

Metaphorical perceptions of sports management students in Turkey with regard to “leadership” notion

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the metaphorical perceptions of sports management students in Turkey with regard to “leadership” notion. In the study, qualitative research method was used. The study group of the research was composed of 90 people studying at a Sports Management Department in a Faculty of Sports Sciences in 2020-2021 academic year in Turkey. In order to determine the metaphorical perceptions of prospective sports managers with regard to leadership Notion, the study required the participants to complete the sentence “Leadership is like... because...”. The descriptive analysis method was used for the analysis of the data. The analysis showed that metaphorical descriptions made by the participants with regard to leadership were composed of the themes of ‘providing guidance’, ‘influencing people’, ‘uniting people’ and ‘setting people in motion’. It was found that the most common metaphorical perception of participants with regard to leadership notion was ‘providing guidance’, followed by ‘influencing people’. It was also seen that the least common metaphorical perceptions of participants with regard to leadership were related to the themes of ‘setting people in motion’ and ‘uniting people’.

Keywords: Leadership, leadership education, metaphor.

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INTRODUCTION

Leadership has been important since ancient times and has gained different meanings according to the arising conditions from time to time (Donuk, 2007; Güner, 2019; Yukl, 2018). Leadership is one of the terms commonly used in many areas of human activity such as business, politics, armed forces, religion, sports, etc (Silva, 2016). Stogdill (1950) defines leadership as the process of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts toward goal setting and goal achievement. According to Katz and Kahn (1978), leadership is an influential increment over and above compliance with routine directives of the organization. According to Yetim (1996), leadership is the ability to convince individuals to achieve and realize the set goals in the desired manner. According to Öztaş (1996), leadership is the process of influencing and leading the way of people who got together with certain goals in order to help them carry out their activities towards a common goal. According to

Winston and Patterson (2006), leadership is the process of influencing followers to willingly put in a spiritual, emotional, and physical effort in order to achieve the organizational mission and objectives. Gibson et al. (2009) define leadership as an attempt at using the influence to motivate people towards the achievement of a certain goal. According to Robbins and Coulter (2012), leadership is the process of influencing and leading a group to achieve group objectives.

A general review of literature on the concept of leadership has revealed that Bennis (1959) studied the leadership theory while Yukl (2018) studied leadership within organizations. Fulmer (1997), Avolio (1999), Day (2000), Augustin (2003), and McCleskey (2014) carried out studies on leadership development. Hogg (2001) studied the social identity theory of leadership while Balkundi and Kilduff (2005) approached leadership as a social network. In their studies, Winston and Patterson

(2006) made a definition of leadership while Spears (2010) put emphasis on leadership traits. Essa and Alattari (2019) studied leadership styles while Parry (2008) and Clouse et al. (2013) studied leadership metaphors.

A review of the literature shows that the definitions of the leadership notion describe leadership as the ability to unite individuals towards a certain goal, to guide the audience towards set goals, to influence and set people in motion (Aykan, 2004; Bakan, 2008; Bakan et al., 2004; Burns, 1978; Cemaloğlu, 2007; Çetin, 2008; Diker, 2017; Dirik et al., 2017; Eren, 2013; Ergun, 1981; Ergun and Polatoğlu, 1984; Essa and Alattari, 2019; Güney, 2007; Karakaya and Reyhanoğlu, 2020; Karaküçük, 1997; Koçel, 2018; Lussier and Achua, 2007; Malik et al., 2014; Munir and Iqbal, 2018; Özcan et al., 2012; Özçer, 1988; Qaralleh, 2020; Serinkan, 2012; Tannenbaum and Schmidt, 2009; Yılmaz and Ceylan, 2011; Zel, 2011).

