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Evaluation of the Self-Perceptions of the People Working in Disaster Organizations on Leadership Behaviors

Afet Organizasyonlarında Görev Almış Kişilerin Liderlik Davranışlarına İlişkin Öz Algılarının Değerlendirilmesi

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ÖZET

Anahtar Kelimeler:

Afet,

Afetlerde Liderlik,

Afet Organizasyonu,

Afetlerde Öz-Algı,

Liderlik Davranışı,

Bu çalışmanın amacı, afet organizasyonuna katılmış kişilerin liderlik davranışlarının afet yönetim sürecindeki etkilerinin karşılaştırılması ve liderliğin afet yönetimindeki rolünün daha iyi anlaşılmasıdır. Veriler Kasım 2022 ve Nisan 2023 tarihleri arasında toplanmıştır. Gruplar arasındaki farklılıklar incelenirken t ve ANOVA testinden yararlanılmıştır. Cinsiyetler arasında ilkeli liderlik özelliği açısından anlamlı bir fark olduğu görülmektedir. Kadınların, erkeklere kıyasla daha yüksek ilkeli liderlik özelliği sergilediği belirlenmiştir. Eğitim düzeyi ile liderlik özellikleri arasında anlamlı bir ilişki olduğu görülmektedir. Yaş ile katılımcı liderlik özelliği arasında negatif yönlü bir ilişki olduğu belirlenmiştir. Sonuç olarak liderlik özellikleri ve bunların farklı değişkenlerle olan ilişkileri, liderlik geliştirme programlarının tasarlanmasında ve liderlik potansiyelinin değerlendirilmesinde dikkate alınması gereken önemli faktörler olarak değerlendirilebilir. Afet durumlarında etkili liderlik için eğitim modüllerinin düzenlenmesinin ve liderlik potansiyeline sahip bireylerin desteklenmesinin afet yönetim sürecine önemli derecede katkı sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir.

ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Disaster,

Leadership in Disaster,

Disaster Organization,

Self-Perception in
Disasters,

Leadership Behavior,

The aim of this study is to compare the effects of the leadership behaviors of individuals participating in disaster organizations during the disaster management process and to gain a better understanding of the role of leadership in disaster management. The data were collected between November 2022 and April 2023. While examining the differences between the groups, t and ANOVA tests were used. It is seen that there is a significant difference between the genders in terms of principled leadership. It has been determined that women exhibit a higher principled leadership characteristic compared to men. It is seen that there is a significant relationship between education level and leadership characteristics. It has been determined that there is a negative relationship between age and participatory leadership. In conclusion, leadership characteristics and their relationship with different variables may be important factors to be considered for the design of leadership development programs and evaluating leadership potential. It is thought that organising training modules for effective leadership in disaster and supporting individuals with leadership potential will contribute significantly to the disaster management process.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Disasters are defined as incidents that cause severe harm or loss to people or their property. Disaster managers are dealing with the negative impacts of calamities while dealing with limited resources and a minimized staff. These difficulties force local governments to reconsider their disaster management strategies and consider ways to boost disaster resilience from a social standpoint (Hoeppe, 2016; Photiou, 2021; Sun et al., 2020). The ability of individuals, communities, organisations and governments to cope with hazards, shocks or stress is called disaster resilience. This capacity is achieved without jeopardizing long-term development objectives (Combaz, 2014). The assessment of short-term and long-term response challenges is addressed in post-disaster response and recovery strategies. Short-term recovery is concerned with keeping people alive and sustaining their livelihoods, whereas long-term recovery is concerned with rebuilding years following disasters (Ingram et al., 2006).

It can be considered that the essence of development orientated policies is the concept of governance. Disaster risk governance refers to the efforts of public authorities, civil servants, media, private sector and civil society at community, national and regional levels to manage and reduce the risks related to disasters (Djalante et al., 2011). Community-based leadership is of great importance in disaster governance practices (Hiwasaki et al., 2015). The process of influencing people and encouraging efforts to attain common goals are known as leadership. A good leader motivates the group to work together, grow, and evolve. This is referred to as "*inspiring leadership*" (Photiou, 2021).

Leaders use communication, organization, problem-solving, analytical, and interpersonal abilities to influence the behavior of others. Leaders play a key role in crisis circumstances, managing their teams and ensuring that everyone engaged performs to the best of their abilities (Veenema, 2003). In the event of a disaster, employees perform their duties in accordance with the directives and guidance of the team leader. Team members must trust their leaders and continue their work in that direction (Grossman, 2020). One of the most useful pieces of advice you can use when creating a disaster management plan is to learn from those who have experienced disaster first-hand (Gray and Hebert, 2007). It has been demonstrated that concerns such as good team time management, effective organization, and high productivity are critical in disaster management. It has been underlined that team members' proactive personality attributes are helpful in reaching these aims (Bateman and Crant, 1993).

Proactive personality qualities include being open to change, developing and grasping possibilities, having strong self-confidence, being social in problem solving, and being willing to take risks. The presence of people with the mentioned characteristics in the work team helps the team to achieve its goals easily (Thompson, 2005). It can be said that it is important for leaders to have a holistic perspective in the process of creating and managing spontaneous or professional teams in disasters. Because good leadership is directly related to the success of the team and good management can positively affect the performance of the team. The aim of this study is to gain a better understanding of the role of leadership in disaster management by comparing the effects of leadership behaviours of people involved in disaster organisation on the disaster management process. In this context, the following question was sought to be answered.

Do the leadership behaviours of the people who participated in the disaster organisation contribute more to the success in the disaster management process?

2. METHOD OF RESEARCH

In this part of the study, the design of the research, the importance of the research, the data collection tool, the collection and analysis of the data, the ethical dimension and the limitations of the research are included.

2.1. Importance of Research

Identifying leadership behaviors in disaster organizations can help to design a leadership model that is tailored to the problems that leaders confront. This model has the potential to be useful in identifying the abilities and attributes required of leaders in order to reduce the consequences of disasters, build community resilience, and offer an effective response to the post-crisis recovery process. As a result of the subjective character of disasters and the many problems experienced by the participants, the chosen topic is regarded as an original study issue.

2.2. Data Collection Tool

In the study, the "*Scale of Self-Perceptions of Undergraduate Students Regarding Leadership Behaviors*" established by Özbek and Kızılyallı (2017), was employed. The evaluation options and scores of the items were decided as "*I strongly disagree (1)*", "*I agree little (2)*", "*I agree moderately (3)*", "*I agree highly (4)*", and "*I agree completely (5)*". There is no reverse-coded item on the scale. The scale consists of 20 items and four sub-dimensions. There were 6 items in the first dimension, 4 items in the second dimension, 6 items in the third dimension and 4 items in the fourth dimension. Rising scores show that each factor of leadership self-perception is favorable. The reliability of the scale dimensions took values between 0.82 and 0.70 (Özbek and Kızılyallı, 2017).

2.3. Collection and Analysis of Data

Data collection was carried out in two ways. The first method was to create an online survey via Google form and send the participants via social media. The second method was face-to-face survey application. Participants in both ways were given extensive information about the study and asked whether they would participate willingly. Those that wished to participate gave their approval. Written information about the study was presented in the first section of the online application questionnaire, and participants' agreement to participate in the study voluntarily was requested. During the face-to-face data collection phase, verbal information was given to the participants and written consent was obtained that they would participate voluntarily. The study's data were collected between November 2022 and April 2023. The questionnaire was completed by 341 participants within the scope of the study. The online approach was used by 25 people, while the face-to-face method was used by 316 people. The "*convenience sampling*" approach was used to obtain data for the study. The convenience sampling approach is based on the selection of conveniently available or obtainable samples rather than random sampling. This approach is often used because of its simplicity and low cost (Karasar, 2014).

The data of the study were analyzed using the licensed SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) 25 package program. The skewness and kurtosis coefficients were used to examine whether the variables came from a normal distribution. Variables with skewness and kurtosis values between -1.50 and +1.50 is accepted as coming from the normal distribution. Therefore, according to the results of the analysis, it was stated that the examined variables came from a normal distribution (Tabachnik and Fidell, 2013).

