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ABSTRACT

The historical leadership records that have continued over these centuries have caused people to think, question and do different research on the characteristics of leaders. Especially in the twenty-first century, it is seen that leadership and leader effectiveness have become an important issue in scientific research. Today, together with the changing structures and processes in organizational studies, strategy and vision development, goal and goal setting and leadership processes are the prominent concepts. Organizations must thoroughly assess the opportunities and risks in the environment in the twenty-first century if they are willing to grow and acquire a competitive advantage. They must also embrace flexible management techniques and have strategic leaders who can carry out these responsibilities. Strategic leaders should focus on achieving sustainable competitive advantage or sustainable organizational success in organizations. A leader who is in the middle of a rapid change must be able to use his leadership qualities well in order for the organization to continue successfully. Strategic leadership, as it attaches importance to change, prefers long-term studies and solutions, ensures the acceptance of the vision by involving everyone, keeps development and progress above everything else, and has features from other leadership types, can be considered an appropriate type of leadership both for educational organizations and other organizations.

Keywords: Strategic leadership, strategy, educational organizations.

INTRODUCTION

Leadership has come to the fore with different characteristics throughout civilizations as a phenomenon independent of cultural, geographical and ethnic characteristics that all societies experience in common. The achievements of important figures in history with their leadership characteristics in civilizations such as Ancient Greece, Egypt and China have become epic. The historical leadership records that have continued over these centuries have caused people to think, question and do different research on the characteristics of leaders. Especially in the twenty-first century, it is seen that leadership and leader effectiveness have become an important issue in scientific research. Although it is discussed from many different perspectives and paradigms, such as the leader's different dimensions and situations such as behaviors, characteristics, skills and power sources that reinforce his influence on followers and group goals, it is difficult to say that changing situations and information can be adequately evaluated. While Stogdill emphasizes that leadership can be explained with many different definitions, Yukl emphasizes that researchers define leadership through characteristics related to individual paradigms and areas of interest (Uđurluođlu & elik, 2009). In addition to the individual characteristics of leaders, situational differences also diversify the definitions of leadership (Eretin, 2000).

Different foundations stand out in the theorizing of definitions of leadership, and these theories continue to change with the development of humanity. First, the Great Men Theory is based on the assumption that leaders achieve extraordinary things thanks to some innate characteristics, and it has been defined as the Traits Theory over time by bringing a more realistic trait approach to leadership (Aslan & Uyar, 2015). Researchers have started to focus on behaviors and actions with the judgment that learning and experience and examining the characteristics of leaders are insufficient over time. The Behavioral Leadership Theory considers leadership as a process and emphasizes that what makes leaders successful and effective is the behavior of the leader while leading rather than the characteristics of the leader (Eretin, 2001; Aslan & Uyar, 2015). These theories evaluated leadership effectiveness together with the culture, goals, and managerial values of the organization, but they were criticized with the view that such characteristics and behaviors could not be common in effective leadership, and that processes would change in different situations (Eretin, Potas, Aıkalın, Yılmaz, Kısa & Gngr, 2017). The basic assumption in Contingency Theory, which emerged from this criticism, is that

effective leadership will differ from situation to situation. Important behaviors, characteristics and interactions suitable for situations are examined to determine the effectiveness of the leader (Erçetin, 2000).

Today, institutions experience globalization and competition at the international level, are in different and variable markets, and create new product and service sectors with rapid technological developments. As a result, they faced increased competition, increased complexity and uncertainty. Leaders, on the other hand, carry out different strategic directions to adapt to changing environmental and organizational conditions (Erçetin, Potas & Koç, 2016). Similarly, with the change in the educational institution, the educational leader is expected to have various characteristics and the ability to think strategically in order to achieve the objectives of the institution, to achieve success and to always be one step ahead. With the growth and change in educational organizations, it has become important to deal with the increasing managerial and situational problems with more strategic approaches.

1. Strategy in the organization

Today, together with the changing structures and processes in organizational studies, strategy and vision development, goal and goal setting and leadership processes are the prominent concepts. In this context, the concept of strategy appears in many different fields such as sports events, starting from the military field. Derived from the ancient Greek words “stratos” and “ago” and according to the Turkish Language Association (TDK, 2021), “The science of using political, economic, psychological and military forces together in order to support the policies adopted by a nation or a community of nations in peace and war and art”. The concept has been used frequently especially in the 1960s and after the early 1970s and has different definitions in the literature. The management game plan includes the concept of strategy, which can be defined as making a difference, all the work done by the organization and examining whether these works match with the environment of the organization (Akyüz, 2018).