Some leadership approaches have emerged as a result of various definitions made to describe the leadership notion. A review of studies conducted up to now has revealed that some researchers have focused on trait theory (Alberto, 2015; Bass, 1990; Ekvall and Arvonen, 1991; Hitt et al., 2007; Khan et al., 2016; Tead, 1929; Yukl, 2018; Zaccaro et al., 2004), behavioral theory (Bass, 1990; Deniz and Hasançebioğlu, 2003; Gibson, et al., 2009; Howell and Costley, 2001; Khan and Nawaz, 2016; Pfeffer, 1977; Scott, 1977; Yukl, 2018) and situational theory (Alberto, 2015; Canbaş, 2004; Greenleaf, 1977; Khan and Nawaz, 2016; Langton and Robbins, 2007; Vroom and Yetton, 1973) in their studies. The review has also revealed that some researchers have also studied contemporary (modern) approaches in addition to the aforementioned theories (Doruk, 2012; Işık, 2014; Tengilimoğlu, 2005; Uzun, 2005; Yılmaz, 2006; Yörük et al., 2011). These approaches bring forward the question "Is leadership innate or acquired?" The answer to the question is in the leadership training. According to Tortop et al. (2010), today, training is the only way to close the gap between the qualities a leader already has and the qualities the organization looks for in a leader. Training is of utmost importance to bring the qualities that will allow organizations to improve human resources, increase efficiency and contribute to the country. According to Dardeniz (2007), what makes a leader is the ability to learn most of the leadership skills. Leadership training is a dynamic process that can be positively or negatively affected by certain factors. Personality traits and behaviors of the trainer, social and cultural backgrounds of the participants are some of the factors that can affect the outcomes of the training. Çelik (2016) considers leadership a skill that can be taught and improved after completing the necessary training. Due to the increasing socio-economic problems, a need for student leadership training has arisen. Just as with the adult leadership training, communication, planning, problem-solving and decision making are the necessary

components of the student leadership training.

The studies have put forth that there are certain traits leaders need to possess (Bayındır, 2018; Ekenci and İmamoğlu, 2002; Ergezer, 2003; Görkem, 2008; Sabuncuoğlu and Tüz, 1998). Sağlam (2014) argues that leaders need to have more knowledge, talents and traits compared to the other individuals in the group. According to Başer (2009), trustworthiness is the primary trait of leadership. Besides, a leader should be able to provide a solution to the problems that may arise, have advanced communication skills, and be able to empathize in order to meet the needs of the audience. According to Hughes (2009), leadership essentially involves trust that has been gained through ethical and transparent practices. When necessary, leaders take some risks, reject the status quo and step in to take responsibility. In practice, such behavior requires good strategical thinking, interpersonal communication skills and emotional intelligence.

The aforementioned opinions have shown that the leadership notion creates different associations in each individual and therefore everyone has different metaphorical perceptions with regard to the leadership notion (Kaya, 2021; Memişoğlu and Yılmaz, 2019; Yıldız and Ertürk, 2019). While the term 'metaphor' means a figure of speech or an expression that describes things or people by showing their similarity to another thing, there are also other definitions of the term (Koç, 2014). Metaphor has been described as mental tools that can help explain and perceive a notion, subject, phenomenon or a word with a new perspective (Aydın, 2006; Eraslan, 2011; Türkan, 2019). Palmer and Lundberg (1995) argue that metaphors are an important way of conveying the symbolic meanings within cultural values. It is a way of expressing an opinion, an object, or an action by comparing it with another situation with a word or a phrase.

A review of studies has shown that various studies on leadership metaphors have been carried out. Edmonstone (2016) studied the leadership metaphors in healthcare services in his study titled leadership metaphors. The leadership metaphors categorized under three major themes included terms such as advance, arrows and domino effect. Argyropoulou and Hatira (2014) studied the metaphors related to the leadership notion under the categories such as animals, landscape, human beings and roads. This study shows that participants have used various animals, landscapes, human beings and roads for the metaphors with regard to the leadership notion. The content analysis of the metaphors of leadership done by Clouse et al., (2013) provided seven categories which are people, nature, animals, transportation, objects, guidance and creativity.

A review of literature has shown that metaphorical perception studies related to the leadership notion have been carried out, but a metaphorical perception of prospective sports managers with regard to the leadership notion has not been studied yet. This study

aims to determine whether prospective sports managers can comprehend leadership traits such as setting in motion, providing guidance, uniting and motivating by analyzing their perceptions with regard to leadership notion and ultimately make suggestions to improve the leadership skills of prospective managers. This study aims to analyze the metaphorical perceptions of sports management students in Turkey with regard to the “leadership” notion. Considering the fact that prospective sports managers are to become managers in the future, it is thought that learning what leadership means for a prospective sports manager will contribute to their professional competency by improving the leadership skills of individuals who will shape the future of sports.

