

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MANAGERS' LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ACCORDING TO EMPLOYEE OPINION

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### ABSTRACT

Leadership characteristics of managers are important for the organisation to achieve its goals and to provide competitive advantage. The employees of the organisation become individuals who benefit the organisation by following the path shown by their leaders and believing in them. Another important factor in achieving the aims and objectives of the organisation is the efficient and effective management of human resources. Therefore, leadership characteristics of managers play an important role in the management of human resources. In this study, it is aimed to examine the importance of managers' leadership characteristics in human resources management according to the views of employees. In line with the research purpose, the research was conducted with the participation of 18 employees in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The data of the study conducted with qualitative methods were collected with a semi-structured interview form. The data obtained were analysed with content analysis method. As a result of the research, it is seen that the employees indicate participative leadership characteristics such as motivating, role-playing among the leadership characteristics that managers are expected to have. In addition, it was concluded that human resources management should be supportive, fair and egalitarian in the light of these leadership characteristics.

**Keywords:** Human resources, Leadership, Employee, North Cyprus

### INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly changing and accelerating business world, organisations can only achieve their goals by effectively and accurately directing their existing staff. Therefore, leaders need to clarify ways to achieve employee goals.

There is a need for a leader who can influence the attitudes of employees, respond to their needs and requirements, and maintain the working environment and working conditions required by employees or organisations. In this direction, a leader can be anyone who influences the behaviour of others, is a symbol of the success of the society, has different skills and qualities from others, is the head of the organisation or is adopted as a leader by others. Human resources are the determining factor to achieve the goals and objectives set by the leader and to provide competitive advantage over competitors (De Grip & Sieben, 2005; Bayraktaroğlu, 2008).

Leaders are those who most effectively manage the available human resources and tend to easily attract them to effective and efficient actions by speaking words that speak to the spirit of the community they lead. In this context, leaders mainly fulfil human resource management functions. When human resource management and leadership work on the same issue, the existing potential will be used more, and the organization will be able to move itself to a level far superior to other organisations (Pazarbaş, 2012). Moreover, combining the leadership qualities of the human resources managers of the organisation is another issue that will positively affect the management culture of the organisation.

The aim of the research is to examine the concept and scope of leadership and human resources management correctly and to examine the relationship between these concepts in detail. The research aims to reveal the importance of managers' leadership characteristics in human resources management according to the views of the employees.

### Human Resources Management and Planning

When enterprises develop in a planned manner in a certain sequence and order, they need many necessary resources. Undoubtedly, human resources are the most important of these needs. The human resources of a company on its international platform and, in short, its development and growth play an important role in the success of the company. Therefore, if a business wants to increase its competitive advantage, it should increase the importance it attaches to human resources and ensure that it is understood and used correctly.

The concept of human resources refers to human resources, which is one of the resources that an organisation must use to achieve its goals and which covers all personnel in the organisation, from the most unskilled employees to senior management. Although this concept includes the workforce of the organisation, it also refers to the workforce that exists outside the organisation and can benefit from it. It can be said that human resources management is the

general task and work of ensuring that the law is managed effectively in accordance with the interests of the organization, the person, and the environment in all kinds of organisations and environmental areas (Doğan, 2010). Although human resource management is widely referred to in the literature, the most important thing is that it has become a management perspective in today's modern business world. With this change, human resource management can be interpreted as a mechanism with technical details that refers to all philosophies, policies, methods, and practices related to the management and guidance of employees in the enterprise (Arıgün 2018).

When describing human resources; the facts show that organisations need to use people at the highest level to manage and achieve their own goals, while treating people as assets, they must have feasible policies to ensure and satisfy their private and professional development, practice, and satisfaction (Çakı, 2017). Human resource management is the process of recruiting, training, evaluating, and satisfying employees and participating in labour relations, health, safety and justice issues (Karta, 2018).

### Human Resources and Leadership

The human resource management function and the leader's efficiency combine an intertwined process. Today, the meaning has changed and the expanding scope of "human resource management" continues to be used as a field of practice to assess the establishment of an employment relationship with one party and changes in the other party's organisational structure and employment relationship (especially technical aspects). It then analyses changes in human resource management functions (Solaklar 2003).

The essence of employee leadership is to have high motivation and to be able to point in the right direction. The responsibility of the leader is to make decisions and take the dangers they face while making these decisions (Uğuz 2018). There are some technical and psychological difficulties in the decisions that leaders need to take and put into practice, questioning the appropriateness, talking about accurate predictions, spending a certain period in the implementation phase, and unplanned expenditures that make the leader a leader, and the reason is to show that it is not easy to achieve for everyone.

In addition, trust is an important factor in providing support and demonstrating communication leadership. The manager is the person in charge of human resources, it reveals the importance of leadership in human resources, it is an individual's leadership quality and its relationship with management functions and rules. The leader is responsible for completing the work correctly to increase productivity and completing the right work correctly to increase productivity (Baruch & Lavi-Steiner, 2015).

