

## ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP STYLES AND SUPPORT FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN CAPPADOCIA REGION, TURKEY

TÜRKİYE KAPADOKYA BÖLGESİNDEKİ  
YÜKSEKÖĞRETİM KURUMLARINDA AKADEMİK  
LİDERLİK STİLLERİ VE STRATEJİK PLANLAMAYA DESTEK

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### ABSTRACT

Although faculty support and effective academic leadership are crucial factors in successful implementation of strategic plans, there seems to be few studies which investigate the faculty support for strategic planning and the role of academic leadership styles in fostering support for strategic planning. In this paper we present the results of an exploratory research project which was conducted at nine universities around Cappadocia Region in Turkey. We analyzed data acquired from 233 questionnaires which were gathered from academics who are employed at four year faculties. We examined group differences with ANOVA and t-tests, and we explored the relationship between support for strategic planning among faculty and the role of perceived academic leadership styles with multiple regression analysis. The findings show that academic titles, gender, disciplinary differences, and administrative roles have significant effects on support for strategic planning and perceived leadership styles. Multiple regression analysis revealed that entrepreneurial leadership style has significant positive effect in fostering support for strategic planning activities.

**Key Words:** *Strategic planning in higher education, faculty support, academic leadership, entrepreneurial leadership*

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## ÖZET

Öğretim üyelerinin desteği ve etkin akademik liderlik stratejik planların başarıyla uygulanmasında önemli faktörler olsa da bu konularla ilişkili çalışmaların az sayıda olduğu görülmektedir. Bu çalışmada Kapadokya bölgesinde bulunan dokuz üniversitede gerçekleştirilen keşfedici bir araştırma projesinin sonuçları sunulmaktadır. Dört yıllık lisans eğitimi veren fakültelerde görevli öğretim üyelerinden elde edilen 233 anket analiz edilmiştir. Grup farklılıkları ANOVA ve t-testleri, öğretim üyelerinin stratejik planlamaya destekleri ve algılanan liderlik stilleri arasındaki ilişkiler ise çoklu regresyon ile analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular akademik unvan, cinsiyet, disiplinler farklılıklar ve yönetici rolü değişkenleri açısından anlamlı farklılıklar olduğunu göstermiştir. Çoklu regresyon analizi girişimci liderlik stiline stratejik planlama faaliyetlerine destek konusunda anlamlı pozitif etkiye sahip olduğunu göstermiştir.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** *Yükseköğretimde stratejik planlama, öğretim üyesi desteği, akademik liderlik, girişimci liderlik*

## INTRODUCTION

Despite arguments about its relevance (Birnbaum, 2000), strategic planning has become one of the most important management tools of the academic leaders in higher education institutions during the last three decades (Dorris et al., 2002; Machado & Taylor, 2010). Strategic planning process requires multiple leadership competencies to be performed from beginning steps to sustainability of the achievements (Hitt et al., 2007: 375-377). However, both the success of strategic plans and leadership also depends on faculty support (Welsh and Nunez, 2005). In the end, it is mainly the faculty who are supposed to achieve strategic goals. Faculty support, in turn, is affected by how leadership is performed or how strategic plans are prepared and implemented. This logic of the triadic relation among strategic planning, leadership, and faculty support seems plain enough. However, passing through this triadic gate, we enter into a more complex sphere where unprecedented organizational change in higher education institutions have significantly altered governance structures, and where the distinctive nature of the *academia*, and the individual perceptions of the faculty give rise to additional challenges.

In this study we focus on the relationship between support for strategic planning and four selected leadership styles in higher education institutions which include bureaucratic, distributive, collegial, and entrepreneurial leadership styles. The core organizational procedures are not limited to strategic planning and there are many other leadership styles which correspond to different governance models in higher education (Birnbaum, 1988: 28-29; Cohen & March, 1986: 29-40). However, we had to

limit our study according to our research priorities which investigated how distribution/concentration of power (bureaucratic vs. distributed) and entrepreneurial tendency (collegial vs. entrepreneurial) among the leaders within the organization may affect faculty support for strategic planning in Turkish higher education institutions. We believe these dichotomies are highly relevant in the case of higher education institutions in Turkey where universities are organized as hierarchical bureaucracies and where they are under pressure to change both due to afore mentioned challenges and reforms in financial management as part of wider new public management reforms since early 2000s.