METHODOLOGY

Research model

Since this study aims to present the existing situation, it is of descriptive nature. Descriptive analysis methods were used in order to analyze and interpret the data collected through research. Accordingly, prospective sports managers were asked to conceptualize their thoughts about the “leadership” notion.

Study group

The study group is composed of 90 people studying at Turkey Manisa Celal Bayar University, Faculty of Sports Sciences in the 2020-2021 academic year. A total of 35 women and 55 men between the ages of 18 and 43 participated in the study. The class levels of the participants are 1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year, 4th year or suspended. The branches of sports participants are involved in are categorized as individual and team sports. The participants were asked whether they had taken leadership courses or not. The participants who had taken leadership courses were asked which institution (public, private or both) they had received such training from.

Data collection tools

This study required the prospective sports managers to fill in a personal information form and to complete the sentence “Leadership is like..... because.....” in order to determine their metaphorical perceptions with regard to the leadership notion. The personal information form asked participants their age, gender, branch of sports, class levels, whether they had received leadership training before and the name of the institution they had received such training at. Data have been collected online through Google Forms.

Data analysis

The “descriptive analysis” method was used for the analysis of the data. The descriptive analysis method makes it possible to analyze the data in a comprehensible manner, to draw conclusions by deeply studying cause-effect relations and to interpret the findings. (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008). Demographical information of the participants was analyzed by using SPSS 22 software package. The figurative language used by participants was analyzed from a metaphorical point of view. Each metaphor used by participants was categorized under the appropriate theme. Special attention was paid to ensure the use of the themes that can reflect the meaning and ideas participants convey in the best way possible.

FINDINGS

Personal information of participants of the study has been given in Table 1. The average age of participants is 23.35 ± 4.14 . 38.9% of individuals participating in the study are women while 61.1% of participants are men. The class levels of the participants are as follows: 10.0% of participants are 1st year students, 16.7% are 2nd year students, 10.0% are 3rd year students, 44.4% are 4th year students, and 18.9% are suspended students. It can be seen that 53.3% of participants are involved in individual sports while 46.6% do team sports. It has also been found that 68.9% of participants have taken leadership courses while 31.1% of them haven't taken such a course. Data related to those who have taken leadership courses has revealed that 57.8% of participants have taken the course at a public institution, 4.4% have taken it at a private institution while 6.7% have taken the course at both institutions. It was observed that the participants taking leadership courses from public institutions were university students and took the classes within a formal education system. These courses are given for one semester according to the curriculum. Leadership courses in private institutions are different in each institution. Institutions offer leadership courses according to the lesson plan they prepare.

Table 2 shows metaphor categories of participants. It can be seen that the metaphors of participants have been put under 12 categories. The most frequent metaphors made by 90 participants are; ‘captain (3)’ in the jobs category, ‘sun (5)’ in the nature category, ‘power (8)’ in the abstract terms category, ‘lighthouse (2)’ in the buildings category, ‘compass (3) and ‘arrow’ in the objects category, ‘steering wheel (2)’ in the transportation category. (Figure 1)

Table 3 shows the findings regarding the themes and metaphorical descriptions of participants. It was determined that the participants' views consisted of the themes of ‘providing guidance to people’, ‘influencing

Table 1. Demographic profile of participants.

Variables	Groups	Number	%	Total	\bar{x}	S	Min.	Max.
Age		90	100	90	23.35	4.14	18	43
Gender	Female	35	38.9	90				
	Male	55	61.1					
Class level	1st Year	9	10.0	90				
	2nd Year	15	16.7					
	3rd Year	9	10.0					
	4th Year	40	44.4					
	Suspended	17	18.9					
Branch of Sports	Individual Sport	48	53.3	90				
	Team Sport	42	46.7					
Taking leadership courses	Yes	62	68.9	90				
	No	28	31.1					
Institution where the course has been taken	Public Institution	52	57.8	62				
	Private Institution	4	4.4					
	Both	6	6.7					

Table 2. Metaphorical categories of participants with regard to the leadership notion.