Strategy can be defined as evaluating the organization with all its dimensions or dealing with a long-term goal. At the same time, it requires the strategy to analyze the relations between the organization and its environment, in terms of being a tool that regulates the relations of the organizations with the environment and enables them to use their limited resources in the most effective way in order to create a competitive advantage. It includes determining the current situation, vision and goals and how to work to achieve them, using the existing resources of the organization in the most effective way, ensuring that organizations reach the predetermined goals in the most effective way with limited resources (Akyüz, 2018). In order for the organization to be used as a management tool in order to evaluate the opportunities it has obtained in line with its goals, it is necessary to put the strategies to work according to a plan.

2. Leadership in the organization

The concept of leadership has become one of the most frequently studied concepts in the field of management, especially since the beginning of the 20th century. Leadership, which the ancient philosophers emphasized with its personal, physical and social characteristics, has also been discussed as an innate talent. The concept, which has become an interesting phenomenon in the field of management with the industrial revolution, has been handled with different aspects and many leadership types have emerged.

There are different definitions of leadership, but there are opinions that not all components are fully met in these definitions. When evaluated from a historical point of view, it can be seen that leadership is handled with different dimensions, and as a result, the focus of influence of the leadership and the perceptions and expectations of the changing social systems regarding leadership come to the fore in the definitions. In the periods in human history, it is seen that leader and leadership approaches have emerged according to different situations and characteristics (Erçetin, 2000; Akyüz, 2018). The various definitions of leadership in the literature can be classified as “leadership at the center of organizational processes, leadership as the ability to persuade to action, leadership where influence is used and interaction is provided, leadership as a means of achieving goals and objectives, leadership as initiator and driver” (Erçetin, Açıkalın, Olgun, 2021; Erçetin, 2000.).

The concept of leadership has been defined and named with different characteristics such as charismatic leadership, servant leadership, mentoring, visionary leadership and has been developed with the view that it can be improved with education and experience. The Traits Theory, which accepts that the characteristics of the leader are the most important variable, the Behavioral Leadership Theory, which asserts that the key factor of effective leadership is the behaviors shown while leading, and the Situational Leadership Theory, which Hersey and Blanchard put forward after the 1970s, are among the important approaches. In Situational Leadership theory, it is emphasized that different situations require different leadership styles. Along with contemporary management approaches, different leadership approaches such as Total Quality Management, Interactive Leadership and Charismatic Leadership are found in the literature (Erçetin, 2001).

Leadership can generally be thought of as an individual who manages a group or takes responsibility for the group, but in the managerial dimension, it is expected that the effectiveness of the institution and personnel,

continuous improvement and monitoring of work performance and improvement of their capacity to adapt to changing conditions are among the expectations.

3. Strategic Leadership

After the 1960s, managerial behaviors and organizational outputs were determined as the predominant cause in the organizational processes. At this point, there was no opinion that there could be a positive relation between leadership and organizational effectiveness. Conversely, this point of view has changed that leadership skills have a much greater effect on organizations as with the first Hambrick and Mason Theory of Upper Echelons (Uğurluoğlu & Çelik, 2009). In the Hambrick and Mason Upper Echelons Theory, it is stated that the age, education level and experience of senior executives affect the type of information they use in organizational management and decision-making, and therefore the success of the organization. Strategic leadership is a leadership style based on this theory (Çelik, 2016). Accordingly, reasons such as the personal characteristics of senior managers, the type and amount of information they use while making strategic decisions affect organizational effectiveness. Thereafter, the perspective on leadership began to transform its role from managerial leadership to the strategic leadership.

Along with these improvements in the literature of strategic leadership, the concept has started to arouse curiosity and different studies have begun to be carried out on it. However, there are various opinions about whether strategic leadership is a separate type of leadership because strategic leadership appeals only to senior decision makers (Altinkurt, 2007). Baron and Henderson while considering strategic leadership as a separate leadership type, claim that strategic leader should create an acceptable environment that develops the services provided by the school and nurtures creative thoughts as well as personal abilities (Taş & Aksu, 2011). Akyüz (2018) summarized the definitions of strategic leadership have been made in the literature.

Table 1

Years	Researchers	Strategic Leadership Definitions
1997	Sullivan and Harper	Strategic leadership; The purpose is to manage and oversee the logical and well thought-out activities that fundamentally make the organization, such as culture, strategy, core identities, and critical processes.
1999	Ireland, Hitt, and Hoskisson,	What is needed is the ability to see the future, set a vision, provide flexibility, and empower employees to bring about strategic change.
2001	Rowe	The ability to voluntarily influence other employees to make day-to-day decisions that will enhance long-term viability while maintaining short-term financial stability.
2009	Pisapia	They are wise people who have the ability to make decisions about goals, behaviors and tactics in environments where change is experienced rapidly and where chaos is high.
2013	Barutçugil	People who are open to changes occurring outside the organization's environment, can adapt to changes, exhibit innovative behaviors, are flexible, have high problem-solving skills and decision-making skills.

