The Relation between Learning-Centered Leadership and Structural Empowerment of Teachers

Research Article

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
<p><i>Article History:</i></p> <p>Received: 24.01.2020</p> <p>Available online: 09.09.2021</p>	<p>The aim of the current study is to determine whether there is any significant relationship between school administrators learning-centered leadership and teachers structural empowerment, based on teachers' opinion. The research was designed with the correlational survey model. The participants consist of 261 volunteer teachers working in Bolu central district in the academic year of 2020-2021. Personal information form, learning-centered leadership scale, and teachers structural empowerment scale were used as data collection tools. The data were analyzed with SPSS software. According to the results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality, it was seen that the data were not distributed normally. That's why Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis were employed for the data analysis. Spearman correlation analysis was used in order to determine the relationship between learning-centered leadership and teachers structural empowerment. The results of the research show that teacher opinions on learning-centered leadership and structural empowerment are at high level. Also, there are no significances in learning-centered leadership and structural empowerment in terms of gender professional seniority, working period with school manager. While the variable of working period at school makes a significant difference in the factors of managing curriculum and being a role-model of learning-centered leadership, there is no significance in the other factors and the scale. The variable of working period at school does not make a significant difference in teachers structural empowerment and its factors. There is a significant, positive and high relationship between learning-centered leadership and teachers structural empowerment.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">© 2021 IOJES. All rights reserved</p> <p>Keywords: Learning-Centered leadership, Structural empowerment, Teacher.</p>

Introduction

It can be suggested that the effective operation of institutions is related to the competencies of the managers and their ability to manage based on these qualifications (Cerit, 2004). The efficient realization of

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education and training activities in schools and the school administrators have an important role in achieving goals by increasing the quality of education (Ertürk, 2019). In this respect, the idea that school principals have a significant role in achieving the objectives of educational institutions emphasizes the need for having leadership qualities as well as management qualifications. This led the school principals to search for leadership behaviors and emergence of new leadership approaches. One of these leadership approaches is the learning-centered leadership that has attracted a lot of attention in schools recently (Bakan, Doğan, Koçdemir & Oğuz, 2018). Especially, the studies on efficient schools have indicated that some behaviors of school principals have an influence on the quality of the teacher's behavior in the classroom, and the understanding of teaching leadership that forms the basis of learning-centered leadership is in the process of changing towards the concept of "learning-centered leadership", which includes being a model, monitoring and dialogue behaviors (Male & Paleiologou, 2021; Southworth, 2002).

Although learning-centered leadership and educational leadership are closely related to each other, teaching leadership focuses on teaching and learning at schools, and the school administrators who are the teaching leaders provide the necessary resources for the school to achieve its visions and objectives, try to improve the learning environment in the classroom, provide two-way communication with effective language and are in constant communication with the teachers and students in all environments. Learning leaders aim to establish and develop the learning organization by trying to design the organization as a whole in accordance with the learning organization model in that learning-centered leadership focuses on the learning of all employees at the school, including the principals, while empowering the professional learning of employees to create environments that will enable teachers to learn from each other (Çelik, 2015). The studies have showed that learning-centered leaders aim to create a school environment that encourages teachers and students to learn at school (Liu, Hallinger & Feng, 2016).

Learning-centered leadership is defined in various ways in the literature. Murphy, Goldring, Cravens, Elliot and Porter (2011) have stated that learning-centered leadership means to have six basic functions as developing a strong curriculum, providing effective teaching, developing a learning environment and professional behavior, developing good relationships within school environment, and developing a performance accountability mechanism. They have emphasized that there should be a culture that promotes learning and professional behavior, not a culture with a bureaucratic relationship at the school because no success can be achieved as being isolated from society; therefore, school, which is an important part of the society, should have strong relations with the society. Liu et al. (2016) have focused on the role of learning-centered leadership in the professional development of teachers, examining learning-centered leadership in four main dimensions: building a learning vision, providing learning support, managing the curriculum and being a model. Recent studies have also revealed that the learning-centered leadership improves the professional learning of teachers at the school and the confidence among teachers. In learning-centered leadership, the principal not only actively contributes to in-school learning practices, but also contributes to the creation of a school environment that allows teachers at the school to improve their professional learning processes and learn interactively with their colleagues (Kılınç, Bellibaş & Gümüş, 2017). Learning-centered leadership is considered as a process in which the school is organized as a whole by updating, improving and increasing the level of achievement of teachers and other staff at the school (Cravens, 2008; Knapp, Copland, Honig, Plecki & Portin, 2010). In the learning-centered leadership model, leaders develop a vision that encourages and enhances the professional and personal development of teachers as well as other staff of the school (Liu et al., 2016). Perez-Garcia, López and Bolívar (2018) have explained that a learning-centered leader has an effect on the improvement of students' achievement levels by focusing on most appropriate teaching and learning conditions.