“Leadership is like.....”			
Category	Metaphor	Number of metaphors	Metaphor frequency
Jobs	Captain (K16, K79, K87), Coach (K20), Teacher (K33, K84), Commander (K41, K64), Guide (K82),	5	9
Nature	Sun (K26, K61, K77, K86, K89), Moss on the tree bark (K21), Cliff (K24), Seawater (K40), Pole star (K43), Wind (K66), Fire (K51), Peak (K56)	8	12
Animals	Chameleon (K4), Stork (K19), Queen bee (K65), Ant (K73)	4	4
Human Beings	Child (K1), Parent (K27), Father (K54), Mother (K85), Hero (K8), Woman (K32), Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (K58), Problem solver (K60),	8	8
Abstract Terms	Religion (K5), Power (K7, K11, K25, K53, K57, K67, K71, K83), Intelligence (K9, K36), Being functional (K13), Goal (K14), Justice (K23), Time (K30), Innovative (K37), Motivation (38), Management (K63), Wisdom (K69), Life (K81), Music (K31)	13	21
Constructions	Lighthouse (K2, K49), Building (39), Column of a building (44), Road (K55), Step (K88),	5	6
Objects	Compass (K3, K17, K29), Book (K6, K76), Magnet (K12), Handbook (K15), Black box (K42), Arrow (K46, K59, K80), Light (K48), Bracelet (K52), Map (K62, K68), Domino (K70), Shoes (K74),	11	17
Physical Activities	Physical conditioning (K10), Running (K28), Job completion (K78),	3	3
Education	School (K45),	1	1
Food and Drinks	Water (K22), Tea (K47),	2	2
Organ	Brain (K72, K90)	1	2
Transportation	Navigation (K18), Steering wheel (K34, K50), Vehicle (K35), Locomotive (K75),	4	5
Total		65	90



Figure 1. Metaphorical categories of participants with regard to the leadership notion.

Table 3. Themes of metaphorical descriptions of participants with regard to the leadership notion.

Theme	Metaphor names	Number of participants
Providing Guidance	Lighthouse (K2, K49), Compass (K3, K17, K29), Religion (K5), Handbook (K15), Captain (K16), Navigation (K18), Stork (K19), Moss on the tree bark (K21), Justice (K23), Parent (K27), Coach (K20), Book (K6), Power (K11, K53, K67), Magnet (K12), Sun (K26, K61, K77, K89), Steering wheel (K34, K50), Vehicle (K35), Commander (K41), Pole star (K43), School (K45), Arrow (K46, K59, K80), Lighting the way (K48), Fire (K51), Father (K54), Road (K55), Map reading (K68), Job completion (K78), Guide (K82), Brain (K90)	40
Influencing People	Child (K1), Chameleon (K4), Hero (K8), Intelligence (K9), Time (K30), Music (K31), Teacher (K33, K84), Innovative (K37), Black box (K42), Bracelet (K52), Peak (K56), Power (K57, K71, K83), Management (K63), Wisdom (K69), Domino (K70), Brain (K72), Captain (K79, K87), Sun (K86)	22
Setting People in Motion	Being Functional (K13), Peak (K14), Cliff (K24), Power (K25), Running (K28), Woman (K32), Intelligence (K36), Motivation (K38), Tea (K47), Map (K62), Commander (K64), Wind (K66), Ant (K73), Shoes (K74), Locomotive (K75), Life (K81), Step (K88)	17
Uniting People	Power (K7), Physical conditioning (K10), Water (K22), Building construction (K39), Seawater (K40), Building columns (K44), Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (K58), Problem solver (K60), Queen bee (K65), Book (K76), Mother (K85)	11
Total		90

people', 'uniting people' and 'setting people in motion'. The views of some participants regarding these themes are as follows:

Lighthouse: "helps me find the right way" (K2), *Compass*: "guides us towards improvement" (K3), *Book*: "a new thing awaits you in every page and you improve yourself

as you go through them" (K6), *Power*: "gathers the whole team and unity makes strength" (K7), *Magnet*: "discovers people, attracts them and brings out the good in them" (K12), *Handbook*: "clearly states the things to be done in order to be successful and you can look through the handbook (get help from the leader) and do your job right" (K15), *Captain*: "helps us find the way in the high seas" (K16), *Stork*: "like the leader of a flock of migratory storks, shows direction" (K19), *Coach*: "is the person who guides and motivates us. That's why coaches have all the leadership traits" (K20), *Water*: "is as essential as water in order to survive and exist in the society" (K22), *Justice*: "teaches me to be fair" (K23), *Parent*: "cares about people's problems, values them and lead their way" (K27), *Music*: "is motivating" (K31), *Vehicle*: "when necessary it can be used correctly and in the right way and helps me" (K35), *Intelligence*: "the better you use it, the quicker you can reach your goal" (K36), *Building construction*: "the foundation of the building forms the leadership. The leadership in the foundation supports the rest of the building" (K39), *Sea water*: "washes the dirt to the shore and keeps the clean water within" (K40), *Pole star*: "helps find the way" (K43), *School*: "feels tedious while studying, but you understand that it leads your way when you feel that you have received the training" (K45), *Fire*: "helps us find our way in the dark" (K51), *Father*: "Fathers always show the right path, watch over and protect their children" (K54), *Arrow*: "Helps me make progress towards a goal while staying the course" (K59), *Map*: "takes me to my destination" (K62), *Domino*: "the movement of the first domino affects all the other dominoes" (K70), *Life*: "you have difficulties and learn to overcome them while also gaining experience by contributing to your self-improvement and learning about life's struggles" (K81), *Sun*: "if you work with the right leader in the right way, you can shine like a star. If you work with the right leader in the wrong way, you will fade away before your star rises. Wrong leader burns you either way, you will burn down" (K86), *Step*: "always takes you forward" (K88).

DISCUSSION

Findings of the study conducted in order to analyze the metaphorical perceptions of prospective sports managers with regard to leadership notion reveal that metaphorical descriptions of participants with regard to leadership notion consist of the themes 'providing guidance', 'influencing people', 'uniting people', and 'setting people in motion' (Figure 2).

Providing guidance to people

When the leadership metaphors of the participants are analyzed, lighthouse, compass, religion, handbook, captain, navigation, stork, moss on the tree bark, justice,

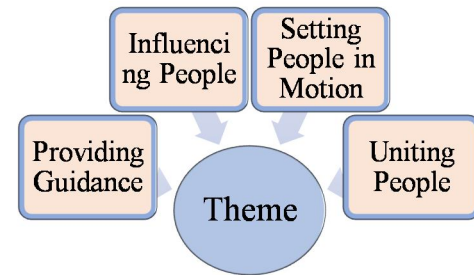


Figure 2. Themes of metaphorical descriptions of participants with regard to the leadership notion.

parent, coach, book, power, magnet, sun, steering wheel, vehicle, commander, pole star, high school, arrow, lighting the way, fire, father, road, map reading, job completion, guide and brain metaphors have been observed. As a result, the theme of "providing guidance" has been created.

A review of the literature shows that leadership has been defined as guiding people's activities with a certain aim, in order to achieve the set goals (Aykan, 2004; Bakan, 2008; Bennis and Nanus, 1997; Cemaloğlu, 2007; Essa and Alattari, 2019; Hemphill and Coons, 1957; Koçel, 2018; Prentice, 1961; Serinkan, 2012; Tannenbaum and Schmidt, 2009). When the metaphors related to the leadership notion in this study are analyzed, it is clear that the metaphors are mostly gathered around the theme of providing guidance to people. When the metaphors related to the theme of providing guidance to people are analyzed, it is clear that the "sun" metaphor is the most frequently used one, followed by "compass", "power" and "arrow" metaphors. In the study conducted by Yıldız and Ertürk (2019) in order to determine teachers' opinions on manager and leader notions, the category "leader is someone who guides/leads the way" was created. This category defined leadership with the brain, compass, steering wheel, sun, pole star, lighthouse and navigation metaphors. The metaphors created in the study conducted by Kaya (2021) to determine the perceptions of school managers with regard to the leadership notion are grouped under 13 categories. When the metaphors under "leader is someone who leads the way/guides" category are analyzed, it can be seen that father, lighthouse steering wheel, parent, sun, handbook, pole star, compass and guide metaphors have been used. In the study conducted by Memişoğlu and Yılmaz (2019) on metaphorical perceptions of instructors at faculties of education related to the leader and leadership notions, 29 metaphors and 3 categories were created. It was seen that road, lighthouse and guide metaphors were used under "taking the lead/ leading the way" category. Similarly, the study conducted by Parry (2008) on leadership and metaphors treats leadership as captain and training under the category of guiding people. Considering the results of the

