EVALUATING THE REALIZATION LEVEL OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP ROLE IN ASPECTS OF SOME VARIABLES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to determine how and to what extent the primary teachers perform their roles of instructional leadership. In order to carry out the research, the opinions of the primary school teachers were obtained and analyzed in terms of the following instructional leadership subscales; 'Controlling the Curriculum and Teaching Process', 'Stating and Sharing the Aims of Subjects', 'Supporting and Improving Students', 'Evaluating the Students and the Teaching Process' and 'Creating A Regular Teaching–Learning Environment'. In addition to this, the suggestions were made to education partners about what they should do in this sense. The study has a quantitative research design and used descriptive survey model. The population of the study consists of the primary school teachers teaching at schools in Şanliurfa province and its towns in Turkey during 2013-2014 academic year. The sample of the research is selected by using basic random sampling and stratified technique and it is consisted of 793 primary school teachers and 66 primary schools. The data were collected by using "Primary School Teachers' Instructional Leadership Behaviors" scale adapted from Şişman (1996). The finding indicates that there is a meaningful difference in views of primary school teachers regarding the instructional subscales. The most effective instructional subscale teachers display is 'Evaluating the Students and Teaching Process'. The least effective subscale they display is Supporting and Improving Students and Stating and Sharing the Aims of Subjects.

Keywords: Instructional Leadership, Primary School Teacher, Primary School

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1. Introduction

Instructional leadership is generally defined as the management of curriculum and instruction by a school principal. However, some researchers have recently expanded the concept of instructional leadership to include not only principals, but also other school staff such as teachers, vice-principals etc. (Marks and Printy, 2003). In order to maximize student learning, teachers must assume roles of leadership and take on more responsibility for school-wide change (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Muijs & Harris, 2003). Similir to ınstruction leadersship, teacher leadership has been advanced as an essential component of successful school reform and the professionalization of teachers (Lieberman, Saxl & Miles, 2000). Troen and Boles (1994) characterize teacher leadership as a collaborative effort in which teachers develop expertise and promote professional development to improve instruction to all students. Instead of a pat definition of instructional ledaership, explaining what instructional leaders do is more effective. As Murphy (1988) emphasized that Instructional leaders develop misisons and goals, manage the instructional program, promote a positive academic learning climate. What instructional leaders do is a task for teachers as well. Teachers are supposed to do activities mentioned above in the school and classroom effectively.

Huber (2004) sees leadership as a mediator which has the authority to develop and empower teachers in the quest of school effectiveness. This approach gives a significant mission to leadership in terms of school effectiveness. As a consequance of this, it is possible to say that Successful leaders affects students achievement and educational provisions and environment positively (Harris, 2004; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000) and successful leaders have an indirect, influence on the quality of educational provision and the achievement of students (Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010). Instructional leaders usually aim to school improvement having a strong goal orientation (Hallinger, 2003).

There are four strategies that instructional leaders use to increase student achievement: the first one is to provide provision of resources to attain learning goals, the second one is provide provision of strategies and skills to achieve better teaching practice, opportunities for professional development, and assessment for school performance related to instruction, the third is to promote discussion among school members about school vision, goals, and culture for successful learning, and the last is to show up through face-to-face interaction as well as through informal exchanges in day-to-day activities Andrew, Bascom, and Bascom, 1991; Hallinger, 2000). Similirly, Childs-Bowen, Moller and Scrivner (2000) propose that "teachers are leaders when they function in professional learning communities to affect student learning; contribute to school improvement; inspire excellence in practice; and empower stakeholders to participate in educational improvement" (p. 28). Moreover, Gabriel (2005) describes teacher leaders as "those who influence school culture, build and maintain a successful team, and equip other potential teacher leaders to improve student achievement". Briefly, what instructional leaders are assumed to do are almost same as what teacher leaders are asumed to do. These are actions all teachers also should perform during learning and teaching process.

Obviously, there is a knowledge gap in relation to what specific leader behaviors and types of leadership are most likely to support student development. In light of the above, instructional leadership is the focus of attention in this article.