It has been concluded that there are two basic perspectives on learning-centered leadership in the literature. Murphy et. al. (2006) have revealed approaches such as leadership and transformational leadership or teaching-oriented leadership at high-performing schools. Accordingly, the character of the learning-centered leader relies on the previous experiences and the knowledge, individual characteristics and values and beliefs he/she gains over time. Also, in-class activities along with the school administration has a positive effect on student success. This indicates that the learning-centered leader has a significant impact on educational activities, whose main goal is student success. Liu et. al. (2016) have considered the learning-centered school leader as providing professional guidance to teachers in order to increase the learning and effectiveness of the school by increasing the professional knowledge of teachers (Saphier, King & D'Auria, 2006; Cravens, 2008; Liu et. al., 2016), and based the learning-centered leadership on four key dimensions: building a learning vision, providing learning support, managing the curriculum and being a model. Goldring, Porter, Murphy, Elliot and Cravens (2009) have discussed the learning-centered leadership in two dimensions: the main components of the principal's strong empowerment of the students' learning process, and the basic processes that emphasize leadership behaviors in order to form a school culture that would increase the commitment of all shareholders to the school (Murphy et al., 2007; Goldring et al., 2009; Elliot & Clifford, 2014).

In terms of educational institutions to be effective, as in all institutions, the performance of teachers is as important as school leaders. Therefore, especially in recent years, it has become one of the new management techniques for the institutions, even the most important one that focuses on empowerment of the employees for them work effectively (Gül & Çöl, 2004). The empowering of employees is expressed as the process of sharing, training, helping and teamwork and also ensuring their participation in decision-making processes and personal development (Koçel, 2010). According to the related literature, it is concluded that there are two ways to empower the employees in the institution. The first one is structural empowerment, which means empowering of employees in terms of knowledge, resources and opportunities by sharing power and transferring it from senior management to those working in the lower ranks. In other words, McDonald's (2014) defines structural empowerment as individuals' using opportunities and resources most effectively to achieve the organization's objectives. In structural empowerment, institutions can change organizational processes, policies and practices by transferring power within the management and hierarchy to the lowest level of employees and encouraging them to participate in management as much as possible (Çavuş, 2006). The second is psychological empowerment, which means empowering the employees in terms of competence, significance and effectiveness (Sürgevil, Tolay & Topoyan, 2013; İlman Püsküllüoğlu & Altinkurt, 2017; İhtiyaroğlu, 2017). According to Odabaş (2014), the main objective of psychological empowerment is to increase the quality of the employee's work by increasing the internal motivation of them. Empowering of teachers has been considered as decision-making, professional development, status, self-sufficiency, autonomy and influence by Short and Rinehart (1992); professional development, status, self-effectiveness, autonomy and influence by Mete (2004); participation in the decision, transfer of authority, the chain of command authority, staff authority, functional authority by Taş (2017).

Empowering of the employees will also play a critical role in empowering teachers, who are key figures for educating an individual with regard to expectations of the society. Empowering as a management concept is defined as the development process of teachers by increasing the decision-making authorities of teachers through cooperation, sharing, training and collaboration at school (Aras, 2013). Accordingly, in order to have remarkable teachers at schools, it is necessary to empower the development of teachers, to encourage them about making their own decisions and to provide them a self-check opportunity in terms of professional work (Mete, 2004). Empowerment of teachers increases their confidence in background knowledge and expertise because they feel motivated and perform better in achieving the objectives of their schools by doing work in accordance with the educational purposes of the schools (Çalışkan, 2006). In addition, empowered teachers

ensure continuous improvement at their schools by acting for a certain purpose in their own work and life (Özdaşı, 2002). Empowering the teachers will contribute positively to them working more enthusiastically and increase their professional knowledge and experience (Bogler & Nir, 2012). In fact, what the learning-centered leader aims to do is to contribute to teachers' professional knowledge and development and to guide them by enabling the educational institutions to develop in accordance with the objectives. In addition, empowering the teachers will improve the quality of education by contributing to the strength of the teachers' personality and their performance (Kirby, Wimpelberg & Keaster 1992). Factors such as teachers' motivations, workplace atmosphere, and level of commitment to the work will ensure the success of institutions. It is very important to empower teachers in order to raise our children and young people as well-educated individuals and to compete with the other countries. The increase in learning-centered leadership will also contribute significantly to this situation.

As a result, empowering teachers in terms of behaviors means encouraging them about the transfer of authority, teamwork, communication for them to participate more in decision making processes at schools (Kıral, 2015). It is considered that school administrators who adopt learning-centered leadership at schools will allow teachers to empower more because learning-centered leaders will provide guidance to teachers about improving themselves, contribute to increase their motivation to see themselves as more knowledgeable and competent, and improve the quality of education. This will be beneficial in developing a positive climate at schools with educational institutions and achieving the objectives of schools. Any research investigating the relationship between learning-centered leadership and structural empowerment could not be seen in the literature. Besides the studies investigating different subjects with both learning-centered leadership (Murphy et al., 2006; Cravens, 2008; Goldring et al., 2009; Knapp et al., 2010; Male & Palaiologou, 2012; Kılınc et al., 2017; Bakan et al, 2018; Polat, 2020) and teachers empowerment (Polatçı ve Özçalık, 2013; Altinkurt ve et al, 2016; Gedik, 2017; İhtiyaroğlu, 2017; Umar ve Özen, 2019; Ertürk, 2021).

