership. According to leadership categorization theory, implicit leadership theories, including the prototype of the ideal leader reflect people's minds all around the conceptual categories and according to these models people can classify surroundings as leading or not leading (Lord, Foti, and De Vader, 1984; Lord, Foti and Phillips, 1982).

If it is thought that every human beings have an ideal leader in their mind than it can be deemed that the relationship between leaders and followers can be organized by implicit leadership theories in business (Hunt, Boal, and Sorenson, 1990). So, the manager's behavior will vary according to a leader model which is internalized. As a result, if the behavior of manager and implicit leadership theories of followers provided at the compliance point, then the follower will evaluate the manager as leader, and accept as an effective leader and follow.

If the harmony between implicit leadership theories of employees and managers increases, then, social interaction will increase by courtesy of common understanding, together with the business communication (Enge and Lord, 1997). Similarly, the manager's compliance with employees' implicit theories of leadership increases employees' job satisfaction will increase, in parallel to this, business environment of peace increases (Epitropaki and Martin, 2005).

Studies on implicit leadership theories have shown that people who have created and shaped the ideal model of a leader in their minds have been exposed to different variables such as their culture (Brodbeck et.al., 2000; Konrad, 2000)

living in, gender (Paris, 2004), personality traits(Keller, 1999), and childhood experiences (Keller, 2003). Are perceptions of leader differentiate according to the demographic characteristics of employees working in defense industry?

2. THE METHOD OF STUDY

118 workers are asked with an open-ended question to define people's perceptions about leadership characteristics, which are their desire for a leader, in defense industry in Ankara. Defense workers are asked to write down 5 characteristics which describe best leader ideally. Firstly, frequency analysis is performed for gathered data and frequencies of perceptions are gained. After that, multi dimensional scaling (MDS) is performed and similarities and dissimilarities of gender groups are scrutinized. MDS can be considered to be an alternative to factor analysis. In general, the goal of the analysis is to detect meaningful underlying dimensions that allow the researcher to explain observed similarities or dissimilarities (distances) between the investigated objects.

MDS is a set of data analysis techniques that display the structure of distance-like data as a geometrical picture. In MDS there are measurement-scales used. These are:

$$\text{Euclidian Distance}(d = \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - y_i)^2}),$$

$$\text{Mahalanobis distance} (d = \sqrt{(\bar{x} - \bar{y})P^{-1}(\bar{x} - \bar{y})}),$$

$$\text{Minkowski distance}(d = \left[\sum_{i=1}^n |x_i - y_i|^p \right]^{\frac{1}{p}}),$$

$$\text{Block distance} (d = \sum_{i=1}^n |x_i - y_i|),$$

$$\text{Chebyshev Distance} (d = \text{Max}|x_i - y_i|) \text{ (Yenidoğan 2008)}.$$

Goodness of fit of an MDS model is shown by the stress statistic. Up to the Wilkermaier (2003) stress values and fit of the model is defined as:

| <u>Stress</u> | <u>Fit</u> |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| >.20 | Not adequate |
| .10 | Medial |

| | |
|------|-----------|
| .05 | Good |
| .025 | Very good |
| .00 | Perfect |

2.1. Sample and Procedure

The scope of this study is defense industry enterprises in Ankara province and 118 workers are participated to questionnaire. 79% of participants are man and 21% of participants are woman.

2.2. The Measures and Procedure

The data is obtained by asking 118 defense industry workers with an open-end question, which is “write down the most influential five leadership features up to the order of preference”. So, the perceptions on leadership features up to the order of preference are provided without giving biased information to selected sample.

3. FINDINGS

Perception of leadership characteristics are classified up to the frequencies and defined as written in Table 1.

| <i>Codes</i> | <i>Leadership Characteristics</i> | <i>Frequencies</i> | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| | | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> |
| Case1 | Fairness | 23 | 6 |
| Case2 | Being Honest | 11 | 2 |
| Case3 | Knowledgeable | 17 | 4 |
| Case4 | Being debonair | 4 | 1 |
| Case5 | Being decisive | 2 | 0 |
| Case6 | Being consistent | 0 | 2 |
| Case7 | Being Social | 1 | 1 |
| Case8 | Being authoritarian | 1 | 0 |
| Case9 | Being lowly | 1 | 0 |
| Case10 | Being coaxer | 2 | 0 |
| Case11 | Being smart | 2 | 0 |
| Case12 | Being effective | 3 | 1 |
| Case13 | Being protectionist | 2 | 1 |
| Case14 | Being Charismatic | 8 | 2 |

| | | | |
|--------|-------------------------|---|---|
| Case15 | Being allowance | 5 | 2 |
| Case16 | Being law-abiding | 1 | 0 |
| Case17 | Being cordial | 2 | 2 |
| Case18 | Being incentive | 3 | 0 |
| Case19 | Being foresighted | 3 | 0 |
| Case20 | Being listener | 1 | 0 |
| Case21 | Being communicative | 1 | 1 |
| Case22 | Being courteous | 6 | 1 |
| Case23 | Being open to new ideas | 2 | 2 |
| Case24 | Being orator | 2 | 1 |
| Case25 | Being self-confident | 7 | 2 |
| Case26 | Being finery | 2 | 1 |
| Case27 | Giving judgment | 1 | 1 |
| Case28 | Being even-tempered | 1 | 0 |
| Case29 | Being free from bias | 1 | 0 |

Table 1: Leadership Characteristics and Frequencies

When the MDS performed stress value, which shows the goodness-of-fit of the model, is 0. So it can be said that there is a perfect fit for analyzed model.