The purpose of this study was shed light on instructional leadership including teacher leadership applications and instructional leadership level of Primary school teacher in public schools in Turkey. The aim was to gather information about the following questions:

1. How do primary school teachers view their instructional leadership role?
2. Is there a significant difference in the views of primary school teachers in terms of gender, teaching experience, and educational status and marital status variables regarding to realization level of instructional leadership roles?

2. Theoretical Context

School principals cannot be the only leaders in a school. The pervasive view of the principal as the sole instructional leader in school is inadequate and increasingly difficult given the current demands for accountability and student learning results (Marsh, 2000; Pellicer & Anderson, 1995; Smylie, Conley & Marks, 2002).

In the beginning, it was assumed that instructional leadership was the sole responsibility of the principal. However, recent research has a more inclusive focus, acknowledging that the responsibility for instructional leadership should be shared by principals and other professional staff

(Robinson et al., 2008 cited in Börkur & Steinunn 2015). Fullan, (2007) and Honig (2012) assert that one indication of instructional leadership is a supportive and encouraging work environment which enhance the development of teaching practices that are thought to increase improved academic performance. In such environments, teachers are more responsible than principals and teachers assume the role of developing academic performance of students. The studies have found that teacher leaders take part in schoolwide decision- mentor teachers, develop curriculum, facilitate professional growth of teachers, participate in action research, foster more collaborative working arrangements and influence school change (Hart, 1995; Paulu & Winters, 1998; Fessler & Ungaretti, 1994; Gabriel, 2005; Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001; Smylie & Denny, 1990; Ash & Persall, 2000; Blase & Anderson, 1995; Day & Harris, 2002).

Most of the researches related to instructional leadership in Turkey were carried out with the participant of school administrators. (Gümüşeli,1996; Aksoy,2006; İnceler,2005; Şişman, 1997; Saygınar, 2006; Arslan, 2009; Sağır, 2011; Yılmaz, 2010; Akdağ, 2009; İnandı & Özkan, 2006; Akgün, 2001; Buyrukçu, 2007, Coşar,. ,2010; Göçen, 2013). This research in this sense is a unique one. In the reserch of Hansen, Jóhannsson, and Lárusdóttir (2008) the principals were aske on what task they spend their time, they replied that they spend most of their time onschool management, such as on tasks involving finance, operations, and office administration. In the resersch it is also emphasised that the leading area where principals would ideally like to spend their time has consistently been curriculum work, such as tasks related to curriculum development, teaching methods, educational materials, and similar tasks. This can be viewed as an indicator of professional matters not only for principals, as well as for teacher leaders. Based on the discussion above, leadership that supports teaching and learning can be exercised by principals and teacher leaders. It has already been established that research on instructional leadership including teachers especially primary school teachers in Turkey is limited.

What this research highlight is that the leadership role of teachers is extensive, complicated, and in need of continuous review. They moreover indicate that teachers are expected to spend considerable time on projects related to teaching, learning, and how to be an effective instructional leader in the class and in the school.It is important that teachers spend as much time as possible on professional matters, those matters are tied to the core of school operations, namely teaching and learning effectively.

3.   Methods

3.1 Context for the Study

The purpose of this study was to shed light on instructional leadership in Turkish primary schools. The aim was to gather information about the realisation level of primary school teachers' instructional leadership role

3.2 Sample of Schools

The research was conducted during the 2013 -2014 academic year in Şanlıurfa. A total of 739 teachers from 66 primary schools in various districts of Şanlıurfa province were chosen randomlay. During this time, the total primary school teacher population in Şanlıurfa province was 42,930 in 175 compulsory schools. The sample is therefore approximately 17% of the total teacher population in schools in the province at the time.,

3.3 Analysis of Data

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In analyysing the data obtained via measurement instrument, a paired sample t-test was used to find the difference, if any, between total scores obtained by the primary school teachers from sub-scale of İnstructıınal leadership scale. To find whether the participants'opinion differ in terms of gender, marital statue variables, an independent t-test was used. An ANOVA test was used to find whether their views regarding instructional leadership differs in terms of teaching experience and educational statue (Büyüköztürk, 2010; Hopkins, Glass,& Hopkins, 1987).

