

-RESEARCH ARTICLE-

ARTICLE
THE MEDIATING ROLE OF MERITOCRACY AND THE
MODERATING EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ON
THE IMPACT OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP ON PERCIVED
NEPOTISM

Şevval Nur MERİÇ¹ & Ömer Okan FETTAHLIOĞLU²

Abstract

The general purpose of this study is to determine whether there is a relationship between nepotism, which is one of the undesirable practices in the organization, and ethical leadership, and at the same time, whether meritocracy, which is called merit-based management, plays a tool and organizational culture plays a regulatory role in this relationship. The theoretical foundations of the study are based on different foundations such as leader-member interaction, human capital theory, social learning and social change theories. The study is a quantitative study based on inter-variable interaction, mediation and regulation model tests. Questionnaire form technique was preferred in the data collection method, which was initiated after the ethics committee approval was obtained. The research data were obtained from those working in family businesses in Malatya OIZ. SPSS 26 and Process Macro 4.1 programs were used in data analysis and model hypotheses were interpreted by correlation, regression, mediator and regulatory effect analyses. The findings of the research indicate that there will be a positive relationship between ethical leadership and meritocracy and organizational culture, but a negative relationship will emerge between nepotism and ethical leadership. In addition, it has been shown that the perception of ethical leadership has an effect on the perception of nepotism and the tool of meritocracy on this effect; It is also possible to say that organizational culture plays a regulatory role.

Keywords: *Ethical Leadership, Nepotism, Meritocracy, Organizational Culture.*

JEL Codes: *D23, M1.*

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¹ Arş. Gör. Şevval Nur MERİÇ, Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam Üniversitesi, İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi, İşletme, Yönetim ve Organizasyon Anabilim Dalı, Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye, sevvalnurmeric@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0001-8672-0591

² Doç. Dr. Ömer Okan FETTAHLIOĞLU, Kahramanmaraş Sütçü İmam Üniversitesi, İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi, İşletme, Yönetim ve Organizasyon Anabilim Dalı, Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye, omerokanfettahlioglu@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0002-0621-1699

ETİK LİDERLİĞİN ALGILANAN NEPOTİZM ÜZERİNE ETKİSİNDE MERİTOKRASİNİN ARACI; ÖRGÜT KÜLTÜRÜNÜN DÜZENLEYİCİ ETKİSİ³

Öz

Bu çalışmanın genel amacı örgüt içerisinde istenmeyen uygulamalardan biri olan nepotizm ile etik liderlik arasında bir ilişki olup olmadığını, aynı zamanda da bu ilişkide liyakat esaslı yönetim olarak adlandırılan meritokrasinin aracı, örgüt kültürünün de düzenleyici rol oynayıp oynamadığını tespit edebilmektir. Çalışmanın teorik temelleri ise lider-üye etkileşimi, beşerî sermaye teorisi, sosyal öğrenme ve sosyal değişim teorileri gibi farklı temellere dayandırılmıştır. Çalışma değişkenler arası etkileşim, aracılık ve düzenleyicilik modeli testlerine dayalı nicel bir çalışmadır. Etik kurul izni alınmasının ardından başlatılan veri toplama yönteminde anket form tekniği tercih edilmiştir. Araştırma verileri ise Malatya ili OSB'ndeki aile işletmelerinde çalışanlardan elde edilmiştir. Veri analizlerinde SPSS 26 ve Process Makro 4.1 programları kullanılmış ve model hipotezleri korelasyon, regresyon, aracı ve düzenleyici etki analizleri ile yorumlanmıştır. Araştırma bulguları etik liderlik ile meritokrasi ve örgüt kültürü arasında olumlu bir ilişki olacağını ama nepotizmle etik liderlik arasında olumsuz bir ilişki ortaya çıkacağını işaret etmektedir. Ayrıca etik liderlik algısının nepotizm algısı üzerinde etkisinin olduğu ve bu etki üzerinde meritokrasinin aracı; örgüt kültürünün düzenleyici rol oynadığını da söylemek mümkündür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Etik Liderlik, Nepotizm, Meritokrasi, Örgüt Kültürü.

JEL Kodları: D23, M1.

“Bu çalışma Araştırma ve Yayın Etiğine uygun olarak hazırlanmıştır.”

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of leadership, which is perhaps one of the most important factors that will lead institutions to success, has been studied extensively in recent years. Leader literally means a person who leads the way (Silva, 2016). In this context, it is in a very important position in terms of its role within the institution and its impact on its employees. An ethical leader, one of the leadership types, is a person who guides his employees within the framework of ethical principles and values. Leaders who have adopted the principle of being ethical both in terms of guidance and in business life should be the first to intervene in possible unethical behavior (Shafique, 2020). What is meant by unethical behavior is the concept of nepotism (nepotism), as we discussed in our study.

Nepotism is one of the types of favoritism and is a frequently encountered situation, especially in developing countries (Büte, 2011) and in our country, which is one of them. One of the places where the phenomenon of nepotism is commonly seen and the institutions that have a large proportion are family businesses. According to

³ Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet, makalenin sonunda yer almaktadır.

research done; 90% of businesses in the USA, 80% in South Africa, 80% in Spain, %98,5 in Taiwan, 95% in Italy, %69 in Scotland, 85% in Switzerland and 95% in Turkey are family businesses (Rahman et al., 2017; Köroğlu et al., 2024). Since family businesses occupy a large place, their contribution to the economy is undeniable. For this reason, the phenomenon of nepotism is frequently encountered in family businesses, which is both undesirable in general and not accepted by the ethical leader in particular. Since the ethical leader is the person who acts within the framework of morality and guides within this framework, he is a role model who is away from the phenomenon of favoritism and adopts a merit-based management approach.

The perceptions and attitudes that may emerge between the leader and the employees may affect the success level of that business. For this reason, it is important that both leaders, employees and even business owners exhibit a positive approach to each other. In an organization, positive attitudes and behaviors occur on the other side in return for the positive approach of one party to the other party. This idea is supported by the idea of “reciprocity” of social exchange theory and the idea of “observation” of social learning theory. In this context, it is possible for leaders who are good role models to cause change in the behavior of their employees. In this context, the leader-member interaction theory, which supports the idea that leaders can gain the trust and loyalty of employees with their behaviors exhibited by considering justice and equality, can come into play (Düger, 2021; Bahar, 2019; Turunç & Turgut, 2017; Yeşiltaş et al. 2012).

The basis of merit-based management, called meritocracy, is to recruit people in line with their skills, abilities, knowledge and determination. However, the process that paves the way for or prevents all these practices is of great importance. This functioning, generally called organizational culture, is the set of values that people share in their human relations. An identity unique to the organization is formed under the roof of culture, and employees act within the framework of this identity without any legal obligation.

When the variables discussed in this study are associated with the theories on which the variables are based, it is possible to draw some conclusions. First of all, it should not be forgotten that human capital is the sum of the knowledge, skills, creativity and qualifications that people possess and demonstrate in their work (Maden Eyiusta and Yanıkilhan, 2015: 115). Secondly, in order to ensure progress and success through the investments made, human capital, especially nepotism, should be prevented from preventing the progress that the investments made can bring about. Because the realization of nepotism may negatively affect the loyalty and success of qualified personnel within the organization. As a result, unqualified people replacing employees with high human capital may push skilled workers to brain drain (Akyıldız, 2024). The last conclusion is that it is possible to say that it will be important to construct the organizational culture correctly and to adopt the meritocracy understanding in order to eliminate these negativities.