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine whether there is a significant correlation between the learning-centered leadership attitudes of school principals and the structural empowerment of teachers based on the views of the teachers working in secondary schools. In accordance with this purpose, research questions were determined as follows:

1. What are the opinions of the secondary school teachers on learning-centered leadership and structural empowerment of teachers?
2. Do the opinions of the secondary school teachers regarding learning-centered leadership and structural empowerment of teachers differ significantly based on gender, professional seniority, years of experience at the school?
3. Is there a significant correlation between the learning-centered leadership of the secondary school teachers and their opinions on structural empowerment of teachers?

Methodology

Research Design

This study is based on correlational survey model and aims to determine the presence and/or degree of variation between two or more variables (Karasar, 2014).

Study Group

The study group of this research consists of 261 teachers working in secondary education institutions in the central district of Bolu province in the 2020-2021 academic year.

51% of the participating teachers are female, and 49% are men. According to the professional seniority variable, 8.8% of the participants have work experience between 0-5 years, 12.3% between 6-10 years, 19.2% between 11-15 years, 24.9% have experience between 16-20 years, while 34.9% have 21 years or more. According to the variable of years of experience at the school, 38.7% of teachers has been working for 0-5 years, 26.1% for 6-10 years, 19.2% for 1-15 years, while 16.1% have 16 years of experience or more. According to the variable of duration of working with the principal, 22.6% of teachers work with the principal for less than 1 year, 44.8% for 1-4 years and 32.6% for 5 years or more.

Data Collection Instruments

In the current study, learning-centered leadership scale and structural empowerment of teachers scale were used as instruments.

Learning-Centered Leadership Scale (LCLS): Learning-Centered Leadership Scale developed by Liu et al. (2016) has been adapted to Turkish context by Kılınç, Bellibaş and Gümüş (2017). It consists of three sub-factors and a total of 19 items. These are *building a learning vision* (5 items), *providing learning support* (7 items) and *managing the curriculum and being a model* (7 items). The internal consistency score ranges from .88 to .91. In this study, the Cronbach Alpha score was calculated as .98 in the whole scale, .94 in the sub-factor of *building a learning vision*, .94 in the sub-factor of *providing learning support*, and .94 in the sub-factors of *managing the curriculum and being a model*.

Teachers' Structural Empowerment Scale: Developed by İlman Püsküllüoğlu and Altınkut (2017), the scale consists of five sub-factors and a total of 30 items, including 5-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree and 5 Strongly agree) and *participatory decision-making environment* (9 items), *accountable environment* (4 items), *professional development supportive environment* (4 items), *facilitative school environment* (7 items), *autonomy-supportive environment* (6 items). The Cronbach Alpha for the internal consistency range from .77 to .95. As for the current study, the Cronbach Alpha score of the scale was calculated as .97 in total, .94 for *participatory decision-making environment*, .83 for *accountable environment*, .82 for *professional development supportive environment*, .91 for *facilitative school environment* and .90 for *autonomy-supportive environment*.

Data Analysis

The scales used in data collection were delivered by hand to 480 teachers in the scope of study group, and 309 teachers provided feedbacks accordingly. In the study, 48 of the scales collected from teachers were considered invalid because of incomplete data, and 261 of the scales were evaluated. Social Sciences Statistical Package (SPSS) program was used to analyze the data. Percentage and frequencies were employed in the analysis of the data, and arithmetic mean and standard deviation values were calculated. Since the data did not show normal distribution, the correlation analysis was performed through non-parametric tests (Mann-Whitney U, Kruskal Wallis). The normality of the distribution was examined by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test in order to determine which analysis to perform on the obtained data, and it was determined that the distribution was not normal ($p < .05$). The current research was ethically approved by Social Sciences Human Research Ethical Committee of Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University in the meeting on 29.03.2021 and with the protocol number of 2021/120.

Results

Findings and Analysis on the First Sub-Problem

Teachers' views on learning-centered leadership are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Teacher views on learning-centered leadership

Scale	Sub-factors	n	$\bar{x}$	ss
Learning-centered Leadership	Building a learning vision	261	3,93	,784
	Providing learning support	261	3,58	,829
	Managing the curriculum and being a model	261	3,69	,798
	Total	261	3,71	,767

When Table 1 was examined, it was determined that teachers' views on the learning-centered leadership scale ($\bar{x}=3.71$) and in the sub-factors of building a learning vision ($\bar{x}=3.93$), providing learning support ($\bar{x}=3.58$), managing the curriculum and being a model ($\bar{x}=3.69$) were high as "Strongly Agree". This finding suggests that teachers consider that school principals exhibit learning-centered leadership behaviors at their schools.