Akyüz (2018)

Strategic leaders, in order to achieve the changing dimensions of the institution should be able to create the necessary strategic management understanding with their capability of key judgments and plans. In line with the predictions about the future of the organizations, regarding to set a vision, provide flexibility, and empower employees they should be able to provide responsive strategic adjustments (Akyüz, 2018). The ability to guide their organization using their organizational skills, put the plan into operation, and build new strategic talents are among the qualities that strategic leaders should exhibit (Taş & Aksu, 2011). In this context, empowering other managers and employees and directing them toward new and creative goals in line with the organization's vision are important in a complicated and competitive time .

Swayne et al. (2006) summarize the characteristics that a strategic leader should possess as follows:

- Creates and explains an exciting vision for the future.
- It ensures the participation of people from all levels of the organization and with different experiences in strategic management processes.
- It governs tomorrow rather than today.
- He spends time with his employees and tries to understand their problems and talks to them at regular intervals.
- Allows people to make mistakes. Innovation in products, services and management processes depends on employees taking risks. Sometimes people make mistakes, but it takes effort to achieve success.
- Develops leaders throughout the organization. Senior managers encourage their followers to take responsibility for guiding the organization and motivating employees.

- Relies on others in the organization to make the best decisions, rather than controlling everything down to the smallest detail.
- Allows time for things to work.
- He sets an example with his behavior.
- Empowers employees to solve problems (Uğurluoğlu & Çelik, 2009).

As a result, in times of organizational upheaval brought on by change, the duties of strategic leaders—which are defined as achieving a common purpose, building teams, and growing manpower—are crucial to enhancing organizational effectiveness. In the literature, the five dimensions of strategic leadership are explained as transformational applications, managerial applications, ethical applications, political applications and relational applications (Pisapia et al., 2009). The characteristics that a strategic leader should have were determined by Ülgen and Mirze (2004) as

“ability to positively influence the behavior of group members, coping with uncertainty, ability to make appropriate decisions as required by the situation, learning and adapting by learning from their experiences, being flexible, behaving ethically, creating a strategic value, establishing good relations with employees, creating a sense of duty in employees, to have knowledge about the process in applying the strategies, leading the implementation of strategies, taking measures to increase strategic performance, creating and supporting organizational culture and creating a vision”.

The leadership trait that prioritizes preserving and sustaining an organization's current structure advocates modifications to the way it currently runs when the company needs to perform better or more effectively. Transparency, accountability, objectivity, honesty, and the capacity to observe the interests of the organization are all part of strategic leadership practices. Negotiation methods are also utilized to resolve disagreements over various issues and to come to an agreement with the opposing side. The strategic leader's goal in these interactions should be to develop the company rather than further his own personal goals (Akyüz, 2018; Taş & Aksu, 2011; Uğurluoğlu & Çelik, 2009).

4. Strategic Leadership and Educational Institutions

Organizations must thoroughly assess the opportunities and risks in the environment in the twenty-first century if they are willing to grow and acquire a competitive advantage. They must also embrace flexible management techniques and have strategic leaders who can carry out these responsibilities. As mentioned earlier, various models of strategic leadership as well as the qualities that should have been prioritized by leaders have been discussed in the literature.

The leaders should have a clear focus on growth and change, and in this regard, they should be able to unite the values of educators and educational institutions behind a single idea and inspire everyone to pursue growth and change (Marshall, 2019). The strategic leader, who must choose the routes to take for educational institutions to accomplish their objectives, must possess the capacity for strategic thought. By creating a pleasant environment, school administrators, who play a crucial part in creating more effective educational institutions, are supposed to set an example for students and teachers and help them absorb the institution's vision and mission. It is crucial that educational institutions are run by strategic leaders in this situation. In educational institutions, strategic planning and process management are crucial for driving change and guaranteeing its viability (Taş & Aksu, 2011). The four components that make up the educational institutions' strategic direction and activity are considered as the logic of strategic processes: Conceptualization, attracting people, articulating, and fulfilling are these process components. Only an educational institution that is strategy-oriented can provide this strategic direction. Strategic leaders, in the opinion of Baron et al. (1995), should establish a suitable environment that supports the educational institution's services and encourages original ideas as well as the development of individual talents.