- 1- What are the views of the participants on the tasks and competences of the organisation towards human resources management?
- 2- What are the opinions of the participants about the approaches to the employees within the scope of the human resources management tasks of the enterprise?
- 3- What are the opinions of the participants about the approaches to support the employees within the scope of the tasks of the organisation for human resources management?
- 4- What are the leadership qualities that managers should have?"
- 5- What are the observations of managers regarding leadership practices?

### METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted with interview technique and document analysis techniques, which are qualitative research methods. Qualitative research methods are research conducted by using qualitative data collection methods to present events and perceptions in a holistic and realistic way in their natural and routine environments (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011). In the interviews with the participants, the structured interview technique, which is one of the interview techniques, was used. While determining the study group, purposeful sampling approach, one of the non-selective sampling methods, was used. In the study, the participants were included in the research with typical sampling, which is one of the purposeful sampling methods. Glesne (2011) states that a typical case sampling can be used in the study to determine what the normal conditions are. Eighteen business employees voluntarily participated in the study group. To protect the confidentiality of the participants' identities, codes such as P1, P2 and P3 were used instead of the participants' real names. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the participants.

**Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the research participants**

	<b>n</b>	<b>f</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Woman	5	%28
Male	13	%72
<b>Age</b>		
20-29 years old	7	%39
30-39 years	5	%28
40-49 years	4	%22
50 and above	2	%11
<b>Working Years</b>		
1-5 years	8	%45
5-10 years	4	%22
Over 10 years	6	%33
<b>Education Level</b>		
High School	8	%45
Undergraduate	9	%50
Master's Degree	1	%5

## FINDINGS

### Duties and Competences of the Organisation for Human Resources Management

The research participants were asked the question "What are the participants' views on the duties and competences of the organisation towards human resources management?" and their answers are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Participant views on the duties and competences of the human resources unit of the organisation**

Theme	Participant Views	
	N	%
Staff recruitment	7	40
Assignment of tasks	5	28
Meeting needs	3	16
Social security	3	16
Total	18	100

The research participants were asked about the duties and competences of the human resources unit in their enterprises. In this direction, participant responses were categorised under 4 themes. These are recruitment of personnel (n6), distribution of tasks (n5), meeting the needs (n3) and social security (n3).

*"The main task of human resources in the workplace is to recruit personnel and to distribute the duties of the employees." P2*

*"The human resources department provides our social security and plays a role in recruiting qualified personnel for the job." P3*

*"It decides who will do what and hires staff by opening vacancies for the required departments. It also ensures that our leave, advance payments or other needs are met." P6*

Like the research findings, recent studies have expressed the duties and responsibilities of the human resources unit as the management of the process of recruiting new personnel, meeting the needs of employees, and distribution of duties and responsibilities (Adam, 2020; Sarwary et al., 2022; Sharma, 2023). It is predicted that the similarity of the research findings stems from the fact that the basic process of managing human resources is similar regardless of the business or organisation.

### **Managers' Approaches to Employees within the Scope of Their Duties to Human Resources Management**

Employees of the enterprises were asked about their views on the approaches to the employees within the scope of the human resources management duties of the enterprise, and the answers of the participants are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Participant views on HRM approaches to employees.**

Theme	Participant Views N	%
Resolving conflicts	9	45
Understanding	7	35
Autocrat	3	15
Not enough	1	5
Total	20	100

Within the scope of the research, when the participants were asked about their organisations' approaches to the employees, their answers were grouped under 4 themes. The emerging expressions are resolving conflicts (n4), understanding (n4), authoritarian (n2), not enough (n1). Participant expressions are as follows:

*"I think it is not sufficient, it is only bureaucratic." P5*

*"They endeavour to solve the problems and conflicts between employees or between managers and employees. It ensures that these conflicts are not reflected on the work." P15*

*"He is authoritarian due to his work and responsibilities. He adheres to the rules for the correct progress of the work. However, he always shows understanding behaviour towards our problems or needs." P10*

Although many studies in the field of human resources examine the effects of digitalisation, studies reveal that these technological developments do not change the perspectives of human resources. Collins (2021) revealed in his research that managers have positive views on what is expected from human resource management and the functioning of human resources in this direction. Research results reveal that the human resources department is adequate in fulfilling its responsibilities and that the HR department acts as a bridge between employees and the organisation (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021; Lengnick-Hall & Lengnick-Hall, 2002; Dirani et al., 2020).

### **Approaches of the Human Resources Unit to Support the Employee**

The question "What are the views of the participants on the approaches to support the employees within the scope of the human resources management duties of the organisation?" was asked to the participants and the answers obtained are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4. Participant views on approaches to support the employee**

Theme	Participant Views	
	N	%
Job orientated training	13	72
Open to ideas	5	28
Total	18	100

Regarding the support of human resources to the employees, the employees of the enterprises gave the expressions of job-related training (n8) and openness to ideas (n3). The statements of the participants are as follows:

*"Trainings are provided for the machines and equipment to be used" P4*

*"We are constantly given trainings, and this helps us to develop professionally, and our management is open to ideas. They listen to us, and we work together to take our organisation further" P9*

*"In order to do our job better, our business is constantly developing by following technological developments and customer needs. In this direction, trainings and information are provided for our development." P12*

In the research data, it was concluded that human resources provide job-oriented trainings to support the development of employees and are open to other ideas. It is seen that sustainability, which we discuss in every field today, and in this context, it is important for businesses to prepare their employees for the conditions of the day to provide competitive advantage. This research is like many studies in the literature in terms of supporting employees and making the business sustainable (Darmawan et al., 2020; Azizi et al., 2021; Saputra & Mahaputra, 2022; Paille et al., 2020).