Teachers' views on the structural empowerment are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Teachers' views on structural empowerment

Scale	Sub-factors	n	$\bar{x}$	ss
Structural empowerment of teachers	Participatory decision-making environment	261	3,88	,717
	Accountable environment	261	3,97	,696
	Professional development supportive environment	261	3,35	,836
	Facilitative school environment	261	4,01	,656
	Autonomy-supportive environment	261	4,15	,630
	Total	261	3,91	,613

When Table 2 was examined, it was observed that they reported high levels of feedback on the scale of structural empowerment of teachers as a whole ($\bar{x}=3.91$), and in the sub-factors of participatory decision-making environment ($\bar{x}=3.88$), accountable environment ($\bar{x}=3.97$), professional development supportive environment ($\bar{x}=3.35$), facilitative school environment ($\bar{x}=4.01$), autonomy-supportive environment ($\bar{x}=4.15$). This finding indicates that teachers are structurally supported and empowered at schools.

Findings and Analysis on the Second Sub-Problem

Teachers' views on learning-centered leadership depending on gender variable are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Mann Whitney-U test results on teachers' learning-centered leadership based on gender variable

Scale	Sub-factors	Gender	n	Mean	Sum of Ranks	U	p
Learning Centered Leadership	Building a learning vision	Female	133	132,67	17645,50	8289,50	,710
		Male	128	129,26	16545,50		
	Providing learning support	Female	133	133,68	17780,00	8155,00	,557
		Male	128	128,21	16411,00		
	Managing the curriculum and being a model	Female	133	134,56	17896,50	8038,50	,435
		Male	128	127,30	16294,50		
	Total	Female	133	133,69	17781,00	8154,00	,557
		Male	128	128,20	16410,00		

$p < .05$

When Table 3 is examined, gender variable was determined to have no statistically significant difference in teachers' views in the whole scale ($U=8154.00$) and in the sub-factors of building a learning vision ($U=8289.50$), providing learning support ($U=8155.00$), managing the curriculum and being a model ($U=8038.50$). This finding suggests that the gender variable does not refer a statistically significant difference in learning-centered leadership.

Teachers' views on structural empowerment based on gender variable are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Mann Whitney-U test results on structural empowerment of teachers by gender variable

Scale	Sub-factors	Gender	n	Mean	Sum of Ranks	U	p
Structural Empowerment Of the Teachers	Participatory decision-making environment	Female	133	132,37	17605,00	8330,00	,764
		Male	128	129,58	16586,00		
	Accountable environment	Female	133	131,74	17522,00	8413,00	,870
		Male	128	130,23	16669,00		
	Professional development supportive environment	Female	133	133,36	17737,50	8197,50	,604
		Male	128	128,54	16453,50		
	Facilitative school environment	Female	133	129,45	17217,50	8306,50	,735
		Male	128	132,61	16973,50		
	Autonomy- supportive environment	Female	133	133,66	17776,50	8158,50	,558
		Male	128	128,24	16414,50		
	Total	Female	133	131,49	17488,00	8447,00	,915
		Male	128	130,49	16703,00		

$p<.05$

As shown in Table 4, it was determined that the gender variable did not show a significant difference in teachers' views in the whole scale ($U=8447.00$), and in the sub-factors of participatory decision-making environment ($U=8330.00$), accountable environment ($U=8413.00$), professional development supportive environment ($U=8197.50$), facilitative school environment ($U=8306.50$), and autonomy-supportive environment ($U=8158.50$).

According to the professional seniority variable, teachers' views on learning-centered leadership are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Kruskal Wallis-H test results on teachers' views about learning-centered leadership based on professional seniority variable

Scale	Sub-factors	Professional seniority	n	Mean Rank	sd	X ²	p	Significant Difference
Learning Centered Leadership	Building a learning vision	0-5 years	23	136,33	4	3,341	,503	-
		6-10 years	32	110,55				
		11-15 years	50	127,00				
		16-20 years	65	136,29				
		21 years and above	91	135,26				
	Providing learning support	0-5 years	23	133,17	4	8,484	,075	-
		6-10 years	32	100,56				
		11-15 years	50	120,93				

	16-20 years	65	138,75					
	21 years and above	91	141,15					
Managing the curriculum and being a model	0-5 years	23	139,96					
	6-10 years	32	101,63					
	11-15 years	50	119,35					
	16-20 years	65	140,93					
	21 years and above	91	138,37	4	8,426	,077	-	
	6-10 years	32	100,23					
	11-15 years	50	122,85					
	16-20 years	65	139,34					
	21 years and above	91	139,25					p<.05

When Table 5 was examined, it was determined that the variable of professional seniority did not make a statistically significant difference in teachers' views in the overall scale ($X^2=7,861$) and the sub-factors of building a learning vision ($X^2= 3,341$), providing learning support ($X^2=8,484$), managing the curriculum and being a model ($X^2=8,426$).

Teachers' views on structural empowerment based on the professional seniority variable are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Kruskal Wallis-H test results on teachers' views on structural empowerment based on the professional seniority variable

Scale	Sub-factors	Professional seniority	n	Mean Rank	sd	X ²	Significant p	Difference
Structural Empowerment of Teachers	Participatory decision-making environment	0-5 years	23	123,30				
		6-10 years	32	108,95				
		11-15 years	50	130,52	4	3,930	,415	-
		16-20 years	65	136,35				
		21 years and above	91	137,14				
	Accountable environment	0-5 years	23	128,50				
		6-10 years	32	114,58				
		11-15 years	50	130,04	4	3,212	,523	-
		16-20 years	65	142,72				
		21 years and above	91	129,57				
	Professional development supportive environment	0-5 years	23	134,46				
		6-10 years	32	130,88				
		11-15 years	50	123,39	4	1,147	,887	-
		16-20 years	65	137,88				
		21 years and above	91	129,44				
	Facilitative school environment	0-5 years	23	108,98				
		6-10 years	32	117,25	4	4,729	,316	-
		11-15 years	50	132,99				

Autonomy-supportive environment	16-20 years	65	142,87	4	1,279	,865	-
	21 years and above	91	131,83				
	0-5 years	23	138,89				
	6-10 years	32	122,81				
	11-15 years	50	127,90				
	16-20 years	65	137,47				
	21 years and above	91	128,97				
	0-5 years	23	126,63				
	6-10 years	32	111,53				
	11-15 years	50	129,70				
Total	16-20 years	65	139,70	4	3,182	,528	-
	21 years and above	91	133,45				

$p < .05$

According to Table 6, the variable of professional seniority does not create a statistically significant difference in teachers' views on the scale of structural empowerment of teachers ($X^2=3,182$), and in the sub-factors of participatory decision-making environment ($X^2=3,930$), accountable environment ($X^2=3,212$), professional development supportive environment ($X^2=1,147$), facilitative school environment ($X^2=4,729$) and autonomy-supportive environment ($X^2=1,279$).

Teachers' views on learning-centered leadership based on the variable of years of experience at the school are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Kruskal Wallis-H test results on teachers' views on learning-centered leadership based on the variable of years of experience at the school.

Scale	Sub-factors	Years of Experience at School	n	Mean Rank	sd	X^2	p	Significant Difference
Learning Centered Leadership	Building a learning vision	0-5 years	101	129,05	3	6,865	,076	-
		6-10 years	68	123,49				
		11-15 years	50	154,67				
		16 years and above	42	119,65				
	Providing learning support	0-5 years	101	127,11	3	5,894	,117	-
		6-10 years	68	120,38				
		11-15 years	50	153,01				
		16 years and above	42	131,35				
	Managing the curriculum and being a model	0-5 years	101	130,46	3	8,193	,042	1-3* 2-3*
		6-10 years	68	114,24				
		11-15 years	50	154,29				
		16 years and above	42	131,73				
	Total	0-5 years	101	128,32	3	6,907	,075	-

6-10 years	68	118,77
11-15 years	50	154,77
16 years and above	42	128,94

$p < .05$

According to Table 7, in terms of teachers' years of experience at the school, it is observed that there is no statistically significant difference in teachers' views based on the learning-centered leadership scale ($X^2=6,907$) and the sub-factors of building a learning vision ($X^2=6,865$) and providing learning support ($X^2=5,894$). However, significant differences were found in the sub-factor of managing the curriculum and being a model ($X^2=8,193$). Mann Whitney U test was performed to find out which groups showed significant difference and the groups were compared in pairs. As a result, it was determined that there was a significant difference in favor of the teachers having between 11-15 years of experience ($U=2060,500$, $p < .05$) when compared to those having between 0-5 years of experience depending on the sub-factor of managing the curriculum and being a model, and significant difference was found in favor of teachers having between 11-15 years of experience ($U=1177,500$, $p < .05$) when compared to those having between 6-10 years of experience. As a result, it was observed that as the teachers' years of experience at the school increase, the perceptions of learning-centered leadership increase in the same way.

Teachers' views on structural empowerment depending on the variable of years of experience at the school are shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Kruskal Wallis-H test results on the teachers' views on structural empowerment based on the variable of years of experience at the school.

Scale	Sub-factors	Years of Experience at School	n	Mean Rank	sd	X^2	p	Significant Difference
Structural Empowerment of Teachers	Participatory decision-making environment	0-5 years	101	132,45	3	4,899	,179	-
		6-10 years	68	124,85				
		11-15 years	50	148,79				
		16 years and above	42	116,30				
	Accountable environment	0-5 years	101	128,28	3	6,461	,091	-
		6-10 years	68	133,24				
		11-15 years	50	150,16				
		16 years and above	42	111,11				
	Professional development supportive environment	0-5 years	101	134,92	3	2,702	,440	-
		6-10 years	68	120,56				
		11-15 years	50	141,30				
		16 years and above	42	126,21				
	Facilitative school environment	0-5 years	101	126,37	3	5,896	,117	-
		6-10 years	68	137,79				
		11-15 years	50	147,02				
		16 years and above	42	112,07				
		0-5 years	101	132,60	3	4,415	,220	-

Autonomy-supportive environment	6-10 years	68	129,95	3	3,875	,275	-
	11-15 years	50	144,91				
	16 years and above	42	112,30				
Total	0-5 years	101	130,85				
	6-10 years	68	128,85				
	11-15 years	50	146,76				
	16 years and above	42	116,10				

$p < .05$

As shown in Table 8, it could be seen that the variable of the years of experience shows no significant difference in teachers' views according to the scale of structural empowerment of teachers ($X^2=3,875$) and in the sub-factors of the participatory decision-making environment ($X^2= 4,899$), accountable environment ($X^2=6,461$), professional development supportive environment ($X^2=2,702$), facilitative school environment ($X^2=5,896$), and autonomy-supportive environment.