The purpose of this study is to determine whether there is a relationship between ethical leadership and nepotism, and if there is a relationship, whether meritocracy plays a mediating role and organizational culture plays a moderating role. For this

purpose, an empirically supported conceptual model with an alternative path mechanism is proposed. The constructs within the model are examined in relation to theories such as leader-member interaction, human capital theory, social learning and social change theories. For empirical support, the model is tested with the data obtained from the employees of family businesses operating in the OIZ in Malatya province. The other parts of the article are the presentation of the hypotheses for the theoretical foundations in Section 2, the research method in Section 3, and the findings and discussions in Sections 4 and 5. The study was finalized with the last section.

1.1. Ethical Leadership

People who want to take a place in social life must act within the framework of generally accepted social rules. In general, these rules are related to the types of behavior expected from individuals, honesty, justice and equality (Aleyashi and Kalfaoğlu, 2023). However, individuals can also exhibit unethical behavior in many areas such as favoritism, discrimination, harassment, abuse, data privacy, and unexpected behavior, contrary to expected behavior. This type of behavior, which can be described as unethical behavior, occurs more in business environments than in social life.

The relationships between leaders and employees in business life have been the subject of many researchers. Leader-member interaction theory, which emerged as a result of these studies, is one of the approaches that examines the attitudes and behaviors between the parties (Scandura et al., 1986). Based on this theory, it is possible to say that there may be behaviors that can be called ethical and unethical behavior in the interaction between employees and leaders in business life. The concept of ethics, which is one of the basic variables of our research topic, involves examining the behaviors that occur in bilateral relations in terms of moral foundations with distinctions such as good-bad or right-wrong (Markham, 2006). Ethical leaders are leaders who guide employees based on normative rules and serve as role models for employees (Brown et al., 2005). For this reason, ethical leaders have become one of the desired and sought-after leadership types in organizations (Wray-Bliss, 2013). For this reason, the first theoretical basis of the concept of ethical leadership, which is one of the main variables of our study, is the *leader-member interaction theory*.

Leaders guide their employees with their power and skills (Köse et al., 2001). The basis of the definitions made about ethical leaders is to keep the concept of ethics at the center, to act in this direction, and to ensure that other employees act on an ethical axis in their communication and interaction with each other (Lawton and Páez, 2015). In this context, it can be seen that ethical leadership has taken its place among the leadership models that are considered indispensable in the organization and is supported by the words "the concept of ethical leadership is the heart of leadership" (Ciulla, 2014). This idea, advocated in terms of leadership, is one of the ideas advocated by social learning theory. For this reason, the second theoretical basis of the concept of ethical leadership, which is one of the main variables of our study, is *social learning theory*.

One of the main duties of top management is to provide an environment that will create the opportunity to obtain economic and social benefits in the relationship between the leader and the employee. In return for providing this environment, employees are expected to act with more effort and dedication. In short, in the face of the ethical leader's supportive behavior, employees begin to respond with ethical behavior (Treviño et al., 2006). The main starting point of this idea is the social exchange theory. The theory in question is based on the principle that positive feedback will be received in relationships that are approached positively (Seçkin, 2020). For this reason, the third theoretical basis of the concept of ethical leadership, which is the independent variable of our study, is *social change theory*.

It is possible to say that ethical leaders have the power to influence not only themselves, but also other employees and even the entire organization with their attitudes and behaviors (Tuna et al., 2012). According to the national business ethics research report published by the Washington Post newspaper, only 63 percent of employees report ethical violations they witness in workplaces. The majority of these notifications are made directly to the supervisor (82%). The percentage of those applying to senior managers is 52%, and the rate of those applying to ethics officers or helplines is 15-16% (McGregor, 2014). Considering these research findings, it is necessary to take into account that the situation of applying to ethical leaders may be high in case of possible unethical behaviors that may arise in organizations, or in our opinion, the ethical leadership model may become an important element in preventing the emergence of ethical behaviors.

The phenomenon of ethical leadership is considered in the literature as a leadership model that includes positive behavioral patterns, as opposed to negative behaviors such as nepotism and discrimination. Therefore, our study asks, "Can it be possible to reduce or eliminate negative behaviors such as nepotism, which is one of the types of nepotism, in an environment where ethical leadership behaviors are exhibited?" It was prepared based on the question:

1.2. Nepotism (Nepotism)

It is argued that the concept of nepotism emerged in the Middle Ages (Lokaj, 2015) because the popes appointed their nephews to important positions because they did not marry and did not have children. In our opinion, considering that relatives or people from close circle were appointed to important positions even before the Middle Ages, it would be more accurate to date the concept to older times. It is even possible to say that the concept has become more widespread today, as the number of institutions and organizations is many times higher today compared to previous periods.

It is argued that nepotism behaviors are more common in the societies of underdeveloped countries, where family ties are at the forefront, people act with the feeling of "we" rather than the feeling of "I", and where unprofessional work-family

relationships are mixed (Karaca and Aksoy, 2022). In our opinion, this interpretation would only be correct when social characteristics are considered. The comment is about the general characteristics of family companies. When we look at the distribution of family companies compared to other companies, according to (Uçkun and Yüksel, 2007), a significant portion of private sector businesses in the world and in Turkey are family companies. In fact, 96% of the companies established in Turkey and an average of 75% in the world are family businesses. In this case, it is a normal result that nepotism behaviors are more likely to be seen commonly in family companies.

Some scientists who research on nepotism also argue that nepotism can have positive effects in family businesses (Bellow, 2003; Mulder, 2008; Fırfıray et al., 2017). According to these researchers, the understanding of nepotism has a positive effect in preventing young people from becoming unemployed and being excluded by their family members in the future (Asunakutlu and Avcı, 2010). In his book *In Praise of Nepotism*, Bellow (2003) stated that companies achieve success with nepotism (Kaye, 2009). In addition, seeing familiar faces at work and being in contact with these people may reflect positively on employees and make them feel more comfortable (Özler et al., 2007).

In our opinion, the concept of nepotism is a negative concept in terms of words but relative in terms of application. When a person hires employees for a business that he owns or has authority over, would it be normal or abnormal if he invites people from his close circle with whom he wants to work or whose work he trusts? The answer to this question will vary depending on the person's management thinking or working principle. Hiring a deserving person, even if he or she is a relative or close circle, should not be confused with nepotism. Nepotism is an undesirable form of behavior when it is considered as the behavior of undeserving or unfairly placing someone in a position.

Nepotism refers to an unorthodox style of action. Essentially, it is not about finding a man according to the job, but about finding a job according to the man (Özkanan and Erdem, 2014). In other words, it is a case of giving priority to family members and providing employment by favoring them, even if they do not have the desired competencies. In short, in nepotism, the behavior of the person holding public power to use the power for his own family members occurs (Gyimah-Boadi, 2000).

The Relationship Between Ethical Leadership and Nepotism

As stated, before in the content of our study, nepotism is a person who has authority in an unusual way of acting, using this power in a way that gives priority to family members. This situation can be considered as a kind of unethical behavior. Because the concepts of honesty, justice and equality are at the basis of ethical behavior.

When the studies in which ethical leadership and nepotism issues are evaluated together are examined; It was stated that a conclusion was reached that there was a relationship and effect between the two variables (Mako, 2022; Özdemir and Özer,

2019). In the foreign literature, Khairy et al., 2024 concluded in their study that ethical leadership has a negative effect on nepotism.

In this study, based on literature sources, it is argued that the perception of ethical leadership can prevent the emergence of nepotism behaviors. In order to test this assumption, the first hypothesis of our research is; It was constructed as "Hypothesis 1: Ethical leadership behaviors have a positive effect on nepotism behaviors."

1.3. Meritocracy (Government Based on Merit)

Although the word meritocracy was initially used to express the helplessness of people caught between the power of the upper management and the lower-level employees, it has changed over time and gained a positive meaning (Alvarado, 2010). In general, meritocracy refers to management styles in which a management approach based on merit is adopted, there is equality of opportunity, and individuals are given promotion opportunities in line with their personal efforts and dedication (Castilla and Benard, 2010; Dağüstün, 2023).

Today, the concept of meritocracy is used to express management styles that are considered the basis of the modern state system and where employment opportunities are provided by offering equal opportunities to everyone. Especially in terms of politics, university education and employment opportunities, countries such as America, Japan and France (Therault, 2003; Young, 2017) are considered to be leading examples of the understanding expressed as meritocracy. It is possible to say that, unfortunately, the management approach that adopts the concept of meritocracy is not very common. In management approaches that embrace meritocracy, people are given equal rights. In the face of these equal rights, individuals must have certain competencies, be willing, and work devotedly with their own skills in order to attain any position. In short, every individual strives to obtain the place he deserves.

In order to establish a meritocratic system, there must be people with rational mind, emotional intelligence and a versatile perspective in the top management (Guney, 2020). Moreover, even if there are managers in the upper management who have the mentioned characteristics, it should not be ignored that the failure of the managers at the department level, which are the application units, to fully comply with this understanding will damage the understanding of meritocracy. Otherwise, in our opinion, it is possible to say that the concept of meritocracy cannot be prevented from remaining a metaphorical concept.

There are also some criticisms directed towards the meritocratic management approach. The first of these is that not every society or individuals in that society have access to the opportunities offered to them. At this point, it is argued that the principle of equality of opportunity does not fully come into play (Yücel and Özmen, 2020). For example, an individual living in a rural area has more limited access to the opportunities offered than an individual living in the capital. The second point of

criticism is about the functioning and continuity of the reward system. According to Hyter (2004) and Sever (2021), equal rewards cannot be achieved in systems where not every employee makes the same contribution and effort, and even if justice cannot be ensured in reward systems and this situation persists, disagreements and conflicts may arise between employees and senior management (Hyter, 2004; Sever, 2021).

In summary, the essence of meritocracy is a management approach in which merit, equality and justice are dominant. For this reason, it is possible to associate the meritocracy variable, which is called merit-based management, with the equality theory. The basis of the *equality theory* lies in the perceptions of employees about their jobs. They make an inference by evaluating the effort they put in and the reward they receive (Turunç & Turgut, 2017).

The Relationship between Ethical Leadership, Meritocracy and Nepotism

According to literature research, it is possible to say that the ethical leadership style and the understanding of meritocracy include many concepts such as equality, being fair, treating everyone equally, honesty, and acting according to the requirements of the system, not according to individuals. While it is possible to say that the meritocratic management approach can be successful if it is adopted by the top management, the lack of functional managers in putting this understanding into practice may harm the understanding of meritocracy. In our opinion, at this point, the involvement of ethical leaders who will act in accordance with ethical rules can reduce or eliminate the possible harm in question. In the domestic and foreign literature review, no study was found that examined ethical leadership and meritocracy issues together.

The meritocratic management approach is an approach adopted as a reaction to the nepotism system in America, which is considered the predecessor of the concept of meritocracy. According to Theriault (2003), the content of the law accepted as the "Pendleton Public Services Reform Law" includes practices such as preventing people from applying to vacant positions through their political acquaintances and entrance exams in this direction (Theriault, 2003). In this case, it is thought that the understanding of ethical leadership can have an impact on nepotism practices through meritocracy.

Meritocratic management systems; These are systems built on principles such as equality, competition, career, fair wages, security and in-service evaluation (Çamurcuoğlu, 2022). It should not be ignored that these principles are the basis of both discrimination and favoritism such as nepotism and ethical leadership behaviors. In this respect, it is possible to say that there is a strong connection between the variables of ethical leadership, nepotism and meritocracy in our study. In order to test this idea, the following hypothesis is proposed based on the arguments above:

H₂: Meritocracy plays a mediating role in the effect of ethical leadership on nepotism.

1.4. Organization Culture

The most important feature of social structures is associated with the cultural values they possess. The cultural characteristics of businesses consisting of human communities are expected to reflect the characteristics of the business in question (Biermeier-Hanson, 2015). In management literature, the concept of culture was first used by Elliott Jagues (Ezra and Charles, 2023). In general, organizational culture has a significant contribution in shaping human relations, in the formation of a language specific to the organization with shared values, and in being a factor in people's self-control, even though it is not legally binding (Hofstede et al., 2010).

Organizational culture begins to form with the business owner, but only the formation of organizational culture is not enough. Employees of the organization must adopt the cultural values in question and demonstrate culturally appropriate behavior. Moreover, values that are not adopted will not become organizational culture (Lubis and Hanum, 2020). Organizational culture consists of four subdimensions: clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy. Clan culture emphasizes collaboration, employee involvement, teamwork, and focuses on values such as trust, loyalty, and open communication. Adhocracy culture prioritizes creativity, innovation, and flexibility. In this culture, responding quickly to changes and taking risks are key aspects. Market culture focuses on meeting the needs of the target customer group. It requires continuous development of strategies to stay competitive in changing conditions. Finally, in hierarchical culture, bureaucracy is dominant. There are many rules, plans, and procedures, and rigidity is emphasized (Wahyuwardhana and Wisesa, 2024: 1313-1314). Considering that organizational culture is important for strategic action, especially in changing conditions, it should not be forgotten that organizational culture is an image building exercise for both employees and external customers. Because the most important factor that distinguishes an organization from others and shapes its image and reputation is the culture of that business. In this respect, it is possible to associate the organizational culture variable with *image theory*. The function of image theory in this context will be related to what, how and why the people who are leaders in the organization do what, how and why they do, and to create a framework for setting and achieving goals. From this point of view, it is possible to say that leaders should act by prioritizing the cultural values of the organization in their decisions about the organization (Şişman & Pekkan, 2022; Turunç & Turgut, 2017: 195).