Cronbach's Alpha test statistics were used to evaluate the reliability of the study. The Kalaycı (2016), classification was used to determine the reliability coefficient. As a result, the range of $0.00 \leq \alpha < 0.40$ is regarded "*not reliable*", the range of $0.40 \leq \alpha < 0.60$ is "*with low confidence*", the range of $0.60 \leq \alpha < 0.80$ is "*highly reliable*", and the range of $0.80 \leq \alpha < 1.00$ is considered "*highly reliable*".

This categorization is used to analyze the findings collected. Because the data were normally distributed, t and ANOVA tests are employed to examine the differences between the groups. In the event of a difference in the ANOVA test, the differences were estimated using the Tukey test, taking into consideration the assumption of variance homogeneity. When investigating the link between continuous variables, Pearson correlation tests are utilized. A significance level of 0.05 was used when interpreting the data; it was indicated that there was a significant difference in the case of $p < 0.05$ and no significant difference in the case of $p > 0.05$.

Table 1 shows the normalcy and reliability outcomes of the self-perception scale of leadership behaviors used in this study. According to this data, the average participation leadership characteristic score of the responders is 21.96. The lowest and maximum values are 12.00 and 30.00, respectively. The skewness and kurtosis values of the distribution are 0.239 and 0.081, respectively. The reliability value was determined as 0.807. The average score of the self-confident leadership trait of the leaders participating in the survey is 14.42. The minimum value is 5.00 and the maximum value is 20.00. The standard deviation (sd) value is 2.39. The skewness and kurtosis values of the distribution are -0.222 and 0.698, respectively. The computed dependability value was 0.783. The respondents' average score for the principled leadership attribute is 22.72. The lowest and maximum values are 13.00 and 30.00, respectively. The distribution's skewness and kurtosis values are 0.248 and -0.213, respectively. The reliability value was calculated to be 0.802. The respondents' average score for the determined leadership attribute is 15.37. The lowest and maximum values are 7.00 and 20.00, respectively. The distribution's skewness and kurtosis values are -0.187 and 0.057, respectively. The computed dependability value was 0.749. The mean score on the self-perception scale for respondents' leadership actions is 74.48. The lowest and maximum values are 51.00 and 100.00, respectively. The distribution's skewness and kurtosis values

are 0.230 and 0.521, respectively. The reliability value was calculated to be 0.846. According to these findings, participative leadership, principled leadership, and self-perception scale were all high, but self-confidence and determination were low.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution, Normality and Reliability Results of the Scale

Scale Dimensions	Mean	Min.	Max	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Reliability
Participant Leader	21.96	12.00	30.00	3.11	0.239	0.081	0.807
Self Confident Leader	14.42	5.00	20.00	2.39	-0.222	0.698	0.783
Principled Leader	22.72	13.00	30.00	3.24	0.248	-0.213	0.802
Resolute Leader	15.37	7.00	20.00	2.28	-0.187	0.057	0.749
Leadership Behavior Self-Perception Scale	74.48	51.00	100.00	7.76	0.230	0.521	0.846

2.4. Ethical Dimension, Limitations of the Research

Before starting the study, permission was obtained from Trabzon University Social and Humanities Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee (Approval Number: E-81614018-000-2200045594- 08.11.2022). This permission ensures that ethical principles are observed, since the study is a research conducted on humans.

This study has some limitations. Among these, a certain part of the participants can be reached online and the data collection tool is limited to a single scale. These limitations may limit the generalization of the results of the study and provide opportunities for further studies.

3. RESULTS OF RESEARCH

In this part of the study, socio-demographic information is primarily given. Of the participants, 51.32% are male, 53.67% were married individuals, 40.18% were middle education, 63.64% had a middle income rate, and their mean age was 33.98 ± 8.7 (Table 2).

Table 2. Frequency Distribution Table of Socio-Demographic Characteristics

		n	%
Gender	Male	175	51.32
	Female	166	48.68
Marital status	Married	183	53.67
	Single	158	46.33
Education level	Middle Education	137	40.18
	Associate Degree	92	26.98
	Undergraduate	97	28.45
	Graduate	15	4.40
Income rate	Good	116	34.02
	Middle	217	63.64
	Bad	8	2.35
		Mean \pm SD	Min-Max
Age		33.98 \pm 8.7	18-67
Work Experience		9.45 \pm 7.95	0-35

T-test was used to compare leadership characteristics according to genders and it was examined whether there were statistically significant differences between genders in terms of dimensions. While the average for men's principled leadership is 22.32, the average for women is 23.14. The t value obtained as a result of the t-test is -2.365 and the p-value is 0.019. This result shows that there is a significant difference between the genders in terms of principled leadership. This finding indicates that there is a considerable difference between the genders in terms of principled leadership. While the average score of leadership self-perception scale for men is 73.82, it is 75.17 for women. The t value obtained as a result of the t-test is -1.612 and the p-value is 0.108. This result shows that there is no significant difference between the genders in terms of self-perception total (Table 3).

Table 3. Comparison by Gender

		Gender		t test	
		Mean	SD	t	p
Participant Leader	Male	21.74	3.11	-1.354	0.177
	Female	22.19	3.10		
Self Confident Leader	Male	14.38	2.31	-0.289	0.773
	Female	14.46	2.48		
Principled Leader	Male	22.32	3.22	-2.365	0.019*
	Female	23.14	3.21		
Resolute Leader	Male	15.37	2.18	-0.056	0.956
	Female	15.38	2.38		
Leadership Behavior Self-Perception Scale	Male	73.82	7.62	-1.612	0.108
	Female	75.17	7.87		

*p<0.05; t = Independent Samples T-Test

While individuals with an associate degree had an average score of 22.38 for leadership qualities, those with various education levels have the following averages; graduate: 25.07, undergraduate: 22.36, middle education: 21.05. As a result of ANOVA, the F value is 10.85, and the p-value is 0.001. This finding indicates that there is a considerable variation in participative leadership traits across educational levels. Furthermore, the difference test between groups identified that there is a difference between the first group (Associate Degree) and the third group (Graduate). There is no statistically significant variation in the mean scores of the self-confident leadership attribute based on education degree. While the average principled leadership score of associate degree is 23.39, the averages of leaders with various levels of education are as follows; middle education: 21.77, undergraduate: 22.94, graduate: 25.93. The ANOVA resulted in a F value of 11.28 and the p-value of 0.001. This finding indicates that there is a considerable variation in principled leadership between educational levels. In addition, as a result of the difference test between the groups, it was stated that there was a difference between the 1st group (Associate Degree) and the 3rd group (Graduate). There is no statistically significant difference between the averages of determined leadership characteristics according to education level. While the average of leadership behavior self-perception scale total score of associate degree is 75.18, the averages of leaders with other education levels are as follows: undergraduate: 75.48, graduate: 81.40, middle education: 72.54. The F value obtained as a result of ANOVA is 8.102 and the p-value is 0.001 (Table 4).

Table 4. Comparison by Education Level

		Education Level		ANOVA		
		Mean	SD	F	p	Difference
Participant Leader	Associate Degree	22.38	3.11	10.85	0.001*	1<3
	Undergraduate	22.36	3.13			
	Graduate	25.07	2.94			
	Middle Education	21.05	2.80			
Self Confident Leader	Associate Degree	14.32	2.50	1.378	0.249	-
	Undergraduate	14.82	2.17			
	Graduate	14.00	3.63			
	Middle Education	14.25	2.30			
Principled Leader	Associate Degree	23.39	3.29	11.28	0.001*	1<3
	Undergraduate	22.94	3.34			
	Graduate	25.93	3.28			
	Middle Education	21.77	2.76			
Resolute Leader	Associate Degree	15.10	2.45	1.496	0.216	-
	Undergraduate	15.42	2.03			
	Graduate	16.40	2.38			
	Middle Education	15.41	2.30			
Leadership Behavior Self-Perception Scale	Associate Degree	75.18	7.95	8.102	0.001*	1<3
	Undergraduate	75.48	7.56			
	Graduate	81.40	9.85			
	Middle Education	72.54	6.91			

*p<0.05; F = Anova Test, Difference = Tukey Test

Participatory leadership has a negative link with age ($r = -0.178$, $p = 0.001$). This association is statistically significant, however the strength of the relationship is minimal. Work experience has no significant relationship with participative leadership ($r = -0.054$, $p = 0.320$). Age and self-confidence in leadership have a negative connection ($r = -0.031$, $p = 0.565$). This link, however, is not statistically significant. Work experience and self-confidence in leadership have a relationship ($r = 0.120$, $p = 0.027$). This relationship is statistically significant. There is a negative relationship between principled leadership and age ($r = -0.222$, $p < 0.001$). This relationship is statistically significant. There was no significant relationship between work experience and principled leadership ($r = -0.027$, $p = 0.620$). There is a positive relationship between resolute leadership and age ($r = 0.061$, $p = 0.262$). However, this relationship is not statistically significant. There is a positive relationship between work experience and resolute leadership ($r = 0.159$, $p = 0.003$). This relationship is statistically significant. There is a negative relationship between self-perception total and age ($r = -0.156$, $p = 0.004$). This relationship is statistically significant. There was no significant relationship between work experience and total self-perception ($r = 0.060$, $p = 0.272$) (Table 5).

Table 5. Comparison Between Age and Work Experience

		Age	Work Experience
Participant Leader	r	-0.178*	-0.054
	p	0.001	0.320
Self Confident Leader	r	-0.031	0.120*
	p	0.565	0.027
Principled Leader	r	-0.222*	-0.027
	p	0.000	0.620
Resolute Leader	r	0.061	0.159*
	p	0.262	0.003
Leadership Behavior Self-Perception Scale	r	-0.156*	0.060
	p	0.004	0.272

* $p < 0.05$; r = Correlation Coefficient

There is no statistically significant relationship between income level and leadership traits. The influence of different income levels on participative leadership, self-confident leadership, principled leadership, resolute leadership, and leadership self-perception scale total score is not seen. According to these findings, either leadership traits do not vary with income level or income level has no effect on leadership characteristics (Table 6).

Table 6. Comparison According to Income Level

		Income Level		ANOVA		
		Mean	SD	F	p	Difference
Participant Leader	Good	21.83	3.15	0.309	0.734	-
	Middle	22.00	3.14			
	Bad	22.63	1.41			
Self Confident Leader	Good	14.47	2.46	0.085	0.918	-
	Middle	14.41	2.38			
	Bad	14.13	1.89			
Principled Leader	Good	22.34	3.21	1.256	0.286	-
	Middle	22.93	3.29			
	Bad	22.75	1.98			
Resolute Leader	Good	15.58	2.27	0.925	0.397	-
	Middle	15.29	2.26			
	Bad	14.75	2.82			
Leadership Behavior Self-Perception Scale	Good	74.16	7.35	0.17	0.855	-
	Middle	74.66	8.08			
	Bad	74.25	4.59			

4. CONCLUSION

In this study, it was tried to determine the self-perceptions of the people who took part in any disaster organization regarding their leadership behaviors. This study found a considerable difference between the genders in terms of principled leadership. It has been identified that women have a greater level of principled leadership than males. According to the literature, female leaders have a proclivity to identify societal needs and adapt to changing conditions (Khullar, 2021), to understand community norms and practice collaboratively (Saha, 2021), to have effective communication skills and to be active listeners (McKenna, 2000), have risen to prominence. It is possible that female leaders in disaster groups place a higher weight on principles and so make a difference. It is thought that women leaders are more likely to be successful in their leadership roles and to have more positive relationships with the society.

There is a substantial association between education level and leadership traits in this study. Participants with a graduate degree level were shown to have stronger leadership qualities than the other groups. Academic education can help people develop natural talents including psychological well-being, effectiveness, autonomy, and competence (Deci and Ryan, 2000). Education is vital in human-oriented service delivery because it prepares workers to address the problems of the service supplied and to have the required abilities (Massimi et al., 2017). Crisis leadership trainings may be organized to preserve healthy communication, issue-solving, motivation, task awareness, and decision-making under extreme conditions. This may help to build social resilience (Fraser et al., 2021; Marcus et al., 2006). It is thought that education level affects leadership behaviour.