When the two-dimensional graph (Figure-1) is analyzed up to the codes Fairness and Being Consistent cases are observed significantly different from others. In two-dimensional graph the cases, which are close to the centroid, are evaluated as common perceptions. In this perspective it can be said that being effective, being free from bias and being even-tempered cases must be taken as common perceptions in implicit leadership characteristics.

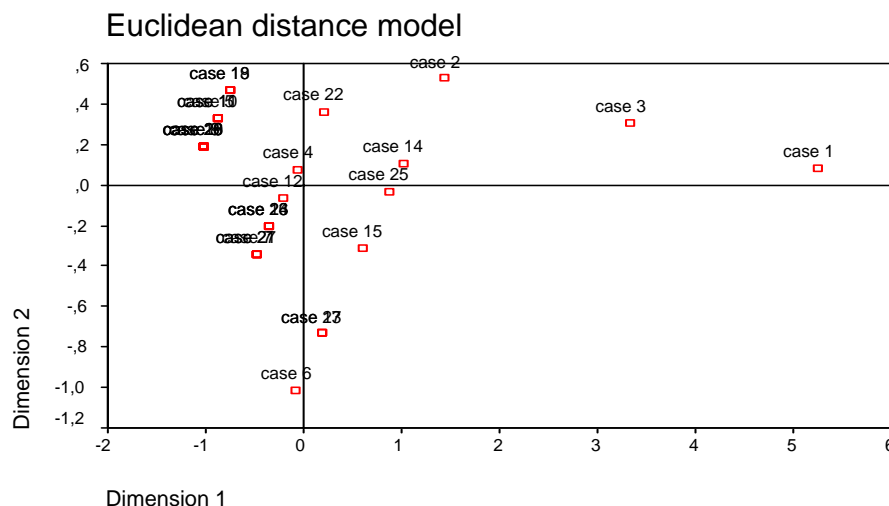


Figure 1: Two-Dimensional Graph for Implicit Leadership Characteristics

4. CONCLUSIONS

It can be seen that effective, even-tempered and unbiased leaders are demanded by both men and women workers in defense industry and this situation creates a similarity. The dissimilarity of variables between men and women can be seen in some characteristics as fairness, knowledgeable and being consistent. Other leader characteristics do not have discriminating power but it can be interpreted as other characteristics except mentioned before have understood commonly.

References

Brodbeck, F.C. et.al. (2000). Cultural Variation of Leadership Prototypes Across 22 European Countries, *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology*, 73(1), 1-29.

Eden, D. & Leviatan. V. (1975). Implicit Leadership Theory as a Determinant of Factor Structure Underlying Supervisory Behavior Scales, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 60, 736-741

Engle, E.M. & Lord. R.G.(1997). Implicit Theories, Self-Schemas, And Leader-Member Exchange, *Academy of Management Journal*, 40-4, 988-1010.

Epitropaki, O. & Martin, R. (2005). From Ideal to Real: A Longitudinal Study of the Role of Implicit Leadership Theories on Leader-Member Exchanges and Employee Outcomes, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90(4), 659-767.

Felfe, J. & Petersen, L.E.(2007). Romance of Leadership and Management Decision Making , *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 16(1), 1-24.

Hunt, J.G., Boal K.B. & Sorenson. R.L.(1990). Top Management Leadership: Inside the Black Box, *Leadership Quarterly*, 1, 41-65.

Keller, T. (1999). Images Of The Familiar: Individual Differences And Implicit Leadership Theories, *Leadership Quarterly*, 10(3), 590-607.

Keller, T. (2003). Parental Images as a Guide to Leadership Sensemaking: an Attachment Perspective on Implicit Leadership Theories, *Leadership Quarterly*, 14, 141-160.

Konrad, E.(2000). Implicit Leadership Theories in Eastern and Western Europe, *Social Science Information*, 39(2), 335-347.

Lord, R.G., Foti R.J. & De Vader C.L. (1984). A Test of Leadership Categorization Theory: Internal Structure, Information Processing, and Leadership Perceptions, *Organizational Behavior And Human Performance*, 34, 343-378

Lord, R.G., Foti R.J. & Phillips J.S. (1982). A theory of leadership categorization. J.G. Hunt, U. Sekaran ve C.A. Schriesheim, (Ed.), *Leadership: Beyond establishment views*, Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Pres.

Paris, L.D. (2004). The Effects Of Gender And Culture On Implicit Leadership Theories: A Cross-Cultural Study, *Academy of Management Best Conference Paper*, 2004.

Rosch, E.(1978). Principles of Categorization, E. Rosch, B.B. Lloyd (Ed.), *Cognition and Categorization*, Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 28-48.

Wilkermaier F. (2003) An Introduction to MDS, Sound Quality Research Unit.

Yenidođan Graylılar, T. (2008) “Pazarlama Arařtırmalarında ok Boyutlu lekleme Analizi: niversite đrencilerinin Marka Algısı zerine Bir Arařtırma” Akdeniz İ.İ.B.F. Dergisi (15), 138-169.

Yukl, G. (2002). Leadership in Organizations (5th ed., Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall).