

DO DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF ACADEMICIANS BUILD A DIFFERENCE UPON PERCEIVED TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS AT UNIVERSITY?

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ABSTRACT

In the field of leadership, numerous studies focused different leadership styles in terms of demographic characteristics of leaders or members. The current study structured for investigating perceived transactional leadership behaviors at the university in terms of academician's demographic characteristics. Accordingly, the aim of this study is to understand whether demographic characteristics of academicians build a difference upon perceived transactional leadership behaviors at university. For explaining this, empirical research was conducted with academicians of a university in Turkey. Data of the research was collected through questionnaire technique. For measuring demographic characteristics of academicians, gender, marital status, age, title, total seniority, seniority at current university, a working period with the manager and managerial position ownership selected as demographic characteristics. For measuring perceived transactional leadership behaviors, "Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-6S)" of Bass and Avolio (1992) was utilized. The reliability of the scale was analyzed by Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient and its validity was analyzed by confirmatory factor analysis. According to the findings, reliability and validity of the scale were proven once again. In this study, by using the variance and t-test analyses, how academician's perceived transactional leadership behaviors vary in terms of their demographic characteristics have examined.

KEYWORDS: *Perceived Transactional Leadership Behaviors, Demographic Characteristics of Academicians*

INTRODUCTION

Transactional leadership is a type of leadership behaviors that focuses on performance and supervision. Transactional leadership is a method of leadership in which leaders encourage employees through both rewards and punishments. Out of a reward and punishment system, transactional leaders are able to keep employees motivated for the short-term. Leaders utilizing transactional leadership as a model pay attention to employees' work in order to find deviations and faults. Transactional leaders are interested with processes rather than future thinking. Transactional leadership behaviors are usually split into two dimensions as contingent reward and management-by-exception. In the field of leadership, numerous studies concentrated various leadership styles in terms of demographic characteristics of leaders or followers. Previous studies have shown that there is a relation between demographic characteristics and transactional leadership behaviors. The current study structured for investigating perceived transactional leadership behaviors at

university in terms of academician's demographic characteristics. The findings will extend our understanding of the mechanisms to find out the answer to the main question of the study, do demographic characteristics of academicians build a difference upon perceived transactional leadership behaviors at university?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Leadership can be defined as the ability to motivate and influence the activities of groups of subordinates and over the years, a vast number of leadership theories have been developed and empirically tested (Rodrigues and Ferreira, 2015). Leadership established on connections with followers (Kanbur and Kanbur, 2015). In the leadership literature, it can be seen that Bernard M. Bass (1985), extended the works of Burns (1978) about leadership and used the terms of transformational leadership and transactional leadership.

Transactional leadership outlines exchanges in which both subordinates and superiors influence one another for value addition (Kuhnert and Lewis, 1987). These exchanges allow leaders to fulfill their performance targets, complete the required duties, maintain the current organizational status, motivate followers through agreement, direct followers' behaviors toward the accomplishment of common goals, avoid unnecessary risks, emphasize extrinsic rewards, and concentrate on evolving organizational efficiency (McCleskey, 2014). In transactional leadership, the core characteristic is the relation of exchange established between leaders and subordinates (Rodrigues and Ferreira, 2015). Transactional leadership clarifies expectations and provides recognition when goals are met (Sheshi and Kerçini, 2017). Transactional leadership also focuses on how the current needs of subordinates can be fulfilled (Maher, 1997).

Bass (1985) clarified two components that make up transactional leadership as contingent reward and management-by-exception (Francis, 2017). Contingent reward shows the degree to which you tell others what to do in order to be rewarded, emphasize what you expect from them, and recognize their accomplishments (Bass, 1985; Francis, 2017). Contingent reward is the degree to which the leader sets up constructive transactions or exchanges with followers (Judge and Piccolo, 2004). In transactional leadership, leaders influence followers through contingent rewards and negative feedback or corrective coaching (McCleskey, 2014). Transactional contingent reward leadership clarifies expectations and offers recognition when goals are achieved (Bass, Avolio, Jung and Berson, 2003). Effective transactional leaders must regularly fulfill the expectations of their followers (Kuhnert and Lewis, 1987). Most researchers point out to transactional contingent reinforcement as the core ingredient of efficient leadership behavior in the organization. Appearing transactional leadership means that followers agreed with, accepted and complied with the leader in exchange for rewards or an avoid of disciplinary action (Bass, Avolio, Jung and Berson, 2003). On the other hand, management-by-exception assesses whether you tell others the job requirements, are content with standard performance and are a believer in "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" (Bass, 1985; Francis, 2017). In general, management by exception is the degree to which the leader takes corrective action on the basis of results of leader-follower transactions and it can be seen as active or passive (Judge and Piccolo, 2004). According to Howell and Avolio (1993), the difference between management by exception-active and management by exception-passive is the timing of the leader's intrusion. In the active side, active leaders monitor subordinates behaviors and make corrective actions before those behaviors create significant difficulties, in the passive side, passive leaders wait till the behaviors have created problems before making action (Howell and Avolio (1993).

The transactional leader sets standards and norms, and highlights obligations while directing subordinates to perform tasks in the “correct and expected way”. This form of leadership promotes compliance and dependency on the leader and on his or her decisions (Kark, Dijk and Vashdi, 2018). Transactional leadership serves to articulate and establish positions held by the leader (Aldoory and Toth, 2004).

Considerable researches on leadership focus on the linkage between leadership and demographic characteristics of leaders or perceived leadership and demographic characteristics of followers. Based on this, the current study tries to understand whether perceived transactional leadership behaviors of academicians differentiated according to their demographic characteristics. For measuring demographic characteristics of academicians, gender, marital status, age, title, total seniority, seniority at current university, a working period with the manager and managerial position ownership selected as demographic characteristics. In leadership studies some of the researches shown differences in leadership behaviors based on gender (Carless, 1998; Druskat, 1994) while others have shown that there are no differences due to gender (Bass, Avolio, and Atwater, 1996, van Engen, van der Leeden and Willemsen, 2001). More specifically, on the transactional leadership side, Druskat (1994) pointed out that female leaders significantly tend to show fewer transactional leadership behaviors than male leaders. Available literature on the relation between transactional leadership and marital status is limited; however, researchers assumed marriage has an influence on leadership style. Although a great deal of research has concerned the relationship between leadership and gender, few researchers have explored the relationship between leadership and age (Barbuto, Fritz, Matkin and Marx, 2007). In examining leader-follower relationships, Avolio (2007) advocates leadership research that assesses the multiple contextual influences (e.g., follower characteristics such as experience level, gender, and personality) on the leadership process, and Lord, Brown, Harvey, and Hall(2001) also claimed that leadership perceptions are grounded within a larger social, cultural, task, and interpersonal environment(Groves & LaRocca, 2011). Supporting these perspectives, hypotheses of the current study composed as in below depending on the demographic characteristics taken into consideration in this study.

- **H₁:** Perceived transactional leadership behaviors of academicians differentiated according to their gender.
- **H₂:** Perceived transactional leadership behaviors of academicians differentiated according to their marital status.
- **H₃:** Perceived transactional leadership behaviors of academicians differentiated according to their managerial position ownership.
- **H₄:** Perceived transactional leadership behaviors of academicians differentiated according to their age.
- **H₅:** Perceived transactional leadership behaviors of academicians differentiated according to their title.
- **H₆:** Perceived transactional leadership behaviors of academicians differentiated according to their total seniority.
- **H₇:** Perceived transactional leadership behaviors of academicians differentiated according to their seniority at the current university.
- **H₈:** Perceived transactional leadership behaviors of academicians differentiated according to their working period with the manager.

METHODOLOGY

This study proposes to understand whether demographic characteristics of academicians build a difference upon perceived transactional leadership behaviors at the university.

Data of the research was collected through questionnaire technique. In the data gathering process, firstly, permission for conducting the questionnaire was taken from the university administration. Then, the aim of the research was explained to the academicians and data was collected who voluntarily accepted to attend the research. At the end of the data gathering process, 305 academicians participated in the research.

In the questionnaire used in the research, there are demographic questions in the first part and there are questions about transactional leadership in the second part. For measuring demographic characteristics of academicians, gender, marital status, age, title, total seniority, seniority at current university, a working period with the manager and managerial position ownership selected as demographic characteristics. For measuring perceived transactional leadership behaviors, transactional leadership part of "Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-6S)" of Bass and Avolio (1992) was utilized. Also, the scale consists of two dimensions as contingent reward and management by exception. The reliability of the scale was tested by Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient and its validity was analyzed by confirmatory factor analysis.