### Leadership Characteristics of Managers

**Table 5. Participants' views on the leadership characteristics that managers should possess.**

Theme	Participant Views	
	N	%
Democratic	10	29
Empathy	2	6
Must be a leader	10	29
Fair	6	17
Participatory and Guiding	3	9
Respectful	1	2
Problem solver	1	2
Tolerant	2	6
Total	34	100

The answers given by the participants to the question "What are the leadership characteristics that your manager should have?" are as shown in Table 5. The answers given by the participants are grouped under five themes: democratic (n10), empathy (n2), leader (n10), fair (n6), participatory and guiding (n3), respectful (n1), problem solver (n1) and tolerance (n2). The opinions of the participants are as follows:

*"The manager must be a leader. He/she should be a person who is open to changes, has high persuasion skills, is intelligent, has a strong social aspect, can take responsibility and take initiative in the face of developing events." P2*

*"Determination, consistency, being able to stand at an equal distance to everyone, providing a peaceful working environment for all employees, developing opportunities and ensuring co-operation with all employees and the immediate environment in order to achieve all goals in line with the vision and mission of the enterprise, continuously improving oneself in terms of human relations" P5*

*"It should be protective, supportive and united." P16*

*"He should be a leader and motivate his employees by showing goodwill and motivating them to work. He should adopt the "we" spirit. They should listen, guide and act together." P13*

In the results of the research, according to the views of the participants, it was determined that the leadership characteristics that managers should have been mostly participative leader characteristics that reveal positive attitudes. In the research conducted, it is seen that employees are expected to have fair, participatory, just, and empathising leadership characteristics among the leadership characteristics that managers should have (Bulturbayevich & Ikromjonovich, 2021; Piwowar-Sulej & Iqbal, 2023).

### Leadership Practices of Managers

The research participants were asked the question "What are your observations about your manager's leadership practices?" and the themes formed according to the views of the participants on positive leadership practices are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6. Participants' views on the leadership practices of administrators**

Theme	Participant Views	
	N	%
Motivating	7	25
Teamwork	5	18
Acting in the interests of the business	3	11
Open to criticism and new ideas	3	11
Democratic	3	11
Having a vision	3	11
Recognising problems and taking precautions	2	7
Self-righteousness	1	3
Guiding the way	1	3
Total	28	100

Regarding the leadership practices of the managers, the participants expressed the following opinions: motivating (n7), teamwork (n5), acting in line with the interests of the enterprise (n3), open to criticism and new ideas (n3), democratic (n3), visionary (n3), seeing problems and taking measures (n2), not seeing oneself as superior (n1), guiding (n1).

In line with the opinions of the research participants, it was determined that the leadership practices of the managers were mostly motivating and directing teamwork. The results of the studies in the literature are similar to the literature (Nugroho et al., 2020; Rivaldo, 2021).

### CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Today, no matter how many opportunities businesses have, they will not be successful in their sector if they cannot convince their employees to move towards the same goal. An enterprise can only achieve the right management style when it has good managers and human resources. Therefore, it plays an important role that the managers of the business have leadership attitudes and skills.

When the research participants were asked about the duties and competences of the human resources unit in their enterprises, it is seen that these duties and competences are mostly defined by bureaucratic progress. It has been determined that the participants are of the opinion that human resources recruit personnel, distribute tasks, meet their needs, and provide social security. Within the scope of the research, when the participants were asked about the approach of their enterprises to the labour force, the expressions of solving conflicts, understanding, authoritarian, and not sufficient were used. In line with the opinion of most of the participants, it is seen that human resources managers have certain leadership characteristics.

In this direction, when the studies carried out to support the employees are examined, it is thought that organising job-related trainings and being open to the ideas of the employees support that they have leadership skills. In line with the findings of the research, it is suggested that the human resources department should give importance to motivation studies in addition to the work done and related performance evaluation practices should be put forward.

When the leadership qualities that administrators should possess were analysed, it was found that democratic, empathising, fair, being a leader, being participatory and guiding, and being tolerant came to the fore. Subsequently, when the participants were asked about their views on the leadership practices of the managers, it was determined that most of them responded motivation and teamwork. Acting in the interests of the business, being open to criticism and

new ideas, being democratic and visionary, and taking precautions to group problems in advance are among the opinions expressed.

In line with the findings of the research, it is suggested that the human resources department should give importance to motivation studies in addition to the work done and performance evaluation practices should be put forward accordingly. It is recommended that in-service training and development programmes should be provided for the development of managers, especially in cases where leadership characteristics should be taken into consideration in the appointments to be made in the enterprises.

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