Education has been noted as being crucial in helping people's competences, competencies, and readiness for disaster response who work or have the capacity to work in the disasters (Hutton et al., 2016; Jang et al., 2021; Patel et al., 2021; Tzeng et al., 2016). Crisis management requires the multidisciplinary work of many actors (Brownson et al., 2015; Stern, 2013). In this context, the crisis leadership training of professional groups that can play an active role in disaster management can contribute to the ability to respond to crises under different conditions. It is important to give priority to practices that develop leadership skills in educational studies. Experts need to express clear expectations from future leaders and make more efforts to prevent undesirable consequences in crisis events (Nathan et al., 2021). Disaster coordination and response require equipment, manpower, financial, and instructional assistance (Reed, 2023). It is necessary for individuals to engage in education in order to improve their leadership potential.

In this study it has been identified that there is a negative association between age and participative leadership. It has been shown that health staff with longer working hours and ages 40-49 had better job satisfaction and collaboration attitudes than other age groups (Bekmez, 2018). Participatory leadership is often related with results that are more open to change, accept change, and support it. This leadership style encourages the leader to communicate with people, to value their ideas and contributions, and to work together to identify shared solutions for change (Holt et al., 2007; Russ, 2011). According to the findings of this study, the feature of participative leadership declines with rising age. However, this conclusion is insufficiently saturated to generalize the relationship between age and participative leadership. Because the association between leadership qualities and age can vary. Different results can be achieved when different age groups and leadership behaviors are compared, and this issue may highlight the need for more study.

There is a favorable association between job experience and self-confidence in this study. People who have received disaster education or have responded to disasters have a greater sense of preparation for future disasters experienced staff were shown to have good disaster response ratings (Yan et al., 2015). According to Loke et al. (2013), doctors with more experience than their peers are more likely to respond to disasters. The involvement of experienced individuals is critical in the development of disaster management strategies (Pant, 2020).

Individuals who participate in disaster studies might get expertise in both crisis management and leadership. Furthermore, it has been underlined that some leadership attributes emerge when dealing with a crisis or participating in unusual events (Klann, 2003). People who have previously received expertise in disaster management processes can demonstrate excellent management and leadership behavior in the case of a potential disaster (Prewitt and Weil, 2014). The involvement of experienced individuals can help to make disaster management strategies more comprehensive and relevant. It can be said that there is a relationship between work experience and people's self-confidence.

Women leaders can be encouraged to take more roles in the disaster management process. Individuals who desire to strengthen their leadership abilities should be encouraged and supported to engage in graduate education programs. Employees should be given a variety of work experiences and tasks in order to develop

their leadership potential. Work experience may assist leaders gain confidence and decision-making skills. Simultaneously, by providing supportive resources like as mentorship and leadership development programs, the continual growth of leadership abilities should be fostered. To preserve their participative leadership abilities, elderly leaders must participate in leadership development programs and acquire new leadership methods. In conclusion, leadership characteristics and their relationship with different variables are important factors to be considered for the design of leadership development programs and evaluating leadership potential. Based on these data, it is important for organizations to consider factors such as gender, education level, age and work experience when focusing on leadership development.

YAZAR BEYANI / AUTHORS' DECLARATION:

Bu makale Araştırma ve Yayın Etiğine uygundur. Beyan edilecek herhangi bir çıkar çatışması yoktur. Araştırmanın ortaya konulmasında herhangi bir mali destek alınmamıştır. Makalede kullanılan ölçek için yazar(lar) tarafından ölçeğin orjinal sahibinden izin alındığı beyan edilmiştir. Yazar(lar), dergiye imzalı “Telif Devir Formu” belgesi göndermişlerdir. Bu araştırmanın yapılması ile ilgili olarak Trabzon Üniversitesi Etik Komisyonundan 08/11/2022 tarih ve E-81614018-000-2200045594 sayılı “Etik İzni Belgesi” alınmıştır. Yazar, çalışmanın tüm bölümlerine ve aşamalarına tek başına katkıda bulunmuştur. / This paper complies with Research and Publication Ethics, has no conflict of interest to declare, and has received no financial support. For the scale used in the article, it is declared by the authors that permission was obtained from the original owner of the scale. The author(s) sent a signed "Copyright Transfer Form" to the journal. Regarding the conduct of this research, an “Ethics Permission Certificate” dated 08/11/2022 and numbered E-81614018-000-2200045594 was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the University of Trabzon. The author contributed to all sections and stages of the study alone.

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