Teachers' views on learning-centered leadership based on the duration of working with the principal variable are shown in Table 9.

Table 9. Kruskal Wallis-H test results on teachers' views on learning-centered leadership based on duration of working with the principal variable.

Scale	Sub-factors	Duration of working with the principal	n	Sum of Ranks	sd	X^2	p	Significant Difference
Learning Centered Leadership	Building a learning vision	Less than 1 year	59	134,42	2	1,344	,511	-
		1-4 years	117	125,18				
		5 years and above	85	136,65				
	Providing learning support	Less than 1 year	59	133,55	2	2,191	,334	-
		1-4 years	117	123,71				
		5 years and above	85	139,27				
	Managing the curriculum and being a model	Less than 1 year	59	133,21	2	2,253	,324	-
		1-4 years	117	123,69				
		5 years and above	85	139,53				
	Total	Less than 1 year	59	133,92	2	2,174	,337	-
		1-4 years	117	123,65				
		5 years and above	85	139,09				

$p < .05$

When Table 9 is examined, it can be observed that there is no significant difference in teachers' views depending on the duration of working with the principal variable based on the learning-centered leadership scale ($X^2=2,174$) in the sub-factors of building a learning vision ($X^2= 1,344$), providing learning support ($X^2=2,191$), the managing the curriculums, and being a model ($X^2=2,253$).

Teachers' views on structural empowerment according to the duration of working with the principal variable are shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Kruskal Wallis-H test results on teachers' views on structural empowerment of teachers according to the duration of working with the principal variable

Scale	Sub-factors	Duration of working with the principal	n	Sum of Ranks	sd	X ²	p	Significant Difference
Structural Empowerment of Teachers	Participatory decision-making environment	Less than 1 year	59	140,13	2	2,080	,353	-
		1-4 years	117	123,92				
		5 years and above	85	134,41				
	Accountable Environment	Less than 1 year	59	134,71	2	,399	,819	-
		1-4 years	117	127,86				
		5 years and above	85	132,75				
	Professional development supportive environment	Less than 1 year	59	138,68	2	1,542	,463	-
		1-4 years	117	124,87				
		5 years and above	85	134,11				
	Facilitative school environment	Less than 1 year	59	128,53	2	3,095	,213	-
		1-4 years	117	123,91				
		5 years and above	85	142,47				
	Autonomy-supportive environment	Less than 1 year	59	133,76	2	,429	,807	-
		1-4 years	117	127,64				
		5 years and above	85	133,71				
	Total	Less than 1 year	59	138,96	2	2,846	,241	-
		1-4 years	117	122,28				
		5 years and above	85	137,48				

p<.05

As Table 10 shows, there is no significant difference in teachers' views depending on the duration of working with the principal variable according to the structural empowerment of teachers ($X^2=2,846$) and in the sub-factors of the participatory decision-making environment ($X^2= 2,080$), accountable environment ($X^2=.399$), professional development supportive environment ($X^2=1,542$), facilitative school environment ($X^2=3,095$) and autonomy-supportive environment ($X^2=429$).

Findings and Analysis on the Third Sub-Problem

Table 11 includes correlation analysis to determine the relationship between learning-centered leadership and structural empowerment of teachers.

Table 11. Correlation analysis table for determining the relationship between learning-centered leadership and structural empowerment of teachers

			Building a learning vision	Providing learning support	Managing the curriculum and being a model	Learning Centered Leadership Scale Total
The Scale of Structural	Participatory decision-making environment	r	,625	,686	,642	,691
		P	,000	,000	,000	,000
	Accountable Environment	r	,636	,605	,597	,642
		p	,000	,000	,000	,000
	Professional development	r	,609	,735	,671	,718
		p	,000	,000	,000	,000

supportive environment					
Facilitative school	r	,676	,596	,590	,648
environment	p	,000	,000	,000	,000
Autonomy-	r	,546	,485	,485	,527
supportive environment	p	,000	,000	,000	,000
Total	r	,709	,723	,690	,749
	p	,000	,000	,000	,000

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

As shown in the table, a significant, positive and important correlation was found between the learning-centered leadership scale and the scale of structural empowerment of teachers ($r=.749$; $p=.000$). It was also seen that the relation between scales and sub-factors was significant, moderate and positive. The highest connection was observed between the supporting of professional development and the sub-factors of providing learning support which was positively high ($r=.735$; $p=.000$), and the lowest level of connection was observed between autonomy-supportive environment and the sub-factors of providing learning support and managing the curriculums and being a model ($r=.485$; $p=.000$) which was positively moderate.

Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

According to the findings, teachers have a high level of views on learning-centered leadership. Learning-centered leadership enables school principals to contribute actively to in-class learning teaching practices, as well as to improve and support teachers' professional learning processes; it is very important for teachers to be provided with opportunities to learn in an interactive way with their colleagues (Kılıç et al., 2017). Since schools are educational institutions that require continuous learning, the fact that school principals create visions for learning and provide learning support to teachers will contribute to teachers' quality teaching activities and improve student success. The result of the current study on learning-centered leadership is similar to Polat's (2020) research in the literature.

The results also showed that teachers had a high level of views on the structural support. On the other hand, very different results were identified when the literature was reviewed. While the findings of the current study are in line with the results of Arabacı's (2019) study, in another study, Duman (2018) has obtained moderately high and moderately low results in some sub-factors, and Altınkurt, Türkkaş-Anasız and Ekinci (2016) has found at moderate levels. In the qualitative study conducted by Umar and Özer (2019), teachers stated that they did not receive full support from the school principals. The reason that the current study reveals different results from other studies can be caused by the increase in the number of school administrators' trainings of teachers professional development and studies' different participant groups.

It has been very important that school administrators adopt change and creativity, and empower teachers structurally to be compatible with the change and innovations by 21st century and to carry out the innovations and changes in their schools (Yıldız & Ertürk, 2019). The school principals are now expected to demonstrate a management style enabling teachers' participation in the decision and which is facilitative, accountable, supporting the professional development of teachers and providing teachers with an autonomous working environment. All these factors will contribute to the quality of activities at schools by ensuring that teachers are structurally empowered. The teachers who participate in decision-making processes will be more willing to adopt and implement the decisions quickly. When teachers are able to express their opinions, they become more willing and efficient in implementing them (Ertürk, 2020). In institutions where participation in the decision-making processes is supported, the quality, creativity, acceptability, clarity, evaluation and accuracy of the decision increase and provide more benefits than an individual decision (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2013). In accountable school environments, school principals should be able to aware

of their own responsibilities, provide shareholders with clear information on the issues required, and answer questions concerning the school. By means of being accountable managers, they develop good relationships with teachers and gain their trust. Good relations and trust between administrators and teachers can contribute to the formation of a healthy institutional climate at schools (Kalman & Gedikoğlu, 2014). In the institutions where empowerment of teachers is achieved by providing them necessary support and cooperation, the feelings such as the sense of work, influence, self-confidence, determination, perseverance and competence develop better (McCarthy, 2004). Facilitating leadership behaviors which empower employees at both the school and classroom has significantly positive effects on the quality of education, academic achievements of the students, the job satisfaction of teachers, organizational commitment and productivity levels (Marks & Louis, 1997). In order to be beneficial to students, teachers are required to have certain level of proficiency (Seferoğlu, 2004). For teachers to reach a certain level of competence and be aware of innovations, professional support of school principals and other colleagues are required as well as their teacher's own efforts.

A school environment that promotes autonomy contributes to the empowerment of teachers and increases student success by making them more effective in educational practices. Therefore, teachers should be offered the opportunity to use new methods and techniques, to consider the needs of their students, to make their own decisions in teaching and to implement these decisions, to make choices about the order of working environments related to the conduct of professional activities, and to be included in the management. Teachers' role in program development, participation in school administration and their activeness in the decisions making processes should be increased in order to contribute to the improvement of educational environments. Student success and the quality of education can be improved by providing teachers with the opportunity of autonomy in the preparation of curriculums, determining the methods and techniques to be applied, and providing them with autonomy in the selection of materials (Ertürk, 2020). Consequently, positive outcomes could be developed for students, teachers, administrators and schools with structural empowerment of teachers.

While there is no significant difference in teachers' views on learning-centered leadership in terms of gender, professional seniority, and duration of working with the principal, it differs in the sub-factor of managing the curriculum and being a model based on the years of experience. This difference is in favor of the teachers having between 11-15 years of experience when compared to those having between 0-5 years of experience and in favor of the teachers having between 11-15 years of experience when compared to those having between 6-10 years of experience. It is determined in the literature that while there is no difference between the teachers' views on learning-centered leadership and its sub-factors of depending on the gender and years of experience at the school variables, there are differences in teachers' opinions depending on the professional seniority variables according to Polat's study (2020).

Teachers' views on structural empowerment does not show significant difference in terms of gender, professional seniority, years of experience at the school and duration of working with the principal. On the one hand, there are a number of studies in the literature suggesting that gender variable does not make a difference in teachers' views on the structural empowerment and supporting the results of this research (İhtiyaroğlu, 2017; Taş, 2017; Altınkurt, Türkkaş-Anasız & Ekinci, 2016; Odabaş, 2014); on the other hand, there are some studies suggesting different results. Additionally, while a variety of studies in the literature support the results of this research depending on the professional seniority variable (Özaslan, 2018; İhtiyaroğlu, 2017; Taş, 2017; Altınkurt, Türkkaş-Anasız & Ekinci, 2016; Mete, 2014); there are also other studies with different results (Uygur & Arabacı, 2019; Duman, 2018). These significances can be caused by the differences in the number of participants of studies. Another reason of the significances can be that some school administrators are more successful in empowering teachers, and teachers' different demands and needs of empowerment, as

a result of that the school administrators working in the locations of the studies have different professional development.