In this section, we present an overview which summarizes the transformation of higher education institutions, challenges of academic leadership, and the introduction of strategic planning activities in Turkish higher education institutions to portray the contextual background of faculty support in Turkey.

Since the late 1970s and 1980s, higher education institutions have had to meet the challenges of adapting to the changing environment on a global scale. The multi-faceted challenges brought about by massification, democratization, and decreasing public funding were to be solved by diversifying income sources and increasing efficiency on the one hand, while on the other hand being responsive to the demands of stakeholders (Altbach et al., 2009; Trow, 1996). As post-Humboldtian stakeholders of higher education, governments aimed to assert greater control, employers demanded more qualified and skilled employees, national and international institutions were encouraging global competitiveness, the students wanted to be equipped with the necessary skills to have a chance in an increasingly tougher labour market, and the invisible hand of supply side economics demanded further marketization of higher education (Barkholt, 2005; Gayle et al., 2003; Johnstone et al., 1998; OECD, 1999). Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, almost all OECD countries reformed their higher education systems while empowering managerial leadership and developing corresponding governance structures (Askl ng & Stensaker, 2002: 115; Birnbaum, 1999: 14; Braun, 1999: 12; OECD, 1999).

Today, at a time of uncertain turbulences in a fast changing environment, academic leaders are expected to accomplish challenging tasks like identifying shared visions, bridging conflicting demands of shareholders, building consensus, leading organizational change, persuading colleagues, and maintaining collegial atmosphere among many other leadership skills (Bryman, 2007:697; Hoff, 1999; Kouzes & Postner, 2003). However, academic leadership is not an easy challenge. The distinctive nature of higher education institutions which limit the capacity of academic leaders in

handling these tasks have been frequently cited in the literature. For example, it should be noted that there is no clear definition of academic leadership at higher education institutions. Academic leadership is not limited to formal positions of power only and may be exercised on quiet different levels. Rectors, vice-rectors, deans, departmental chairs, or individual academics may assume leadership roles (Rowley & Sherman, 2003: 1059). Higher education institutions are places where different functions exist together. Education, research, and administrative tasks require academic leaders to have different leadership skills on a wide spectrum. On the other hand, academic traditions, disciplinary and ideological differences, legitimacy of processes and leadership, and internal and external (ie. politics) demands restrict academic leaders to a great extend (Kekale, 1999; Jones & Edward, 1996). Academic leaders try to achieve consensus and harmony among actors who frequently have different opinions. They could encounter much more resistance and criticism than their counterparts since academics are, by the nature of their profession, used to critical thinking which is generally directed against academic leaders (Deem, 2010:39). Finally, in many cases, academic leaders must engage these challenges with little prior experience or formal training and with relatively limited *real* power (Gallos, 2002: 174; Wolverton et al., 2005: 227-228). Yet, the fact that academic leadership is different or difficult to define does not mean it should not be studied. Leadership is important, and attempts to discover in which ways it affects organizational procedures may contribute to providing clues on how to confront the challenges of higher education institutions and what to do for building genuine institutional support.

Due to afore mentioned challenges, the higher education institutions started to employ a strategic view of planning since 1980s. Having proliferated in higher education institutions in the USA, this approach has evolved into the most common management tool in different parts of the world. In Turkey strategic planning in public institutions was introduced as part of new public management reforms (Genc, 2009). In 2003, with the Public Financial Management and Control Law (Act no 5018), strategic planning became compulsory at public institutions. Today, after a transitional period until 2010, universities as well as central government units, metropolitan municipalities, larger municipalities, special provincial administrations, social security institutions and state-owned enterprises are all required to prepare strategic plans. The Act no 5018 defines strategic planning as “a plan which includes medium and long term aims, basic principles and policies, targets and priorities, performance indicators of the public institutions, and the methods and resource distributions to achieve these aims” (Leblebici & Erkul, 2008: 278). To provide nationwide coherence of the system, the public institutions must prepare their strategic plans in line with the higher level policy documents

such as the development plans and programs. Moreover, according to the law, there needs to be a connection between the strategic plans, annual performance programs and the activity reports of the public institutions.

Although the law depicts a top-down, holistic and clear view of strategic planning, there seem to be important problems in embedding this strategic management perspective in public institutions. A report of the Ministry of Development (2013: 31-47) outlines the main problems in strategic planning activities in public institutions as the disconnectedness between major policy documents and strategic planning documents, lack of clear performance indicators, poor relationship between the strategic plans and the budgets, isomorphism among the institutions without considering contextual backgrounds, inadequate measures of internal and external monitoring, and lack of institutional support. Furthermore, it is stated that the basic principles and procedures of strategic planning have not been internalized by the high level administrators and public personnel. Other studies have also revealed problems about including external shareholders in planning activities at educational institutions and local governments (Karasu, 2012: 169; Memduhglu & Ucar, 2012: 247).