Table 1: Findings of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Fit Measures	Good Fit Values	Acceptable Fit Values	Model Fit Values
RMSEA	$0.00 < \text{RMSEA} < 0.05$	$0.05 < \text{RMSEA} < 0.10$,078
CMIN/DF	$0 \leq \text{CMIN/DF} \leq 2\text{df}$	$2\text{df} \leq \text{CMIN/DF} \leq 3\text{df}$	2,855
GFI	$0.95 < \text{GFI} < 1.00$	$0.90 < \text{GFI} < 0.95$,987
NFI	$0.95 < \text{NFI} < 1.00$	$0.90 < \text{NFI} < 0.95$,990
CFI	$0.95 < \text{CFI} < 1.00$	$0.90 < \text{CFI} < 0.95$,994

According to the findings of confirmatory factor analysis, it can be seen that the factor structure of perceived transactional leadership behaviors was confirmed in this study as in the previous researches in the literature. On the other hand, Cronbach Alpha coefficient value found as 89% ($\alpha=89.0$) for the scale was shown its sufficient internal consistency. According to these findings, reliability and validity of the scale were proven once again in this study.

FINDINGS

Findings of the research were presented in this part. First of all, the demographic characteristics of the academicians who participated in the research were examined. Then, variance and t-test analyses were performed in order to measure how academicians' perceived transactional leadership behaviors vary in terms of their demographic characteristics.

Findings of the demographic characteristics of the academicians participating in the research were demonstrated in Table 2. When the findings in Table 2 were examined, it was found that the majority of the academicians were a man, more than two out of three of the academicians were married. Assistant professors, lecturers, and assistants were the majority of the academicians, more than two out of three of the academicians were in the age of 39 and below, the majority of them had 5 years and less seniority in the current workplace, nearly two out of three of the academicians had 10 years and less total seniority, more than two out of three of the academicians had 3 years and below working period with their manager and more than two out of three of the academicians stated that they haven't got any managerial position.

Table 2: Findings of Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Characteristics	n	%	Demographic Characteristics	n	%
Gender:			Marital status:		
Woman	113	37,0%	Married	224	73,4%
Man	192	63,0%	Single	81	26,6%
Title:			Age:		
Prof.Dr.	9	3,0%	Below 30	55	18%
Assc.Prof.	25	8,2%	Between 30 - 34	112	36,7%
Asst.Prof.	92	30,2%	Between 35 - 39	63	20,7%
Lecturer	91	29,7%	Between 40 - 44	40	13,2%
Assistant	88	28,9%	45 and above	35	11,4%
Seniority at current university:			Total seniority:		
5 years and below	186	61,0%	5 years and below	93	30,5%
Between 6-10 years	90	29,5%	Between 6-10 years	99	32,5%
11 years and above	29	9,5%	Between 11-15 years	45	14,8%
			16 years and above	68	22,2%
Working period with manager:			Managerial position ownership:		
Below 1 years	78	25,6%	Yes	90	29,5%
Between 1-3 years	128	42,0%	No	215	70,5%
Between 4-6 years	82	26,9%			
7 years and above	17	5,5%			
Total	305	100	Total	305	100

In the context of the main purpose of the research for testing the hypotheses of “*perceived transactional leadership behaviors of academicians differentiated according to their gender (H₁), their marital status (H₂) and their managerial position ownership (H₃)*” t-test was performed and for determining whether the variances between the two groups were distributed homogeneous Levene’s test was used. The analyses and their findings were given in detail in Table 3.

Table 3: Findings of t-Test Analysis

Gender	n	X	SD	df	t	p	Levene's
Woman	113	3,6032	,98206	303	,709	,479	,682
Man	192	3,5234	,93001				
Marital status	n	X	SD	df	t	p	Levene's
Married	224	3,5372	,95377	303	-,483	,629	,428
Single	81	3,5967	,93944				
Managerial position ownership	n	X	SD	df	t	p	Levene's
Yes	90	3,6441	,87478	303	1,444	,150	,214
No	215	3,5023	,97562				

* $p < 0.05$; Levene's Test $p > 0.05$ normal distribution.

Perceived transactional leadership behaviors scores do not show a significant difference due to gender of academicians ($t_{(303)} = ,709$; $p > 0.05$), marital status of academicians ($t_{(303)} = -,483$; $p > 0.05$) and managerial position ownership of academicians ($t_{(303)} = 1,444$; $p > 0.05$). In line with these findings, the first hypothesis (H_1), the second hypothesis (H_2) and the third hypothesis (H_3) of the research are not supported.

In the context of the main purpose of the research for testing the hypotheses of "Perceived transactional leadership behaviors of academicians differentiated according to their age (H_4), their title (H_5), their total seniority (H_6), their seniority at current university (H_7) and their working period with the manager (H_8)" One Way Anova analysis, Tukey and Levene's tests were performed. The analyses and their findings were given in detail in Table 4.

Table 4: Findings of One Way Anova Analysis

Age	n	X	SD	Sd	F	p	Tukey
1. Below 30	55	3,7091	,82353				
2. Between 30 - 34	112	3,4643	,99081	4			---
3. Between 35 - 39	63	3,4709	1,00203	300	1,882	,113	
4. Between 40 - 44	40	3,8417	,81994	304			Levene's
5. 45 and above	35	3,4095	,98381				,199
Title	n	X	SD	Sd	F	p	Tukey
1. Prof.Dr.	9	3,6111	1,08333				
2. Assc.Prof.	25	3,5933	1,06836	4			---
3. Asst.Prof.	92	3,6612	,83588	300	1,755	,138	
4. Lecturer	91	3,3352	1,04187	304			Levene's
5. Assistant	88	3,6477	,89287				,050
Total Seniority	n	X	SD	Sd	F	p	Tukey
1. 5 years and below	93	3,7168	,86421				
2. Between 6-10 years	99	3,4091	1,02084	3			---
3. Between 11-15 years	45	3,5370	1,00119	301	1,700	,167	Levene's
4. 16 years and above	68	3,5490	,89917	304			,136
Seniority at Current University	n	X	SD	Sd	F	p	Tukey
1. 5 years and below	186	3,6577	,88408	2			1-2
2. Between 6-10 years	90	3,3519	1,05629	302	3,238	,041*	Levene's
3. 11 years and above	29	3,5057	,92634	304			,057
Working Period with Manager	n	X	SD	Sd	F	p	Tukey
1. Below 1 years	78	3,8376	,82615				1-2
2. Between 1-3 years	128	3,3815	1,02765	3			
3. Between 4-6 years	82	3,5752	,86112	301	3,953	,009**	Levene's
4. 7 years and above	17	3,4314	1,01731	304			,063

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; Levene's Test p>0.05 normal distribution.

Findings demonstrated that, academicians's perceived transactional leadership behaviors scores do not show any significant difference in terms of age ($F_{(4-304)}=1,882$; $p>0.05$), title ($F_{(4-304)}=1,755$; $p>0.05$) and total seniority ($F_{(3-304)}=1,700$; $p>0.05$). In line with these findings, the fourth hypothesis (H_4), the fifth hypothesis (H_5) and the sixth hypothesis (H_6) of the research are not supported.

Findings demonstrated that academicians's perceived transactional leadership behaviors scores showed a significant difference due to seniority at the current university ($F_{(2-304)}=3,238$; $p<0.05$). For determining from which group this difference originated from, Tukey test was conducted. According to this, it can be seen that the mean of perceived transactional leadership behaviors scores of academicians who have 5 years and below seniority at current university ($X=3,65$), are higher than that of academicians who have between 6-10 years seniority at current university ($X=3,35$). With

reference to this finding, it can be said that the seventh hypothesis (H_7) of the research is supported and this difference stems from the academicians who have 5 years and below seniority at the current university.

Findings demonstrated that academicians's perceived transactional leadership behaviors scores showed a significant difference due to the working period with a manager ($F_{(3,304)}=3,953$; $p<0.01$). For determining from which group this difference originated from, Tukey test was conducted. According to this, it can be seen that the mean of perceived transactional leadership behaviors scores of academicians who have below 1 year working period with a manager ($X=3,83$), are higher than that of academicians who have between 1-3 years working period with a manager ($X=3,38$). With reference to this finding, it can be said that the eight hypothesis (H_8) of the research is supported and this difference stems from the academicians who have below 1 year working period with a manager.

CONCLUSIONS

Transactional leadership has been an important topic for researchers. Some of them tried to explore the link between transactional leadership and demographic characteristics and they pointed out demographic characteristics have an impact on transactional leadership behaviors. The current study indicates a conceptual framework based on the relations between demographic characteristics and transactional leadership. This study aimed to examine transactional leadership in terms of demographic characteristics and gender, marital status, age, title, total seniority, seniority at current university, working period with the manager and managerial position ownership was selected as demographic characteristics. It is necessary to give significant attention to transactional leadership in Turkey higher education. This empirical study is helpful to the Turkish higher education sector which needs academicians who have a high understanding of different leadership styles.

In the context of the results of the study, perceived transactional leadership scores do not show a significant difference due to gender (H_1), marital status (H_2), managerial position ownership (H_3), age (H_4), title (H_5) and total seniority (H_6) of academicians. Therefore, the first six hypotheses of the study are not supported. On the other hand, perceived transactional leadership scores show a significant difference due to seniority at current university (H_7) and working period with a manager (H_8). Thus, the last two hypotheses of the study have been supported.

This study contains helpful information for executives of the university, heads of departments, and academicians. This research is an attempt to add some information to the existing literature pertaining to transactional leadership. This is also useful for understanding transactional leadership and its linkage between demographic characteristics.

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