When the studies on organizational culture and ethical leadership are examined together, it is seen that there are studies in Turkey (Kalfaoğlu et al., 2021; Özmen et al., 2020; Şentürk, 2017; Toytok and Kapusuzoğlu, 2016) and abroad (Kuenzi et al., 2020; Pasricha et al., 2020). al., 2018; Rizwan et al., 2017; Toor and Ofori, 2009) suggested that ethical leadership has an impact on management styles and, as a result, supports the development of organizational culture.

When we look at the studies that examine the issues of organizational culture and nepotism together, we could not find any study in the foreign literature review that studies the issues of organizational culture and nepotism together.

The Relationship between Ethical Leadership, Organizational Culture and Nepotism

Nepotism is the hiring of relatives of powerful managers without taking into account the nature of the job and the skills required (Alesina and Giuliano, 2007). This type of behavior not only shows that there are irregularities and abuses in the business in question, but also negatively affects the business culture (Gold and Dienhart, 2007). In addition, researchers also state that organizational culture can be supported by ethical leadership (Çelen, 2016) and that there are positive significant relationships between ethical leadership and organizational culture variables (Khuong and Nhu, 2015).

Based on the above arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed:

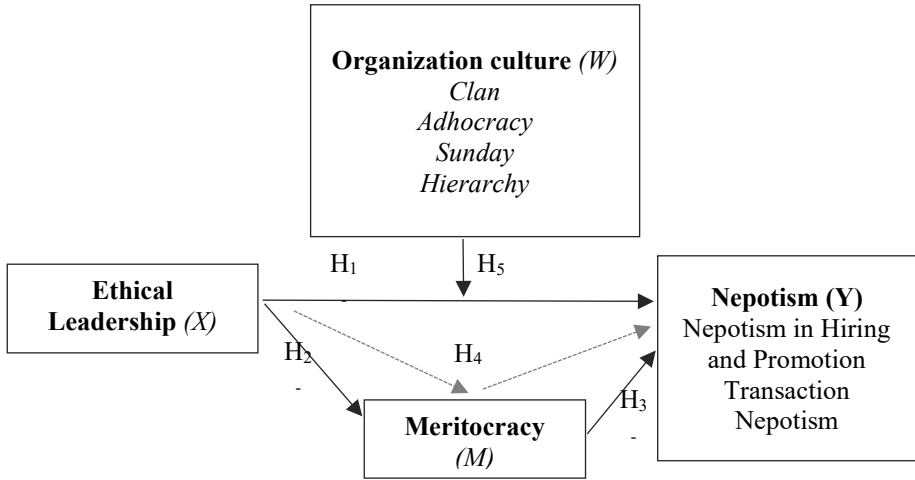
H3: Organizational culture plays a moderating role in the effect of ethical leadership on nepotism.

2. METHODOLOGY

The research is quantitative research and the conceptual structure of the research was created by matching the findings obtained as a result of the analysis of survey data and literature review. According to the literature, the data were obtained from businesses with family business status because the phenomenon of nepotism is more common in family businesses. Family businesses in the province of Malatya, which ranks 40th in terms of development in Turkey, were preferred as the application area. Snowball sampling method was preferred to collect data collected via survey method. The survey forms were distributed and collected face to face by the researchers. With support from the Chamber of Industry in data collection, a total of 300 survey forms were distributed to 8 family businesses. Verbal permission was obtained from middle-level managers working in the selected businesses to distribute the survey form, and participants were informed that participation in this study was voluntary. The data obtained as a result of the survey forms distributed with this system were analyzed using SPSS and Process Macro v4.1 analysis programs. The correlation analysis performed to detect relationships between variables was analyzed with the SPSS program. Mediating and moderating effects between variables were made using the SPSS Process Macro v4.1 add-on program. The quantitative part of the research was completed with the findings and data obtained as a result of the literature review. In line with the findings, the study was finalized with the suggestion and conclusion section.

2.1. Research Model and Hypotheses

The working model is designed as an interactional and moderating model. The model created with the dependent and independent, mediating and moderating variables to be tested within the scope of the research and the hypotheses related to the model are presented below in a graphical manner.



Hypotheses:
H1: Ethical leadership has a negative effect on nepotism.
H2: Ethical leadership has a positive effect on meritocracy.
H3: Meritocracy has a negative effect on nepotism.
H4: Meritocracy has a mediating role in the effect of ethical leadership on nepotism.
H5: Organizational culture has a moderating role in the effect of ethical

Figure 1. Research Model

2.2. Population, Sample, Sample Demographic Characteristics

The population of the research consists of family businesses in Malatya organized industrial zone. At this point, information on the number of family businesses was requested from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the officials in the Organized Industrial Zone, but sufficient and reliable data could not be obtained. However, a total of 300 survey forms were distributed to 8 family businesses selected by snowball sampling method. 185 of these forms were collected back, and 19 of the collected forms were excluded from evaluation because they were incompletely filled out. Ultimately, 166 participants constitute the sample of our study. Ethics committee approval was received for this study with the decision of İstiklal University Rectorate Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee dated 2024 and numbered 29569.

Table 1. Findings on Demographic Variables (n:166)

| Gender | n | % | Education | n | % |
|----------------|-----|------|---------------------------------|----|------|
| Female | 59 | 35.5 | Primary and Secondary Education | 14 | 8.4 |
| Male | 107 | 64.5 | High school | 46 | 27.7 |
| Marital status | n | % | Associate Degree | 41 | 24.7 |
| Married | 108 | 65.1 | Single | 61 | 36.7 |

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|----|------|-------------------|----|------|
| Single | 58 | 34.9 | Graduate | 4 | 2.4 |
| Age | n | % | Operation time | n | % |
| 18-25 | 24 | 14.5 | 0-5 | 78 | 47.0 |
| 26-35 | 73 | 44.0 | 6-10 | 42 | 25.3 |
| 36-45 | 52 | 31.3 | 11-15 | 29 | 17.5 |
| 46 year and above | 17 | 10.2 | 16 year and above | 17 | 10.2 |

65.5% of the participants in the study were male; 35.5% are women and 65.1% of the sample is married. Of the sample; 27.7% are high school; 24.7% have associate degree; 36.7% have a bachelor's degree. 44% of the sample is between the ages of 26-35 and 31.3% is between the ages of 36-45. 47% of participants less than 5 years; 25.3% 6-10 years; 17.5% stated that they have been working in their current job for 11-15 years. When the data obtained as a result of the study were evaluated, the majority of the sample was male (65.5%); married (65.1%) and between the ages of 26-35 (44%); It can be stated that they have a bachelor's degree (36.7%) and have worked in their current workplace for a period of 0-5 years (47%).

2.3. Results for Data Collection Tools, Reliability and Factor Analysis Findings

The survey form prepared for data collection consists of 5 sections in total. The first part contains closed-ended questions to determine the demographic structures of the participants. In the second part, meritocracy and nepotism scales were used. The 5-point Likert method was used to answer the scales with the expressions "(1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Undecided, (4) Agree and (5) Strongly Agree".