The strategic plans of higher education institutions blend strategies, quality enhancement processes, performance monitoring, and finally budget allocations (Arslan, 2009: 397; CAAQDHE, 2007). It is possible to claim that strategic planning has become one of the most important drivers of change in higher education institutions. One of the most important problems about embedding this top-down, holistic system at higher education institutions may be considered as the lack of institutional and individual support and leadership in strategic planning activities. However, the literature review about strategic planning in Turkish higher education institutions revealed that previous researches have mainly focused on other dimensions of strategic planning. Relatively small number of studies about strategic planning at the higher education institutions report evidence of faculty support, accompanied with a sense of lack of participation and communication (ie. Aydin & Aksoy, 2007: 293).

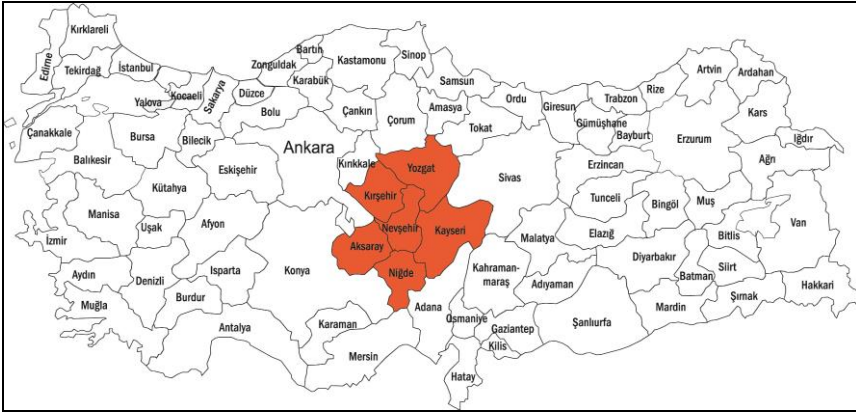
In this paper we hope to contribute to the literature by presenting the results of an exploratory research project. Our project aimed to investigate the faculty support for strategic planning and to explore the effect of perceived academic leadership styles. The findings show that academic titles, gender, disciplinary differences, and administrative roles have significant effects on attitudes about strategic planning activities and perceived leadership styles. Correlation and regression analysis revealed that entrepreneurial leadership has significant positive effect in fostering support for strategic planning activities. We believe these findings may be helpful in

building institutional support for strategic planning in higher education institutions. In the following section, we explain the methodology of the study and provide the details of the research area, population and research instrument.

## METHODOLOGY

In this paper we present the results of a regional research project (NEUBAP13S20) about support for strategic planning and perceived leadership styles at universities. Within the frame of this project, a survey was conducted at nine universities around Cappadocia Region in Turkey (Figure 1). As far as we know, this is the first regional study in Turkey about the faculty support for strategic planning at higher education institutions. Seven of the universities which were included in the study are state universities, while two of them were universities that are run by foundations.

**Figure 1 Cappadocia Region, Turkey: The Research Area**



In the project, the population was limited to academics who are employed at four year faculties (professors, associate professors, and assistant professors) ( $N=1638$ ). The Medicine Faculty of Erciyes University was excluded from the study due to administrative obstacles. Stratified cluster sampling approach was used to calculate the sample size ( $n= 233$ ). In determining the sample size, we used the following formula in each stratum (Çingi, 1994):

$$E = z_{\alpha/2} \cdot \sqrt{\frac{N-n}{N} \frac{p(1-p)}{n}}$$

In this formula,  $N$  is the population size,  $E$  is the precision (or margin of error),  $Z_{\alpha/2}$  is normal deviate for two-tailed alternative hypothesis at a level of significance; we use 5% level of significance and that is  $Z_{\alpha/2}$  is 1.96;  $p$  is the proportion of event of interest for the study, here we use the ratio  $p$  equals to 0, 50.