studies, it is possible to say that leading and guiding people is one of the traits of leadership.

Influencing people

A total of 18 metaphors have been created by 22 participants under this category where there are statements about leadership and influencing people. These metaphors are child, chameleon, hero, intelligence, time, music, teacher, innovative, black box, bracelet, peak, power, management, wisdom, domino, brain, captain and sun. When metaphors regarding the leadership notion are analyzed, it is seen that the theme of influencing people is frequently observed besides the theme of providing guidance.

In some studies, the leadership notion is defined as the process of influencing the opinions, behaviors, activities and efforts of people in order to achieve set goals (Çetin, 2008; Daft and Marcic, 2009; Dirik et al., 2017; Gibson et al., 2009; House et al., 1996; Karakaya and Reyhanoğlu, 2020; Lussier and Achua, 2007; Malik et al., 2014; Munir and Iqbal, 2018; Özcan et al., 2012; Özçer, 1988; Rauch and Behling, 1984; Robbins and Coulter, 2012; Rost, 1993; Silva, 2016; Stogdill, 1950; Winston and Patterson, 2006). This study has revealed that “power”, “teacher” and “captain” metaphors are respectively the most frequent metaphors under the theme of influencing people. The study conducted by Kaya (2021) includes wave, earthquake, wind and superhero metaphors under the category “Leader is influential”. The participants in this study, on the other hand, expressed the influential aspect of leadership with the metaphor “hero” as well as intelligence, time, music and bracelet metaphors. In the study conducted by Hacifazlıoğlu et al. (2011) to determine the perceptions of school managers with regard to technology leadership, the chameleon metaphor was used. It was said that the chameleon metaphor was used because school managers need to be “farsighted, fast and venturesome” in order to keep up with the changes and innovations. In this study, the chameleon metaphor is placed under the “influencing people” category. It has been said that leadership requires changes in accordance with the conditions and needs to influence people in this direction. Consequently, it can be said that leadership has a significant influence on people’s behavior.

Setting people in motion

An analysis of the leadership metaphors of participants reveals that being functional, peak, cliff, power, running, woman, intelligence, motivation, tea, map, commander, wind, ant, shoes, locomotive, life and step metaphors are used. As a result, the theme “setting people in motion” has been formed.

In some previous studies, leadership was defined as the art of bringing people together to achieve a certain goal and setting the audience in motion towards this goal (Bakan et al., 2004; Burns, 1978; Eren, 2013; Ergun, 1981; Ergun and Polatoğlu, 1984; Güney, 2007; Karaküçük, 1997; Kotter, 1988; Yukl, 2018; Qaralleh, 2020). It has been observed that the participants of the study defined the leadership notion with different metaphors. In the study conducted by Demirçelik et al. (2017) to analyze the leadership skills of gifted students, 68 metaphors were used. “Brainpower”, “respect”, “self-confidence” and “power” metaphors were used under the category of “behavioral traits”. The “Power” metaphor in this study, however, is under the theme of setting people in motion. It has been observed that leadership is said to be important in setting people in motion. “Ant”, “locomotive” and “commander” metaphors under the theme “setting people in motion” were also used in the study conducted by Çobanoğlu and Gökalp (2015) to determine the metaphorical perceptions of prospective teachers with regard to school managers. As the metaphors used for the leadership notion are also used for the school management, it can be said that the two have similar aspects. As a result, it can be said that a leader should be someone who influences the opinions and behaviors of people and groups and sets them in motion in order to achieve a goal after bringing them together with a certain goal.