To detect the differences found between the groups Bonferni bartlett test was used. Moreover, descriptive statistics are obtained regarding independent variables and obtained scores.

Tablo 1 Socio-demografic Characteristics of primary school teachers

The number of the participants and their gender		
Gender	f	%
Female	335	42,2
Male	458	57,8
Total	793	100,0
Teaching Experince		
1-5 years	288	36,3
6-10 years	338	42,6
11-15 years	110	13,9
16-20 years	43	5,4
21-25 years	9	1,1
26 years and over	5	0,6
Educational status		
Graguated from Teacher College	1	0,1
Graduated from Vocational High school (2 years program)	10	1,3
Graduated from University (4 years Program	54	6,8
Graduated from School of Education	725	91,4
Others institution	3	0,4
Marital Status		
Married	543	68,5
single	250	31,5

When Examining table1 , according to the findings obtained in the research. 42.2% of the classroom teachers are female and 57.8 %   are male.   36.3%' of teachers have "1-5 years teaching experience", 42. 6 % has "6-10 years teaching experience",   13.9% has "11-15 years teaching experience" , 5.5% has "16-20 years" ,1.2 % has "21-25 years", 0.5% has more than 25 years experience.

 0,1 , % of teachers graduated from "Teacher College", 1.3, % graduated from" Vocational High School", 6.8 % graduated from"University", 9.4 % graduated from "School of Education", 0.4, % graduated from "others institution".

 68.5, % of teachers are married and 31.5% are single. The number of married teachers are higer than sinlge teachers.

4. Data Collection and Measures

Data collection took place in the fall of 2013, and during the first half of 2014. A quantitative approach was used to collect data from teachers concerning the scope and nature of instructional leadership in their work life. Participants included Primary school teachers, Statistical data analysis was carried out using Excel and SPSS 19.0. The items of the scale (50 items) were as statements on a five-point Likert scale ranging from never (1) to mostly (7), with statement (3) as neutral. The resercher handed out the scale, meeting teachers personally to assure accurate and prompt data collection. Participation in this study was voluntary. The scale was administered in a manner to protect individual confidentiality. In this research, evidence gathered from teachers provided valuable information about their perceptions of the scope and nature of instructional leadership in their behaviors and attituteds.

Five factors were identified from the results of the exploratory factor analysis of the adapted version of the scale. The adapted version internal consistency coefficients of the inventory for the total of the items was .952 and for each factor scale the range was from r=.79 to r=.90.

Table 2 The alpha values of Instructional Leadership Sub-scale

Instructional Leadership Sub-scale	The number of Items	Cronbach AlphaValue
Instructional Leadership Scale	50	0.952
Identifying and sharing the course objectives	10	0.900
The management of The Curriculum and Teaching Process	10	0.871
Teaching Process and Evaluating Students	10	0.863
Supporting and Improving Students	10	0.791
Creating a regular learning and teaching environment	10	0.889

As for the reliability of the scale, the alpha values of the items in different subscales we estimated respectively as follows: .90 for 10 items in *Identifying and sharing the course objectives* sub- scale. .87 for 10 items in *The management of The Curriculum and Teaching Process* sub-scale, .86 for 10 items in *Teaching Process and Evaluating Students* sub-scales. .79 for 10 items in *Supporting and Improving Students* sub-scale. .88 for 10 items in *Creating a regular learning and teaching environment* sub-scale. These values indicate that the sub-scales of the scale reveal adequate values in terms of internal consistency.

5. Instrument

Data was collected by an instructional leadership scale produced by Şişman (2006. The original scale was prepared for school principals. "Instructional Leadership Behaviors of School Principlas". The items of survey was adapted to teachers. All the statement in the survey were rewritten with help of 3 experts in education, and then, the draft of adapted survey was applied to 45 teachers. 10 teachers were interviewed about the clarity of items. Later, the final version was created. This final version was implemented to teachers in the research. Very little is known about instructional leadership in Turkish schools and the role of teachers in that context. The study is primarily

descriptive in nature, carried out to collect and summarize information (Punch, 2006) in order to shed light on the scope and nature of instructional leadership in the 66 Turkish schools.

The analysis was guided by the research questions. The scale data were analysed using an SPSS program. The arithmetic means and standard deviation scores were computed for each subscale and overall questionnaire. To understand whether the groups scores are distributed normally, first, Shapiro-Wilk normality test was applied to each subgroup. It was observed that the scores of each subgroup has the normality assumption. Therefore, it was decided to apply parametric test. T-test was was conducted to determine whether there was a significant between the mean scores of male and females, single and married primary school teachers'views. In addition one-way ANOVA test , Bonferroni ve Dunnett were employed to reveal whether the mean scores differ acording to teaching experince and education statues. For all statistical tests the level of significance was set at $p<0.05$. The data obtained from the administration of the scale was rested for their applicability for factor analysis. As obtsained, KMO (Kaiser-Meyer Olkin) sample appropriateness value was found .95; this value is bigger than the minimum .60 value suggested by Pallat (2001), the result of Bartlett test (Bartlett's test of Shhericity:17104,159; sd:1225; p<.000) was significant- the data were concluded to be applicable for factor analysis. Basic components factor analysis (coupled with Varimax Rotation) resulted in distribution of 50 items into scale of five factors. Based on interpretational analysis of the items in the first factor, this factor was named as "**Identifying and sharing the course objectives" subscale. The example items for "Identifying and sharing the course objectives" are "**I explain the main objectives of the course to the students" and "I lead all students to share the objectives of the course" the maximum possible score from first facrtor sub-csale is 50, while minimum possible score is 10. Based on interpretational analysis of the items in the 2nd factor, this factor was named as **"The management of The Curriculum and Teaching Process" sub-scale. Example items for 2nd factor are "**I prepare the monthly work plan of the courses related to the academic studies" and I Consider the students ' needs and expectations in the work plan". the maximum possible score from first facrtor sub-csale is 50, while minimum possible score is 10. Based on interpretational analysis of the items in the 3rd factor, this factor was labeled as" **Teaching Process and Evaluating Students" sub-scale. Example items for 3rd factor are "**I Interviews with class teachers and subject teachers to discuss the students' achievement." and "I Interviews with class teachers and subject teachers to discuss the students' achievement." the maximum possible score from first facrtor sub-csale is 50, while minimum possible score is 10. Based on interpretational analysis of the items in the 4rd factor, this factor was named as Supporting and Improving Students". **Example items for 4th factor are "**I encourage students to show the performance at top level" and I praise students for their outstanding efforts and acheivement.". the maximum possible score from first facrtor sub-csale is 50, while minimum possible score is 10. Based on interpretational analysis of the items in the 5th factor, this factor was named as " **Creating a regular learning and teaching environment" sub-scale. Example items for 5th factor are "**I support students to do their responsibilities better" and "I take into account the views of students". the maximum possible score from first facrtor sub-csale is 50, while minimum possible score is 10.

6. Findings and Commends

Findinds related to research problems:

     a. *How do primary school teachers view their instructional leadership role?*

         Table 3 Findings related to Instructional leadership and its subscales

Instructional Leadership Sub-scale	The number of Items	$\bar{\bar{X}}$
Instructional Leadership Scale	50	3, 933
Identifying and sharing the course objectives	10	3, 974
The management of The Curriculum and Teaching Process	10	4, 000
Teaching Process and Evaluating Students	10	4, 119
Supporting and Improving Students	10	3, 518
Creating a regular learning and teaching environment	10	4, 057

In Table 3, examining teachers views aboutI Istructional Leadership behaviors and subscales, teachers perform instructional leadership at "almost" level, ($\bar{\bar{X}}$= 3, 933). Regarding the subscales, the least instructional leadership behavior teachers perform is supporting and Improving Students subscale ($\bar{\bar{X}}$= 3,518), the maximum instructional leadership behavior theachers perform is Teaching Process and Evaluating Students subscale ($\bar{\bar{X}}$=4,119)

b. *Is there a meaningful difference in the views of primary school teachers in terms of gender, teaching experience, and educational statues and marital statu variables regarding to realization level of instructional leadership roles?*

In order to answer this question, analysis of variance (one-way ANOVA) and t-test, Bonferroni ve Dunnett were used to draw inferences about differences between the means of two or more groups. For all statistical tests the level of significance was set at $p⬚0.05$.

i. *Findings related to Gender*

T-test was conducted in order to understand if there is a meaningful difference in the perspective of primary school teachers about relization level of instructional leadership roles according to teachers' gender variable.