Table 2. Normality Test Results for Variables

| Scales | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|----------------------|----------|----------|
| Meritocracy | -1.017 | 1.212 |
| Nepotism | -.373 | -.717 |
| Ethical Leadership | -.628 | .619 |
| Organization culture | -1.224 | 3.055 |

Skewness kurtosis values are expected to be in the range of -+1; -+2; -+3 (Kalaycı, 2014: 6). According to the analysis results, it can be said that there is a skewness and kurtosis coefficients normal distribution according to the calculated data sets regarding ethical leadership, nepotism, meritocracy and organizational culture.

Meritocracy Scale

The "Preference for the Merit Principal Scale" scale, consisting of 15 items developed by (Davey et al., 1999) and adapted into Turkish by Topdemir (2019), was used to measure the perception of meritocracy. Although the scale in question is one-dimensional, it remains faithful to the original scale. There are no reverse coded questions. For the scale question items (Sample question item 1: Employee efforts should also be taken into account in promotion decisions.) reliability findings are presented below.

Table 3. Meritocracy Scale Reliability Findings

| Cronbach's Alpha (α) Scale | Number of Items | Current Study (α) |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Meritocracy | 15 | .820 |

The overall Cronbach's Alpha (α) value of the meritocracy scale is .820. The factor loadings of the scale question items are as follows; .725; .730; .715; .832; .830; .729; .687; .506; .861; .656; .797; .805; .518; are .700 and .579. (KMO Reliability: .834; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Chi-Square: 868.096, SD: 105, P Value: .000).

Neptotism Scale

It consists of 13 items, which uses the dimension developed by (Ford & McLaughlin, 1985) to measure the perception of nepotism and was later separated by (Abdalla et al., 1998), and adapted to Turkish by (Asunakutlu & Avcı, 2010).

The products of "nepotism" were used. The scale in question has two dimensions, remaining faithful to the original measurement. Questions 1-5 are called the nepotism dimension in recruitment and promotion, and questions 6-13 are called the transaction nepotism dimension. There are no reverse coded questions in the scale ranges. (Sample question item 1: Nepotism is practiced in this workplace when recruiting employees) reliability findings are presented below.

Table 4. Nepotism Scale Reliability Findings

| Cronbach's Alpha (α) Scale | Sub-Dimensions | Current Study | | | |
|--|--|--------------------|-----------------------|----------|-------------------|
| | | Number of Items | Total (α) | Variance | Total Variance |
| Nepotism | Nepotism in hiring and promotion (1-5) | 13 | .948 | .940 | 58,636 |
| | transaction nepotism (6-13) | | .903 | | 19,241 |
| | Kaiser Meyer Scale Reliability | | .916 | | |
| | Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Chi-Square | | 2133,271 | | |
| | Sd | | 78 | | |
| | P | | .000 | | |

The overall Cronbach's Alpha (α) value of the nepotism scale is .940, the nepotism in hiring and promotion sub-dimension is .948, and the transaction nepotism sub-dimension is .903. The factor loadings of the scale question items are as follows; .849; .869; .893; .884; .885; .854; .904; .883; .750; .834; .838; are .794 and .833. (KMO Reliability: .916; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Chi-Square: 2133.271, SD: 78, P Value: .000).

Ethical leadership Scale

The "Ethical Leadership" scale, which consists of 10 items and was developed by (Brown et al., 2005) and adapted into Turkish by (Tuna et al., 2012), was used to measure the perception of ethical leadership. Although the scale in question is one-dimensional, it remains faithful to the original scale. There are no reverse coded questions. (Sample question item 1: In this workplace, managers make fair and balanced decisions) reliability findings are presented below.

Table 5. Ethical Leadership Scale Reliability Findings

| Cronbach's Alpha (α) | Number of Items | Current Study |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Scale | 10 | (α) |
| Ethical Leadership | | .928 |

The overall Cronbach's Alpha (α) value of the meritocracy scale is .928. The factor loadings of the scale question items are as follows; .696; .731; .645; .790; .836; .834; .877; .848; are .796 and .745. (KMO Reliability: .932; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Chi-Square: 1076.876, SD: 45, P Value: .000).

Organizational Culture Scale

The "Organizational Culture" scale, which consists of 16 items and was developed by (Cameron & Quinn, 2006) and adapted into Turkish by (Yörük Karakılıç, 2019), was used to measure the perception of organizational culture. Although the scale in question has four dimensions, remaining true to the original scale, questions 1-4 are called the clan dimension, questions 5-8 are the adhocracy dimension, questions 9-12 are the market dimension, questions 13-16 are called the hierarchy dimension. There is no reverse coded question statement. (Sample question item 1: In this workplace, emphasis is placed on employee development) reliability findings are presented below.

Table 6. Organizational Culture Scale Reliability Findings

| Cronbach's Alpha (α) | | | Current Study | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|----------|----------------|
| Scale | Sub-Dimensions | Number of Items | (α) | Total (α) | Variance | Total Variance |
| Organization culture | Clan (1-4) | 16 | .824 | .938 | 52,350 | 74,929 |
| | Adhocracy (5-8) | | .824 | | 9,713 | |
| | Market (9-12) | | .830 | | 7,168 | |
| | Hierarchy (13-16) | | .880 | | 5,698 | |
| | Kaiser Meyer Scale Reliability | | .922 | | | |
| | Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | | 1802,118 | | | |
| | Chi-Square | | | | | |
| Sd | 120 | | | | | |
| P Değeri | .000 | | | | | |

The overall Cronbach's Alpha (α) value of the organizational culture scale is .938, the clan sub-dimension is .824, the adhocracy sub-dimension is .824, the market sub-dimension is .830 and the hierarchy sub-dimension is .880. The factor loadings of the scale question items are as follows; .782; .774; .729; .830; .835; .743; .633; .837; .820; .562; .691; .726; .798; .723; .732 and .804. (KMO Reliability: .922; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Chi-Square: 1802.118, SD: 120, P Value: .000).

The most preferred method for measuring internal consistency and the consistency of questions with each other is 'Cronbach Alpha'. The Cronbach Alpha value is required to be at least 0.70 and above (Seçer, 2017). According to Cronbach Alpha calculations for the scales, the ethical leadership scale was .928; nepotism scale .940; It was

concluded that the meritocracy scale had a value of .820 and the organizational culture scale had a value of .938, and the Cronbach Alpha values of the scales used in the research were above 0.70, therefore the preferred scales were reliable.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Correlations Between Variables

Since one of the main goals of the study is to detect the interaction between variables, it was first examined whether there was a correlation relationship between the variables. The findings obtained are given in the table below.