Uniting people

Under this category where there are statements about leadership uniting people, a total of 11 metaphors have been created by 11 participants. These metaphors are power, physical conditioning, water, building construction, seawater, building columns, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, problem solver, queen bee, book and mother. When metaphorical definitions and themes regarding the leadership notion made by the participants were analyzed, it was observed that among the themes “providing guidance”, “influencing”, “setting in motion” and “uniting”, the least frequently used one is the theme of “uniting people”. It was also observed that the participants of the study described the leadership notion with different metaphors. A literature review also revealed that the leadership notion was mostly defined as a process of providing guidance and influencing people.

Some definitions regarding the leadership notion describe leadership as the ability to bring people together around a certain aim and goal (Bass, 1990; Cemaloğlu, 2007; Diker, 2017; Eren, 2013; Yılmaz and Ceylan, 2011; Zel, 2011). There are 15 metaphors related to the leadership notion under the category “Leader unites and unifies” formed in the study conducted by Yıldız and Ertürk (2019) Queen and book metaphors show similarity to those of this study. Also, there are 20 metaphors

related to the management notion under the category “manager unites”. Therefore, it is possible to say that even though the metaphors are different, the themes of what the participants mean to say are similar. In the study conducted by Zembat et al. (2015) in order to determine the perceptions of prospective preschool teachers with regard to the school management notion, the category “unifying” was formed. There are 9 metaphors under this category including “mother” and “book cover”. According to these studies, it is possible to state that leaders are people who unite and unify people with different goals within an organization around a common goal.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Ultimately, the demographic profile of the participants of this study shows that there are a total of 90 participants, of whom 35 are women and 55 are men. The average age of the participants is 23.35. Also, 68.9% of participants have taken leadership courses and 57.8% of participants have taken the course at a public institution. It was observed that the participants taking leadership courses from public institutions were university students and took the classes for one semester within a formal education system according to the curriculum. Leadership courses in private institutions are different in each institution and it was observed that these institutions offer leadership courses according to the lesson plan they prepare. It has been observed that the metaphor categories of participants with regard to the leadership notion are grouped under 12 categories, which are jobs, nature, animals, human beings, abstract terms, construction, objects, physical activities, education, food and drinks, organ and transportation. It is seen that 90 participants have created 66 different metaphors. When the number and frequency of metaphors are analyzed, it is also seen that metaphors are most frequently seen under the category “abstract terms”. It is seen that the metaphorical definitions of participants related with the leadership notion consist of the themes ‘providing guidance’, ‘influencing people’, ‘uniting people’, and ‘setting people in motion’. It was found that the most common metaphorical perception of participants with regard to leadership notion was ‘providing guidance’, followed by ‘influencing people’. A review of previous studies on leadership shows that leadership is mostly defined as a process of providing guidance and influencing people. It was also seen that the least common metaphorical perceptions of participants with regard to leadership were related to the themes of ‘setting people in motion’ and ‘uniting people’. It was observed that the majority of the participants who did not receive any leadership training have described the leadership notion with metaphors under the “providing guidance” category. On the other hand, it was observed that the participants who have received leadership

training described leadership with other themes. Therefore, it can be concluded that the participants who have received leadership training interpret the leadership notion from a different perspective, and it can be said that providing guidance is not the only leadership trait. In this regard, it is suggested that students sports managers receive training that will improve and bring out their leadership traits, which are providing guidance, influencing, uniting, and setting people in motion. The students that will receive leadership training should be taught that effective leadership is only possible through continuous self-improvement and therefore they should always improve and adapt themselves (Hart and Waisman, 2005). Thus, the students will develop leadership qualities such as providing guidance, influencing, uniting and setting in motion while also learning that they need to improve themselves. Accordingly, it is important that the number of institutions offering leadership training increases and the courses in such institutions tackle the leadership notion not only from one perspective but in various aspects.

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