Table 4 T-test

Instructional leadership Subscales	Variables	Number of participants N	The arithmetic means n $\bar{\bar{X}}$	*Standard deviation* SS	Levene's Test		t-test		
					F	Sig	t	df	p
Identifying and sharing the course objectives	Male	458	3,9537	0,51850	0,65	0,799	-1,285	712,972	0,199
	Female	335	4,0021	0,52719					
The management of The	Male	458	4,0197	0,4716	2,243	0,13	1,418	673,40	0,157

Curriculum and Teaching Process				5		5	0	
	Female	335	3,9684	0,52485				
Teaching Process and Evaluating Students	Male	458	4,0777	0,51700	0,545	0,461	-2,767	731,975	0,006 *
	Female	335	4,1788	0,50137					
Supporting and Improving Students	Male	458	3,5098	0,57475	0,511	0,475	-0,484	697,846	0,629
	Female	335	3,5304	0,60544					
Creating a regular learning and teaching environment	Male	458	4,0557	0,50894	0,683	0,409	-0,004	707,553	0,997
	Female	335	4,0558	0,52417					

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

Examining Table 4, Regarding Gender variable, there is not a significant difference berween primary school teachers realated to**" Identifying and sharing the course Objectives"** subscale (t= -1,285, p=0,199, p>,05), " **The management of The Curriculum and Teaching Process" dimension** (t= 1,418, p=0,157, p >,05)., "**Supporting and Improving Students"**, subscale (t= -0,484, p=0,629, p >,05) ," **Creating a regular learning and teaching environment**" (t= -0,004, p=0,997, p >,05). However, there is a significant difference between primary school teachers' views related to **Teaching Process and Evaluating Students** subscale, (t= -2,767, p=0,006, p< ,05). Female primary school teachers realize **Teaching Process and Evaluating Students** subscale of Instructional leadership (X = 4,1788), more than male teachers (X = 4,0777).

   ii. Findings related to Teaching experience
One-way ANOVA Test was used in order to understand if there is a meaningful difference in the perspective of primary school teachers about relization level of instructional leadership roles according to teaching experience variable. Regarding teaching experience variable, there is a meaningful difference between primary school teachers'view realated to **" Identifying and sharing the course Objectives" subscales (**p=0,034), p < ,05)., Teachers 'views differenciates about **Identifying and sharing the course Objectives** subscale, in order to understand the difference

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betweengroups, bonferroni test was used. After applying Bonferroni, a significant difference was found among 1-5,   levels. Theachers who have 20-25 years experince think differently from other teachers (P= 0,245).

In "**The management of The Curriculum and Teaching Process"** subscale, teachers' views differnciates among groups. Teachers who have 1-3 years experience think different than the other groups.

In "Teaching Process and Evaluating Students" subscale (P=0,023), teachers' views differenciates among groups. After applying Bonferroni, a significant difference was not found among variables.

In "Supporting and Improving Students" subscale   p= 0,000.), teachers' views differenciates among groups. After applying Bonferroni, a significant difference was found among 1-3, 1-5, 2-5 levels

In "**Creating a regular learning and teaching environment"** subscale p= 0,005* teachers' views differenciates among groups. After applying Bonferroni, a meaning ful difference was found among 1-5, levels

iii. Findings related to Education Status

One-way ANOVA Test was used in order to understand if there is a significant difference in the perspective of primary school teachers about relization level of instructional leadership roles according to educational statu variable. According to ANOVA results, Regarding education statu variable, there is a significant difference between primary school teachers'view realated to the management of the Curriculum and Teaching Process only (P=0,034*).