Table 7. Results of Inter-Variable Correlation Analysis

| Variable/ Sub- Dimensions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----|
| Ethical leadership (1) | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Meritocracy (2) | .316** .000 | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| Nepotism (3) | -.269** .000 | -.366** .000 | 1 | | | | | | | |
| <i>Hiring and promotion</i> (4) | -.311** .000 | -.288** .000 | .905** | 1 | | | | | | |
| <i>Process</i> (5) | -.175* .025 | -.360** .000 | .937** | .699** | 1 | | | | | |
| Organization culture (6) | .477** .000 | .351** .000 | .044 .576 | .005 .945 | .095 .225 | 1 | | | | |
| <i>Clan</i> (7) | .661** .000 | .397** .000 | .139 .074 | .121 .119 | .134 .086 | .777** .000 | 1 | | | |
| <i>adhocracy</i> (8) | .610** .000 | .381** .000 | -.187* .016 | .111 .155 | .224** .004 | .808** .000 | .759** .000 | 1 | | |
| <i>Market</i> (9) | .398** .000 | .531** .000 | .101 .197 | -.012 .881 | .179* .021 | .822** .000 | .644** .000 | .721** .000 | 1 | |
| Hierarchy (10) | .410** .000 | .500** .000 | -.218** .005 | .125 .109 | .263** .001 | .724** .000 | .605** .000 | .630** .000 | .799** .000 | 1 |

With the simple correlation analysis method, it was examined whether there was a significant relationship between the variables of ethical leadership, nepotism, meritocracy and organizational culture. With the findings obtained, between ethical leadership and meritocracy (.316**); between ethical leadership and organizational culture (.477**); It was concluded that there was a positive significant relationship between the sub-dimensions of organizational culture in the range of (.398** and .661**). However, between ethical leadership and nepotism (-.269**); It was also

determined that there was a significant negative correlation between ethical leadership and the sub-dimensions of nepotism (-.175* and -.311**).

There is a negative difference between meritocracy and nepotism (-.366**), between nepotism and its sub-dimensions (-.288** and -.360**), and between meritocracy and organizational culture (.351**), between sub-dimensions of organizational culture (.351**). It was concluded that there was a positive significant relationship between the dimensions in the range of (.397** and .531**).

It was concluded that there is generally no correlation between nepotism and organizational culture, but there may be a negative significant relationship between nepotism and organizational culture: Adhocracy (-.187*) and Hierarchy (-.218**).

3.2. Hypothesis Testing, Model Mediation Effect and Moderation Analyzes Results

In this part of the study, findings are included regarding the effect of ethical leadership (X), which is the research purpose, on nepotism (Y) and whether meritocracy (M) has a mediating role and organizational culture (W) has a moderating role in this effect. The results of the simple linear regression analysis performed with the SPSS program to test the hypotheses are presented below.

Table 8. Regression Analysis on the Effects of Variables

| Variables | R | R ² | F | S.E | β | t | P |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|--------|------|-------|-------|------|
| Ethical Leadership → Nepotism | .256 ^a | .066 | 11.526 | .085 | -.256 | 3.395 | .001 |
| Ethical Leadership → Meritocracy | .316 ^a | .100 | 18.207 | .051 | .316 | 4.267 | .000 |
| Meritocracy → Nepotism | .355 | .126 | 23.621 | .120 | -.355 | 4.860 | .000 |

According to the results of the simple linear regression analysis, the findings obtained are statistically significant and support hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 constructed in the research model.

Ethical leadership explains 6.6% of the total variance in nepotism, and 6.6% of nepotism appears to be due to ethical leadership. In other words, when the Beta (β) value is examined [(β=-.256), (p<0.05)], it is assumed that a 1-unit change in the ethical leadership variable will cause a negative change of .256 on the perception of nepotism. As a result of this finding, there is a decrease in nepotism behaviors as ethical leadership behaviors increase. This result supports the results of the study conducted by Özdemir and Özer (2019) [(β=-.370), (p<0.05)].

Ethical leadership explains 10% of the total variance in meritocracy, and 10% of meritocracy appears to be due to ethical leadership. In other words, when the Beta (β) value is examined [(β=.316), (p<0.05)], it is assumed that a 1-unit change in the ethical leadership variable will cause a positive change of .316 on the perception of meritocracy. As a result of this finding, there is an increase in meritocracy behaviors as ethical leadership behaviors increase. The result obtained could not be compared

because there is no study in the foreign and domestic literature that combines ethical leadership and meritocracy.

Meritocracy explains 6.6% of the total variance in nepotism, and 6.6% of nepotism appears to be due to meritocracy. In other words, when the Beta (β) value is examined [$\beta = -.355$, ($p < 0.05$)], it is assumed that a 1-unit change in the meritocracy variable will cause a negative change of .355 on the perception of nepotism. As a result of this finding, there is a decrease in nepotism behaviors as ethical leadership behaviors increase. This finding also supports the results expressed by other researchers in their studies (Chan, 2019; Takeishi, 2023; Wu and Tang, 2019).

Table 9. Mediation Analysis of Meritocracy in the Effect of Ethical Leadership on Nepotism

| Forecast Variables | Result Variables | | Y (Nepotism) | | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|-------|------|
| | M (Meritocracy) | | | b | S.H | |
| X (Ethical Leadership) | <i>a</i> | .217 | .050 | <i>c'</i> | .180 | .086 |
| M (Meritocracy) | - | - | - | <i>b</i> | .500 | .125 |
| constant | <i>d(m)</i> | 2.972 | .175 | <i>d(y)</i> | .8615 | .466 |
| | R ² = | .099 | | R ² = | .150 | |
| | | F (1; 164)= 18.2074, p<.001 | | F (2; 163)= 14.2658, p<.001 | | |
| Indirect Effect of X on Y: (a.b= .108, %95 GA [.0486, .1842]) | | | | | | |

To test whether meritocracy has a mediating role in the effect of ethical leadership on nepotism, regression analysis was conducted with the IBM SPSS process macro application with the resampling option (5,000). When the results were examined, it was seen that the p value was below 0.05 ($p = .000$) and the lower and upper confidence interval values did not include the value 0 [.0486, .1842], therefore, it can be stated that the findings support hypothesis 4.

Table 10. Moderation Analysis of Organizational Culture in the Effect of Ethical Leadership on Nepotism

| Variables | Nepotism | | | <i>sig</i> |
|--------------------------|----------------------|------------|----------|-------------|
| | <i>b</i> | <i>S.H</i> | <i>t</i> | |
| N=166 (constant) | 3.250** [3.11, 3.38] | .070 | 46.73 | .000 |
| Ethical Leadership (X) | .266** [.073, .459] | .097 | 2.73 | .007 |
| Organization culture (W) | .092 [-.164, .350] | .709 | .71 | .478 |
| X.W Moderation | .286** [.091, .481] | .098 | 2.90 | .004 |

To test whether organizational culture has a moderating role in the effect of ethical leadership on nepotism, moderation analysis was conducted with the application of SPSS Process Macro program. When the results obtained were examined, it was seen that $b=.286$, $p<.05$, lower and upper confidence interval values did not include the value 0 ([.091, .481]), therefore, it can be stated that the findings support hypothesis 5. In light of these results, it is possible to state that practices related to ethical leadership can generally reduce negative thoughts about the perception of nepotism, and when positive perceptions about the organizational culture emerge, this situation can also provide moderator support.

4. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to examine whether the ethical leadership approach will have an effect on nepotism and, if there is an effect, whether organizational culture and meritocracy will play a mediating and moderating role. With the research, a relationship-influence network built on theoretical approaches such as leader-member interaction theory, social learning and social exchange theories is proposed. In order to support this effectiveness with data analysis, research was conducted on 166 employees working in family businesses in Malatya province. It is possible to state that the hypotheses and findings within the research model make various contributions to the literature as discussed. Theoretical inferences that can be presented as a result of the research:

First of all, it is argued that there is an obvious relationship between ethical leadership and nepotism (Mhatre, 2012). Researchers reveal findings that effective leadership models can reduce nepotism, especially in family businesses where nepotism prevails (Akuffo and Kivipöld, 2020; Hayek, 2014; Polat Dede, 2019). It is possible to say that the basis of these findings is based on the inclusion of facts such as honesty, justice, and ethical behavior within ethical leadership practices, and that there is a tendency to decrease negative perceptions towards nepotism in businesses where ethical leadership behaviors exist.

Secondly, ethical leadership behaviors, like behavioral elements in other types of leadership, support meritocracy-related practices. However, there are also researchers who argue that it may be difficult to adhere to meritocracy or to fully implement meritocracy (Castilla and Benard, 2010; Markovits, 2019). It is stated that meritocracy practices are disrupted, especially in countries that have problems with economic unemployment (Kenneth et al., 2000). However, the general rule regarding meritocracy is that equal behavior is exhibited according to the merit system, especially in recruitment and promotions. For this reason, especially when it comes to ethical leadership, managements need to act in a way that supports judgments about transparent action regarding meritocracy.

Thirdly, governments that adopt the concept of meritocracy must take precautions against nepotism. Because all discrimination that is not based on merit is wrong (Mulligan, 2023). It is obvious that there is an emotional element in the recruitment

and promotion of relatives, especially in family businesses. However, businesses that want to become professional or support institutionalization should give importance to meritocratic elements even in cases where they exhibit nepotistic behavior.

Overall, this study hypothesizes that many existing theories can be supported in a general way. Ethical leadership can be an effective tool in the fight against nepotism or in implementing the concept of meritocracy. The findings of the research and literature elements indicate that businesses can benefit from successful leadership practices.

5. CONCLUSION

This study offers different implications that meritocratic practices, which can also be used in human resources management, can be supported and nepotistic behaviors can be reduced, with the ethical leadership model that can be used especially in terms of human resources management in businesses. No study has been found that examines the concepts of ethical leadership, nepotism, meritocracy and organizational culture, which are research variables, together. For this reason, the findings could not be compared with other studies. The results that can be presented to the readers as a result of the research are presented below.

First of all, managers must always act as ethical leaders and offer opportunities such as justice, equality and ethical behavior to their employees. It should be aimed to adopt an understanding of ethical leadership, especially in strengthening the organizational bonds of employees, and to provide a working environment where ethical rules are adopted throughout the business. In this regard, it is necessary to implement the perception that the merit system is prioritized by adopting a meritocratic approach both in the promotion of employees and in new recruitment processes. The way to achieve this is by giving importance to practices such as adopting a transparent management approach and strengthening communication between employees.

Secondly, the literature mentions the finding that nepotistic behaviors are especially common in family businesses. It should not be forgotten that this may also be due to the fact that family businesses hold the numerical majority. Considering that the professional management approach is not dominant in family businesses, it should not be forgotten that nepotistic behaviors may also prevail. However, in order to further increase transmission from generation to generation, it may be recommended to reduce nepotism behaviors over time and adopt a meritocratic approach. In this regard, practices such as family constitution can also be used.

Thirdly, it should not be forgotten that the success of any leadership style, especially post-modern approaches to leadership, depends on the effectiveness, skill and abilities of the leaders. For this reason, it may be recommended to provide training on ethical leadership to individuals at the managerial level rather than leadership. Research findings indicate that being successful in ethical leadership can reduce nepotism [(β=

.256), ($p < 0.05$)] and increase positive perceptions towards meritocracy [$(\beta = .316)$, ($p < 0.05$)].

Fourthly, any manager or leader who does not gain the loyalty and appreciation of the company's employees should not be expected to be successful in terms of implementation. From this perspective, it is recommended to first develop strategies and practices to make employees' perceptions positive, which will guide their attitudes and behaviors. In order to achieve this, leadership behaviors must be implemented correctly or meritocratic behaviors must be disseminated. As a result of the research, it was concluded that meritocracy reduces the perception of nepotism [$(\beta = -.355)$, ($p < 0.05$)].

In the light of the hypotheses to be tested in this study and the findings obtained, the acceptance and rejection status of the hypotheses are presented below.

Table 11. Acceptance / Rejection of Hypotheses

| | |
|--|-----------|
| H ₁ : Ethical leadership has a negative effect on nepotism | Supported |
| H ₂ : Ethical leadership has a positive effect on meritocracy | Supported |
| H ₃ : Meritocracy has a negative effect on nepotism | Supported |
| H ₄ : Meritocracy has a mediating role in the effect of ethical leadership on nepotism. | Supported |
| H ₅ : Organizational culture has a moderating role in the effect of ethical leadership on nepotism. | Supported |

Most empirical studies naturally have limitations because the research scope is conducted in certain cross-sections. This study is also a study conducted in a certain segment. Therefore, making general inferences based on the findings of the study may lead to misinterpretation of events and results. However, it may be recommended to conduct a more comprehensive study in the future, especially across public and private enterprises or sectors, or to consider the variables in question together with other types of leadership in order to emerge alternative designs.

Although the secondary data in the literature is supported by numerical data, it should not be forgotten that it may lead practitioners wrong in interpreting and generalizing the data. In this respect, the use of multiple data sources in future studies may contribute to the generalizability of the findings.

Finally, the concepts of ethical leadership, meritocracy, nepotism and organizational culture, which are the research variables of the topics discussed, are elements that are open to perception-based evaluations, although they have underlying applications like other social science phenomena. It should always be taken into consideration that individuals' perception states may change regarding individual and group elements. The fact that the perceptual element mentioned in this study was not taken into account reveals that our study is limited. In future studies, it may be suggested to implement different methods by taking into account the factors that cause perceptions.

ETİK LİDERLİĞİN ALGILANAN NEPOTİZM ÜZERİNE ETKİSİNDE MERİTOKRASİNİN ARACI; ÖRGÜT KÜLTÜRÜNÜN DÜZENLEYİCİ ETKİSİ

1. GİRİŞ

Bu çalışmanın genel amacı örgüt içerisinde istenmeyen uygulamalardan biri olan akraba kayırmacılığı olarak karşılık bulan nepotizm ile etik liderlik arasında bir ilişki olup olmadığını, aynı zamanda da bu ilişkide liyakat esaslı yönetim olarak adlandırılan meritokrasinin aracı, örgüt kültürünün de düzenleyici rol oynayıp oynamadığını tespit edebilmektir. Bu bağlamda söz konusu değişkenler ile çalışma gerçekleştirilmiştir.

2. YÖNTEM

Çalışma nicel bir çalışma olup Etik kurul izni alınmıştır. Veri toplamada anket yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Araştırma sahası olarak Malatya ili Organize Sanayi Bölgesi'ndeki aile işletmeleri tercih edilmiştir. Veri toplama araçlarından olan anket yöntemi ve veri toplama yönteminde ise kartopu örnekleme yöntemi tercih edilmiştir. Anket formları araştırmacılar tarafından yüz yüze dağıtılarak geri toplanmıştır. Verilerin toplanmasında sanayi odası başkanlığından da destek alınarak, 8 aile işletmesine toplamda 300 adet anket formu dağıtımı gerçekleştirilmiştir. Anket formları aile işletmeleri çalışanlarına dağıtılmış ve elde edilen veriler SPSS 26 ve Process Makro 4.1 programları ile analize tabi tutulmuştur. Korelasyon, regresyon, aracı ve düzenleyici etki analizleri yapıp model hipotezleri doğrultusunda yorumlanmıştır.