According to Wheelen and Hunger (1995), determining the climate of the entire organization is a crucial duty for strategic leaders. Employees within the educational institution see their strategic leaders as both mentor and principal, and they want to have a vision that will lead them in their educational processes, so the strategic leaders are expected to give this direction to the teachers (Ülker, 2009). Setting a higher purpose for the educational institution is crucial, as is reorienting the leader's vision for expanding the institution's activities. All employees have a sense of renewal in their work-related activities, and they may now focus less on the specifics of their jobs and more on how their work affects the overall institution. (Akyüz, 2018). A vision, which is a clear picture of where the educational institution will be in the future, is necessary given the uncertain nature of the future. Creating a vision which is a concept that takes employees towards goals reveals what the leader wants to achieve and expect from the followers is one of the main pursuits. Strategic leaders achieve vision by assessing the school's history, perceiving opportunities in the school's environment, and understanding the school's strategic capacity to excel in opportunities. When strategic leaders are confident that the vision, mission and values are well established harmoniously with the educational goals, they must take the steps to lead to the vision and mission and link with the strategic goals. Another feature is to reveal and maintain the core skills of

the organization. A core skill is a set of skills that give an organization its competitive advantage and are reflected in customer-specific value (Uğurluoğlu & Çelik, 2009). How to obtain successful strategic leadership is explained by Davies and Davies (2010). They claim that if leaders want to see strategic leadership methods used in schools, they must be able to use that strategic leadership to create a framework for understanding. Along those lines, they believe that both human traits and organizational capabilities are related to strategic leadership (Ismail, Kanesan & Muhammad, 2018).

Upholding a successful organizational culture is a crucial strategic leadership quality. Important values and views that the majority of the organization's members share make up its organizational culture (Hitt, Haynes & Serpa, 2010). Strategic leaders' actions and choices influence organizational culture, which in turn influences strategic leaders and their job. The leader has a greater responsibility to convey the organization's guiding principles than the majority of other employees. In other words, it must influence how the organization operates (Shao, 2019). A school leader's primary responsibility is to establish the climate of the institution and the culture in which the team members will operate. This culture should be a success and high achievement culture in line with the whole educational institution's (Davies, 2003). The culture will serve as a standard for all teachers, students and stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

The problems facing educational institutions are transformed by the advancement of science and technology, as well as the economic, political, social, and cultural changes of the time, and they must adapt and redefine themselves in order to adapt to change. In this context, it is necessary to transform risks and pressures into opportunities and assess strategic management procedures in order to be able to establish protracted strategies for the continuity of educational institutions. By encouraging the teachers to go beyond what they believe is feasible, school administrators can encourage innovation and change in their institutions which can be concluded that achieving expectations requires strategic leadership (Ülker, 2009). Thus there is a need for a strategic leader who will train new followers and provide a competitive advantage that preserves the existence of the institution (Akyüz, 2018).

There is also a need for school administrators who can determine a strategy to achieve a goal, ensure that this strategy is implemented by teachers, create the necessary organizational conditions, understand strategic leadership, and ensure that teachers adopt this understanding by involving them in the work. Students who are educated by administrators and teachers who adopt this understanding are thought to be more beneficial to the country's development. Strategic leaders attempt to align the organization's workforce around a common goal before acting by employing a variety of techniques. They try to persuade them to raise organizational thinking to their level. They effectively present the mission and vision, which demonstrates the argument they are attempting to make (Düzgün 2020; Akyüz, 2018; Uğurluoğlu & Çelik, 2009).

Strategic leaders are not only good managers but also good educators, giving importance to the development of their employees and raising them as the leaders of the future is now an expected situation. In this way, it will be possible to present a common vision with the employees, to ensure that they adopt all the goals of the business, to instill the foresight that will enable the employees to anticipate the opportunities and threats they will face, and thus, it will be possible to produce solutions immediately before a problem occurs. Strategic leaders will be able to expect their employees to act in accordance with the strategy in the execution of the work, to follow their work closely in a controlled manner, to want them to act with a sense of responsibility, and to achieve the expected and desired goals more than enough. On the other hand, the strategic leader should try to match the wishes of the employees with the goals of the business in an appropriate way without conflicting them.

As a result, strategic leaders should focus on achieving sustainable competitive advantage or sustainable organizational success in organizations. A leader who is in the middle of a rapid change must be able to use his leadership qualities well in order for the organization to continue successfully. In addition, considering that there is a constant renewal and changing conditions in management in today's world, strategic leaders should be able to renew themselves in all their planning and actions depending on dynamic factors. Likewise, strategic leaders should be able to keep up with the change in their strategies not only for internal factors but also for external factors.

All professionals in education should be actively involved in educational change and demonstrate the essential characteristics of strategic leadership (Baron & Henderson, 1995). In the context of strategic leadership, establishing educational goals in a way that can sustain their continuity and developing strategic measures to achieve success are the middle key system in the development of long-term successful schools (Davies, 2004). Future and strategy-oriented schools turn their attention to the next developmental step and see the future as seizing better opportunities. They are also aware of the necessity of catching up with the times and the necessity of generating ideas about how they should deal with the current situation and how they will change the situation in the future (Davies, 2004). Strategic leadership, as it attaches importance to change, prefers long-term studies and solutions, ensures the acceptance of the vision by involving everyone, keeps development and progress

above everything else, and has features from other leadership types, can be considered an appropriate type of leadership both for educational organizations and other organizations.

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