The distribution of the respondents according to selected variables can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1 Information about the Respondents (n=233)**

		Frequency	Percent (%)	Weighted Percent (%)
Academic Title	Professor	69	29	15
	Associate Prof.	69	30	17
	Assistant Prof.	95	41	68
Gender	Female	40	17	22
	Male	193	83	78
Administrator	Yes	108	46	42
	No	125	54	58
Active duty in identifying strategic planning policy	Yes	63	27	24
	No	168	73	76

The mean age of the respondents was 41, the average length of service at the affiliated institution was 8.5 years, and the average length of service in higher education was 14 years.

The questionnaire form which was used to collect data had four sections. The first section of the form was a guideline which explained how to fill in the questionnaire since the forms were filled in by the respondents themselves. The second section included questions about professional and demographic information. In the third section of the form, we used Support for Strategic Planning Index which was developed and tested by Welsh and Nunez (2005) to calculate the level of support for strategic planning. This index defines support for strategic planning as “the degree to which

respondents report that strategic planning activities are important at their institution”, and it includes 8 seven point Likert-style items (Welsh & Nunez, 2005). The final section of the questionnaire form included four scales which aimed to investigate the perceived academic leadership styles among faculty members.

In order to measure the perceived level of academic leadership styles we prepared four scales derived from the literature about leadership styles. We describe the leadership styles as used in the research instrument below, and then continue to the next section of the paper.

We employed a Weberian conception of “ideal type bureaucracy” to measure the level of perceived bureaucratic leadership. In this definition, the institution is a hierarchical organization where decision making and power is concentrated at the top of the organization. Leaders concentrate on rational planning, coordination, controlling, and efficiency. Following bureaucratic procedures, preserving hierarchical order, employing formal powers rather than informal methods, and restricted direct/informal communication between faculty members and leaders are assumed as indicators of bureaucratic leadership at the institution. Success of the institution depends on the bureaucratic leader who is seen as the “public hero” (Birnbaum, 1988: 105-127; Cohen & March, 1986: 38).

In our collegial leadership style scale, collegial governance is depicted as a bottom-up model where the faculty members retain significant influence and power in governance either through powerful collegial committees or informal traditions of collegiality. In this model, the role of the leaders is to be the voice of fellow colleagues, and to build consensus on issues with intensive consultation and deliberation. The leaders and faculty members share similar values about the aims of higher education, and faculty members have considerable autonomy in identifying education and research aims and targets (Tapper & Palfreyman, 2010: 17-35; Marginson & Considine, 2000).

Entrepreneurial leadership is defined within the context of an entrepreneurial university. In this type of governance structure, the role of the leaders is to provide diverse funding bases, developing networks and partnerships with external shareholders, to support creation of economic and commercial benefits (ie. techno-parks, patent production, public/private partnerships), and encouraging dissemination of entrepreneurial culture by reward mechanisms. In this model, the entrepreneurial leaders are results oriented, and do not hesitate to take risks (Clark, 1998; Shattock, 2010; Gibb et al., 30-31; Slaughter & Leslie, 1999).



The last leadership style that was included in our study is the distributive leadership style. Distributive leadership has been developed mainly within the frame of education institutions (Jones et al., 2012: 70). Although there are several sub-types of distributive leadership, distributing power among actors at different levels of organizational structure and organization of leadership on a team level rather than individual level is considered as a common property of distributed leadership. In this model, leadership is exercised by a team or co-leaders rather than solo leaders, where each member complements the team with their specific abilities and specializations. The distributive leaders act as guides and supporters in professional development, and they encourage other members of the institution to take leadership roles, whether they have a formal position or not (Jones et al., 2012; Harris, 2010:11-18; Gronn, 2002).

It should be noted that the definition of academic leaders as used in this study only include formal positions, leadership styles scales do not cover all dimensions of the relevant leadership styles, and that there is need to enhance the leadership style scales of this study.

### **Data Analysis**

The data acquired from the questionnaires were analyzed in three steps. First, the cases were weighted reflect a better representation of the population. The normality assumption of the data was examined with Kolmogrov Smirnov test, and it was found that the data was not normally distributed. However, Kurtosis and skewness values were within acceptable ranges, and after examination of normality curve and Q-Q plots, the data were considered as approximately normally distributed and parametric tests were used to examine group differences. The bureaucratic leadership scale failed the reliability test, and it was not used for further analysis. Descriptive statistics and internal consistency of the scales is reported in Table 2.

**Table 2 Weighted Descriptive Statistics and Internal Consistency Values ( $\alpha$ ) for Scales (n=233)**

	Items	Mean	SD	$\alpha$
<i>Support for strategic planning</i>	8	5,32	1,03381	,838
<i>Perceived academic leadership styles</i>				
Collegial leadership	10	4,52	1,30487	,933
Entrepreneurial leadership	10	4,70	1,23745	,933
Distributive leadership	8	4,35	1,14709	,874

In the second step, one way ANOVA and independent t-tests were used to investigate differences among faculty members about support for

strategic planning and perceived leadership styles. In the final step of the analysis, we examined the relationships among the four variables (support for strategic planning and three leadership styles) and we tried to predict the dependent variable of support for strategic planning from independent variables collegial leadership, entrepreneurial leadership, distributive leadership. The findings of the tests are presented in the following section.

## **RESULTS**

In order to analyze data, one way ANOVA tests were conducted to examine the differences among groups based on two independent variables: academic titles and the type of faculty. Independent t-tests were used to examine the differences between respondent groups based on gender and administrative role. Multiple regression tests were conducted to examine the relationship between the level of perceived leadership styles and support for strategic planning. The findings of these tests are presented under the following sub-sections.

### **Academic titles**

The findings of the one way ANOVA test which was used to examine differences among respondents based on academic titles suggest that there is significant effect of academic title on support for strategic planning [ $F(2,1695) = 13.54, p = .00$ ] and two perceived leadership styles [ $F_{\text{collegial}}(2,1695) = 6.31, p = .00$ ] [ $F_{\text{entrepreneurial}}(2,1695) = 4.45, p = .00$ ] at the  $p < 0.05$  level.

LSD test was used for post hoc comparison of support for strategic planning and collegial leadership since homogeneity of variance was assumed. Results indicated that the average level of support for strategic planning was significantly lower among professors ( $M=5.06, SD=1.07$ ) than associate professors ( $M=5.24, SD=1.08$ ), and assistant professors ( $M=5.41, SD=1$ ).

It was also found that the perceived level of collegial leadership was higher among assistant professors ( $M=4.60, SD=1.30$ ) than associate professors ( $M=4.35, SD=1.30$ ) and professors ( $M=4.38, SD=1.30$ ). However there was no significant difference between associate professors and professors about perceived level of collegial leadership.

Dunnett T3 test was used for post hoc comparison of perceived level of entrepreneurial leadership. Post hoc test revealed that the assistant professors ( $M=4.78, SD=1.20$ ) perceived a higher level of entrepreneurial leadership at their institutions than the professors ( $M=4.54, SD=1.42$ ).

## **Disciplinary Differences**

Differences among academics who worked at different faculties were also examined with one way ANOVA test. Six types of faculties were included in this analysis: faculty of economics and administrative sciences, faculty of education, faculty of science and letters, faculty of architecture and engineering, medical sciences (medicine, pharmacy, and dentistry were combined), and faculty of theology. Approximately 90% of the respondents were employed at these faculties.

Results showed that the type of faculty has a significant effect on the responses of the faculty members about support for strategic planning [ $F(5,1520) = 12.58, p = .00$ ] and perceived leadership styles [ $F_{\text{collegial}}(5, 1520) = 13.45, p = .00$ ] [ $F_{\text{entrepreneurial}}(5, 1520) = 7.05, p = .00$ ] [ $F_{\text{distributive}}(5, 1520) = 17.24, p = .00$ ] at the  $p < 0.05$  level.

Since the variances were not homogeneous, Dunnett T3 was used for post hoc comparisons. Test results showed that the academics working at the theology faculties have the lowest scores in support for strategic planning ( $M=4.53, SD=1.02$ ). It was found that there was significant difference between medical sciences, education, and theology faculties about support for strategic planning. The members of the education faculties ( $M=5.55, SD=0.97$ ) supported strategic planning activities more than those at the medical sciences faculties ( $M=5.20, SD=0.87$ ) and theology faculties ( $M=4.53, SD=1.02$ ).

The perceived levels of collegial ( $M=3.99, SD=1.18$ ) and entrepreneurial leadership ( $M=4.40, SD=1.24$ ) were less among the academics working at the economics and administrative sciences faculties, while the academics at the education faculties have the lowest scores about distributive leadership ( $M=3.90, SD=1.36$ ). The perceived levels of collegial leadership were highest among the academics working at the medical faculties ( $M=4.93, SD=1.15$ ), and perceived levels of entrepreneurial leadership ( $M=4.95, SD=1.37$ ) were highest among engineering/architecture faculties. The academics at the medical faculties ( $M=4.66, SD=0.92$ ) and engineering/architecture faculties ( $M=4.64, SD=1.12$ ) also have the highest scores about distributive leadership.

## **Gender**

Independent samples t-test results showed that there were significant differences between female and male respondents about support for strategic planning and the perceived level of collegial leadership at the institution. Female respondents ( $M=5.14, SD= 0.84$ ) had lower scores from

the strategic planning index than their male colleagues ( $M=5.38, SD=1.07$ );  $t(1697) = -3.96, p = .000$ . However, the level of perceived collegial leadership was higher among females ( $M=4.90, SD= 1.06$ ) than males ( $M=4.42, SD= 1.35$ );  $t(1697) = 6.27, p = .000$ . There were no significant differences between females and males about the perceived level of entrepreneurial and distributive leadership.

### **Administrators versus non-administrators**

The independent samples t-tests which aimed to compare the answers of the administrators and non-administrators showed that the administrators differed significantly from non-administrator faculty members. They had more support for strategic planning ( $M=5.45, SD= 1.04$ ) than non-administrators ( $M=5.24, SD= 1.02$ ). They also had higher levels of perceived collegial ( $M_{administrator} = 4.73, SD=1.30$ ;  $M_{non-administrator} = 4.38, SD=1.30$ ;  $t(1697) = 5.47, p = .000$ ), entrepreneurial ( $M_{administrator} = 4.96, SD=1.24$ ;  $M_{non-administrator} = 4.52, SD=1.20$ ;  $t(1697) = 7.33, p = .000$ ) and distributive leadership ( $M_{administrator} = 4.67, SD=1.11$ ;  $M_{non-administrator} = 4.11, SD=1.12$ ;  $t(1697) = 10.30, p = .000$ ) at their institutions.

### **Perceived leadership styles and support for strategic planning**

The relationships among perceived leadership styles and support for strategic planning activities were examined with correlation and regression analysis. The scatter plot indicated that support for strategic planning variable and the perceived leadership styles variables were linearly related. Table 3 shows the correlation matrix of the variables.

**Table 3 Correlation Matrix of Variables**

	Support for strategic planning	Collegial leadership	Entrepreneurial leadership
Collegial leadership	,162(**)		
Entrepreneurial leadership	,248(**)	,697(**)	
Distributive leadership	,206(**)	,692(**)	,792(**)

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation matrix showed that all of the variables were positively correlated. Among the three leadership styles, entrepreneurial leadership displayed the strongest correlation with support for strategic planning.

Multiple regression analysis was used to investigate the effect of leadership styles in fostering support for strategic planning in more detail. Due to strong correlations among the independent variables, collinearity

was also tested with VIF values which were within acceptable ranges below ten. Linear regression was used to predict the value of the support for strategic planning based on its linear relationship with the predictors. Summary of the regression analysis is displayed in Table 4.

**Table 4 Summary Report of Multiple Regression Analysis**

Independent variable	Support for Strategic Planning						
	Multiple regression					Collinearity	
	B	Std. Error	$\beta$	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	4,350	102		42,525	.000*		
Collegial	-.025	.027	-.031	-.900	.368	.462	2,167
Entrepreneurial	.202	.034	.241	5,89	.000*	.330	3,031
Distributive	.033	.037	.036	.890	.373	.335	2,988
	R		.250		df	3/1694	
	R <sup>2</sup>		.062		F change	37,53	
	$\Delta R^2$		.062		F change sig.	.000	

\*Significant at the 0.01 level

\*\*Significant at the 0.05 level

As the summary report shows, the model which attempts to explain the effect of perceived leadership styles on support for strategic planning is significant ( $R^2=0,062$ ;  $F=37,540$ ;  $p<0,05$ ). The value of  $R^2$  suggests that 6,2% of the variation in the level of support for strategic planning could be explained by perceived leadership styles. Even though the model fit was significant, the results showed that only entrepreneurial leadership style significantly predicted support for strategic planning ( $\beta = .241$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Collegial and distributive leadership styles had non-significant coefficients, and they seemed to have no significant predictive power on support for strategic planning ( $\beta_{collegial} = -.025$ ,  $p_{collegial}=0,368>\alpha=0,05$ ;  $\beta_{distributive} = .033$ ,  $p_{distributive}=0,373>\alpha=0,05$ ).