3. BULGULAR

Elde edilen analiz sonuçlarına göre ölçeklerin çarpıklık basıklık değerlerinin istenilen aralıkta olduğu tespit edilmiştir (Meritokrasi [-1.017 1.212]; etik liderlik [-.628.619]; nepotizm [-.373 -.717] ve örgüt kültürü [-1.224 3.055]). Güvenilirlik analizi sonucunda ise ölçeklerin yüksek güvenilirlik düzeyinde olduğu tespit edilmiştir (Meritokrasi [.820]; etik liderlik [.928]; nepotizm [.940] ve örgüt kültür [.938]). Gerçekleşen korelasyon ve regresyon analizleri sonucunda ise etik liderliğin nepotizm üzerinde etkisinin olduğu (-.269**) ve bu etki üzerinde meritokrasinin aracı (a.b=.108, %95 GA [.0486, .1842], p<.001) örgüt kültürünün düzenleyici rol oynadığı (.286** [.091, .481], p<.001) tespit edilmiştir.

4. TARTIŞMA

Yapılan literatür taraması sonucunda çalışmanın değişkenlerinin başka değişkenler ile incelendiği çalışmaların olduğu görülmüş ancak hepsinin bir arada çalışılıp incelendiği herhangi bir çalışmaya rastlanılamamıştır. Bu doğrultuda çalışmanın literatüre katkısı olacağı düşünülmektedir. Çünkü günümüz örgütlerinde yaşanan

akraba kayırmacılığı sorununa çözüm bulabilmek isteniyorsa farklı değişkenlerle ilişkiler kurup farklı bakış açıları ile incelenmesi gerekmektedir. Aile işletmelerinin çalışma sahası olarak tercih edilmesinin sebebi ise kayırmacılığa açık bir örgüt kültürünün olmasıdır. Aile işletmelerinde genellikle üst yönetim aile bireylerinden oluşmaktadır. Öncelik aile üyelerinin olması sebebiyle tarafsızlık ilkesi geri plana düşebilmektedir. Bu sebeple aile bağları ve duyguların ön planda olması güven ve sadakat gibi bazı olumlu durumların yanında eşitsizlik, başa geçme hırsı gibi birtakım sorunları beraberinde getirebilmektedir. Deneyimli, bilgili ve becerikli iş görenlerin yerine herhangi bir ayırt edici niteliğe sahip olmayan kişilerin sadece “aileden” olduğu için onların yerine geçmesi ve böyle nitelikli insanların iş bulmakta zorlanması kurumsal hayat ciddi bir sorun teşkil etmektedir.

SONUÇ

Bu çalışma, işletmelerde özellikle insan kaynakları yönetimi açısından kullanılabilir etik liderlik modeli ile insan kaynakları yönetiminde de kullanılabilen meritokratik uygulamaların desteklenebileceği ve kayırmacı davranışların azaltılabileceğine dair farklı çıkarımlar sunmaktadır. Araştırma değişkenleri olan etik liderlik, nepotizm, meritokrasi ve örgüt kültürü kavramlarını bir arada inceleyen bir çalışmaya rastlanılamamıştır. Bu nedenle bulgular diğer çalışmalarla karşılaştırılamamıştır. Bu çalışmanın konu olarak seçilmesinin sebebi özellikle olması gereken yönetim biçiminin meritokrasi yani liyakat esaslı yönetim biçiminin olması gerektiğini vurgulamak istemektir. Deneyimli, bilgili ve çeşitli yönlerde becerileri olan, farklı perspektiflerden bakabilen okuyan, merak eden ve öğrenme isteği yüksek olan kişilere şans verilmesi gerekmektedir. Gelişebilmek, üretebilmek ve ilerleyebilmek bu özelliklere sahip kişiler ile mümkün olacaktır. Yalnızca ülkemizde değil Amerika, İspanya, İtalya, İsviçre gibi ülkelerde de aile işletmelerinin oranı oldukça yüksektir. Ancak sorun aile işletmelerinin oranının fazla olması değildir. Aksine aile işletmelerinin ekonomiye olan yüksek katkısı yadsınamaz bir gerçektir. Ancak bu noktada şu ayırım iyi yapılmalıdır. Akraba olması işi hak etmeyeceği anlamına gelmemektedir. Çalışan, hak eden, bilgili “akrabalar” elbette ki çalıştırılmaz. Burada dikkat çekilmek istenen nokta “vasıfsız akrabaların” kayırılarak iş hayatında yer edinirken; “vasıflı diğer kişilerin” iş hayatından yoksun bırakılmasıdır. İşletmeler etkin ve verimli bir şekilde kurumsal hayatlarını devam ettirmek istemektedirler. Bu noktada biraz önce bahsedilen “vasıfsız akrabaların” varlığı etkinliği ve verimliliği olumsuz yönde etkilemekte ve işletmenin ömrünü kısaltmaya doğru götürülebilmektedir. Liyakat esaslı yönetimin benimsenmesi ise üretken ve öğrenme isteği olan vasıflı kişilerin istihdama dahil edilmesiyle başarılı birey= başarılı işletme= başarılı toplum zincirini oluşturabilmekte önemli rol oynamaktadır.

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| KATKI ORANI / CONTRIBUTION RATE | AÇIKLAMA / EXPLANATION | KATKIDA BULUNANLAR / CONTRIBUTORS |
|---|---|--|
| Fikir veya Kavram / <i>Idea or Notion</i> | Araştırma hipotezini veya fikrini oluşturmak / <i>Form the research hypothesis or idea</i> | Şevval Nur MERİÇ Ömer Okan FETTAHLIOĞLU |
| Tasarım / <i>Design</i> | Yöntemi, ölçeği ve deseni tasarlamak / <i>Designing method, scale and pattern</i> | Şevval Nur MERİÇ Ömer Okan FETTAHLIOĞLU |
| Veri Toplama ve İşleme / <i>Data Collecting and Processing</i> | Verileri toplamak, düzenlenmek ve raporlamak / <i>Collecting, organizing and reporting data</i> | Şevval Nur MERİÇ Ömer Okan FETTAHLIOĞLU |
| Tartışma ve Yorum / <i>Discussion and Interpretation</i> | Bulguların değerlendirilmesinde ve sonuçlandırılmasında sorumluluk almak / <i>Taking responsibility in evaluating and finalizing the findings</i> | Şevval Nur MERİÇ Ömer Okan FETTAHLIOĞLU |
| Literatür Taraması / <i>Literature Review</i> | Çalışma için gerekli literatürü taramak / <i>Review the literature required for the study</i> | Şevval Nur MERİÇ Ömer Okan FETTAHLIOĞLU |