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001

iv. Findings related to Marital status

Considering marital status, and the results of T-Test, there is a meaningful difference between married anf single teachers' views related to subscales of instructional leadership relationship, The management of The Curriculum and Teaching Process (p=0,009), Supporting and Improving Students (p=0,038*), Creating a regular learning and teaching environment, (p=0,037*), Married teachers states that they realise instructional leadership behaviors much more than single teachers according to self rated ratio.

7. Conclusions

This article explored teachers' instructional leadership behaviors in primary schools in Turkey. The data was based on the views of teachers concerning instructional leadership role. The data collection was delimited to describing the views of teachers in 66 schools. Accordingly, it is important to consider this limitation when interpreting the findings.

The study reveals that there are clear indications of considerable instructional leadership that takes place in Turkish primary schools. The data also indicates to improve teaching and learning, the level of teachers' instructional leadership and teacher leaders behavours within and beyond the classroom are significant. The resercher see this as the most important implication of the study. The researcher moreover suggests that it would enhance the development teaching and learning if the teacher shows more instructional leadership behaviors. Finally, it is suggested that school administrators and National Education Ministery take definite steps toward supporting teachers by providing professional development programs where they can enhance their leadership skills. In the research the following solid results were obtained:

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a. Analysis revealed that, as teachers perform the roles of instructional leadership, the most effective instructional dimension/subscale they display is '**"Teaching Process and Evaluating Students"** ($\overline{\overline{X}}$ = 4,12).   The least effective dimension they display is **"Supporting and Improving Students"** ($\overline{\overline{X}}$ = 3,52 and "**Stating and Sharing the Aims of Subjects "** ($\overline{\overline{X}}$ = 3,97).

b. ANOVA analysis showed that teachers'views about realization level of **Identifying and sharing the course objectives (p=0.034,** p<.05**), The management of The Curriculum and Teaching Process, (P= 0.000,** p<.05**) , Teaching Process and Evaluating Students (p=0.023,** p<.05**), Supporting and Improving Students (p=0.000,** p<.05**)and Creating a regular learning and teaching environment (p=0.000,** p<.05**)** subscale of instructional leadership differed significantly according to professional experience

c. ANOVA analysis showed that teachers'views about realization level of *the Curriculum and the Controlling of the Teaching Process* subscale of instructional leadership differed significantly according to educational statu.

d. A significant difference was observed between female and male teachers' views regarding the realization level of '*Evaluating Students and the Teaching Process'* subscale of instructional leadership as aresult of t-test (t=-2,767 p<.05).The mean scores shows that Female teachers ($\overline{\overline{X}}$ = 4,1788) performe instructional leadership subscale *Evaluating Students and the Teaching Process more than* male teachers ($\overline{\overline{X}}$ = 4,07). The t-test analysis also revealed that the views of male and female teachers regarding the other subscales of instructional leadership did not differ significantly.

e. A significant difference was observed between female and male teachers' views regarding to realization level of '**The management of The Curriculum and Teaching Process (married**,$\overline{\overline{X}}$ = 4,0298, single, ($\overline{\overline{X}}$ = 4,0298)) , Supporting and Improving Students ((Married,$\overline{\overline{X}}$ = 3,5483, single, $\overline{\overline{X}}$ = 3,4540), Creating a regular learning and teaching environment, (married, ($\overline{\overline{X}}$ = 4,0820, single, ($\overline{\overline{X}}$ = 3,9998), subscales of instructional leadership as aresult of t-test respectively, (t=-2,639, t=2.082, t=2.088 ,p<.05) . The mean scores shows that married teachers performe instructional leadership subscales mentioned above *more than* single teachers.

As a result, analyses show that participants in the research performs instructional leadership at almost level, but they are expected to perform at "always" level. Teachers who have instructional leadership behaviors in and out of the classroom affect students' academic achievement positively. The analysis also revealed that teaching experince, educational statu marital statu and gender independent variables effects instructional leadership.

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