The findings of the correlation analysis suggest that leadership styles seem to be correlated with support for strategic planning to varying degrees. Entrepreneurial leadership has a stronger predictive power and a more significant and positive influence in fostering support for strategic planning. The regression model shows that support for strategic planning is positively affected by entrepreneurial leadership. It could be claimed that higher values

of entrepreneurial leadership result in higher levels of support for strategic planning.

## **DISCUSSION**

The findings of the study show that faculty members have positive views about strategic planning activities at their institutions. However, there seem to be significant differences based on academic titles, disciplinary differences, gender, and administrative role among the faculty members. Furthermore, higher level of perceived entrepreneurial leadership is associated with faculty support for strategic planning. In this section, following our findings, we develop a number of recommendations.

According to the test results, it could be claimed that the assistant professors support strategic planning activities more than their senior colleagues. It could also be said that they perceive higher levels of collegial and entrepreneurial leadership. We believe that this is an important finding, since assistant professors make up almost %65 of the study's population. One could argue that the attitudes of assistant professors may facilitate strategic planning activities. But, it should be reminded that senior faculty members, and especially the professors, are more powerful and influential in administrative and academic boards of higher education institutions. From this perspective, we believe that it is important to involve senior faculty members in identifying strategic plan policies.

Disciplinary differences should also be considered in building institutional support for strategic planning. The findings of this study indicate that education faculties are more enthusiastic about strategic planning than other faculties. It could be recommended to introduce new or revised strategic planning activities at these faculties first. The differences about the role of academic leadership in different disciplinary settings seem to be more striking. It is evident that social scientists are more critical about collegial, distributive, and entrepreneurial leadership. This point needs particular attention since there is a risk that criticism about leadership may also adversely affect strategic planning.

The differences between the administrators and non-administrators are also significant. It is evident that the faculty members who have administrative roles have more positive views about supporting strategic planning activities. This is a different finding from Welsh and Nunez's (2005) study, but similar differences between administrators and non-administrators have been reported in different institutional settings in Turkey. This could simply be the result of the bias of the administrators who believe it is a part of their role to support strategic planning activities. Although one could argue that the high ratio of administrators (46%) may

be considered as favorable for building institutional support, the discrepancy between the administrators and non-administrators may also indicate an adverse effect of the top-down approach. This top-down approach is also evident in the ratio of those who have active roles in determining strategic planning, which is 27% of the respondents.

The role of leadership styles in fostering institutional support must be studied in more detail. One way to do that may be to investigate direct and indirect effects of leadership styles along with other predictors of institutional support for strategic planning. Entrepreneurial leadership deserves particular attention since the evidence suggests that it could have stronger influence on the attitudes of the faculty members about strategic planning than other leadership styles. Correlation and regression analysis results show that entrepreneurial leadership style has significant value in strengthening support for strategic planning. Accordingly, institutional measures may be recommended to enhance relevant leadership skills of the academic leaders.

The relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and support for strategic planning does not mean that other leadership styles are less important. As it was said in the introduction section, organizational procedures are not limited to strategic planning and other dimensions of organizational life is affected by leadership to a great extent. For example Kök (2006:305) has found that one of the most important factors that undermine work satisfaction among faculty was the lack efforts of academic administrators in creating a collegial atmosphere and participation in efforts to establish collegialism. On the other hand distributive leadership or other forms of collective leadership such as shared leadership, collaborative leadership, and participatory leadership styles have their own merits. Actually, some observers signal the emergence of hybrid governance styles such as collegial entrepreneurialism which, until now, was not deemed as a likely merger (Ryan & Guthrie, 2009). The literature about role of different academic leadership styles in different organizational contexts is still in the making. What we could safely say, however, is that leadership as a collective action is emerging as an important aspect of governance in higher education institutions.

The findings of this study may be beneficial in determining institutional strategies to foster support for strategic planning activities. But this study was limited to nine universities and only included professors, associate professors, and assistant professors who are employed at four year faculties. Higher education institutions in Turkey vary to a great extent with older and younger universities which have different priorities, budget sizes, number of students, legal status, and numbers of academic and administrative staff.

Furthermore, different scales and different methodologies should be employed to investigate the relationships among organizational support in core organizational procedures.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This paper presents the findings of a research project titled “The Role of Academic Leadership in Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance Activities” (NEUBAP13S20) funded by the Scientific Research Unit of Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University. Preliminary findings of the project including 101 samples were presented at the 2. ADPOL, Brussels, 2013.

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