Previous studies has suggested that there is no significant difference in teachers' views on structural empowerment depending on the years of experience at the school (Taş, 2017; Altınkurt, Türkkaş-Anasız, Ekinci, 2016). On the contrary, Duman (2018) has concluded that there are some differences between teachers' views on structural empowerment depending on the years of experience at the school.

A significant, positive and high correlation was found between the teacher-centered leadership scale and the scale of structural empowerment of teachers. It is obvious that the relation between the scales and sub-factors are also significant and positive at mostly moderate level. Since learning-centered leadership is the process by which the principal participates, supports and manages teacher learning in order to empower teachers' professional development, increase student success and improve the school (Liu et al., 2016), it is usual to observe a significant, positive and high level of correlation between learning-centered leadership and structural empowerment of teachers. Accordingly, the learning process, which is the basis of learning-centered leadership, plays an important role in empowering teachers. Since the main goal of learning-centered leadership is to improve the professional knowledge of school leaders and ultimately to guide, manage, support and participate in teacher learning in order to improve student learning and the effectiveness of the school (Liu et al., 2016), supporting the professional development of teachers by school principals, acting as role models for teachers and ensuring their learning will contribute to their structural empowering.

The highest level of correlation is positive and high among the sub-factors of professional development supportive environment and providing learning support. The lowest-level of correlation was found between the autonomy-supportive environment and the sub-factors of providing learning support and managing the curriculums and becoming models. This indicates that having learning-centered leaders at schools will make teachers more empowered because the goal of learning-centered leaders is to support and guide teachers, students and all staff for their professional development, including themselves. Polat (2020) has concluded that there are statistically significant relationships between teacher professionalism and learning-centered leadership in a positive and moderate level. Bakan, Doğan, Koçdemir and Oğuz (2018) have suggested that learned strength have a positive effect on learning-centered leadership.

As sub-factors of learning-centered leadership are analyzed, it is seen that the factors such as building a vision of learning, developing a school-wide learning vision and helping the teachers set professional goals individually, providing learning support, supply the teachers with the necessary resources and coordination to achieve their learning goals, managing the curriculum, guiding teachers to realize their professional learning, designing a development program, tracking the process, encouraging the teachers and being a model refer to the struggle of the school principal to influence the teachers by their desire for learning (Kılıç et al., 2017). Therefore, it is inevitable to observe moderate and positive relationships between learning-centered leadership and structural empowerment of teachers. Besides, the learning support provided to the teachers can be considered to have an important role in empowering teachers by helping and guiding teachers to set individual professional goals. Koçel (2010) emphasizes that sharing, training, cooperation and teamwork are significant for the empowerment of employees which is related to learning centered leadership.

When the literature is reviewed, it is seen that the issue of structural empowering of teachers is associated with many variables. In the studies, it has been determined that there is a moderate positive relationship between personnel empowering and organizational trust (Uygur & Arabacı, 2019). It has been observed that teachers' perceptions on the level of structural empowering at the schools shows negative, low or moderate correlation with organizational cynicism, (Özaslan, 2018), and that structural empowering is the significant precursor of teachers' autonomy behavior (Yorulmaz, Çolak & Çiçek-Sağlam, 2018). Moreover, it has been concluded that there is a positive and significant relationship between empowering leadership and

structural and psychological empowering (Gedik, 2017), and a positive and significant relationship between teachers' structural and psychological perceptions and external and internal motivation levels (İhtiyaroğlu, 2017). It has also been identified that there is a connection between behavioral empowerment of teachers and leadership characters (Taş, 2017); psychological and structural empowerment of teachers is the precursor of organizational citizenship behavior (Altinkurt, Türkkân-Anasız & Ekici, 2016). Also, it has emerged that there is a connection between structural empowering and organizational commitment, but psychological empowering does not play a mediator role in this relationship (Odabaş, 2014). Besides, it has been found that there is a strong interaction between structural empowering and workplace discourtesy. (Polatçı & Özçalık, 2013), and a moderate positive correlation between teachers' behavioral empowerment and organizational dedication (Ertürk, 2021).

In line with the results of the study, the following recommendations were determined:

1. Due to the positive and high-level relationship between learning-centered leadership and structural empowerment of teachers, school administrators should create a learning vision at school, provide the teachers with learning support, and be role-models for teachers by taking an active role in the management of the curriculum since the structural empowering of teachers will also increase along with the learning-centered leadership behaviors of school administrators.
2. Further studies related to learning-centered leadership and structural empowerment can be conducted with different methods, study groups, and school levels.

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