

The Perceptions of Undergraduate and Graduate Students about Ethical Leadership Behaviors of Academic Staff

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to identify how undergraduate and graduate students perceive the ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff. It is also tried to be found out whether dimensions of ethical leadership behavior (communicational ethics, climate ethics, ethics in decision making processes and behavioral ethics) show differences according to the variables of educational level, gender and age of the participant students. The study is in descriptive survey model. The sample is undergraduate and graduate students at Dicle University, Faculty of Education in 2013-2014. As data collection tool “Ethical Leadership Scale (ELS)” developed by Yılmaz (2005) was used. Mean, standard deviation, independent sample t-test and ANOVA test were used to analyze the data. It is concluded that the undergraduate and graduate students’ perceptions of ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff are at mid-level. The means concerning the ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff in terms of behavioral ethics, ethical decision making and communication ethics is 3.01, 3.00 and 2.89 respectively. The lowest mean about the perceptions of undergraduate and graduate students’ about leadership behaviors of academic staff is in climate ethics (2.83).

Keywords: academicians, ethics, graduate students, leadership, undergraduate

1. Introduction

When looking back in human history in the light of our available knowledge, we see that every society has maintained a series of ethical rules in forms and rituals that are unique to the geographical, religious and cultural environment the society lives in. In the course of time, these ethical rules and practices have been institutionalized into a system regulating the social life and controlling its continuity and become an essential factor in individual-society correlation.

It is evident that various variables have played a role in the formation and acceptance of ethical values. First of all religious beliefs, culture, historical backgrounds, geographical environment, traditions that play a significant role in social integration are the key factors that complement this structure. Drawing on ethical values as an essential criterion in fulfilling the tasks and responsibilities that an individual has to shoulder in social life is a generally accepted behavior enjoying broad social consensus.

The word “ethics” is one of the most widely used concepts. In all areas, especially in Medicine, Engineering, Economy, Communication, Tourism and Education has turned into a basic value and rule. It is observed that every profession has ethic rules, which are developing and spreading. The history of “ethics” dates back to the ancient Greek period. The term ethics (ethos) derives from the Greek word ethos, which means “relating to one’s character”. The notion of morals, on the other hand, is derived from the Latin term morality used to refer to customs, habits or traditions. While the concept of ethics rather refers to the character of an individual, the term morality is mainly used in the context of human relations (Thiroux, 1998, cited in Yılmaz, 2006).

For long periods, people have tried to classify and regulate a wide range of different behaviors within the social life of societies. Within these behaviors, they made efforts to determine what was good for the individual and the society and what was bad for them by developing certain criteria. These regulations and criteria have changed according to time and situation. The meaning attributed to the word ethics is accepted by all sides today. Ethics suggests what we should do, which behavior is the right one and what makes our life more meaningful. It is about the essence, origin and development of morals, moral standards and the laws that determine the historical characteristics of these standards (Rosenthal & Yüdin, 1997, p. 145, cited in Yılmaz, 2006).

We observe that ethics that regulates all spheres of life and sets the boundaries of individual conduct in communication and interaction in social contexts has today become a notion with universal dimensions going beyond social boundaries. We might well admit that these rules have a determinant force not only in individual life but also in business activities and services intended for the society. It is observed that the systematic structure that sets its seal on essential social domains has nowadays been integrated, to a great extent, into a framework enabling legal enforcement.

Ethics investigates the fundamentals and essence of questions of morality. It surveys and defines the rules and forms of what ethical behavior or conduct is. It sets ethical rules that have concrete quality and force for life. It brings together the rules and principles that apply to a certain society (Erdoğan, 1999, cited in Yılmaz, 2006). Ethics also refers to a systematic. These structures and rules are expected to be accepted and internalized by all relevant stakeholders. It is also intended to function as a reference source with a continuous transformation into a functional criterion. Ethics, in a way, undertook the duty to regulate and control behaviors and practices in the individual-social dilemma.

There are various definitions of ethics, but we can say, if we try to make a general definition, that it is a philosophical discipline that investigates the values, norms and rules that form the essence of human relations in terms of ethical perspective. Humans are social beings; they live in a society and create, in the course of time, their own right values. These right values that can be defined as morals at local level attain a universal character when addressed from ethical viewpoint (Turhan, 2007, p. 10). Ethics is now becoming a common application and measurement tool for all societies and people. Nowadays, developments in the field of technology and communication have facilitated the regulation of ethics as well as a functional role in the determination of unethical practices.

It is possible to observe that ethical rules which the individuals have to observe as a hinge in realizing their social roles and duties have undergone a continuous change and progress in different conditions and times. But the fact remains that it maintained its essential effect in every epoch. The process of formation and widespread penetration of ethical values in vocational domains, a process being underway since the times social division of labor began to take shape, brought along formal and informal sanctions of binding character with itself.

Parallel to the globalization process, the world has become more and more small and in turn it has become indispensable that countries enter into a closer cooperation at international level. As a result of this, multi-national organizations have been established, competition has attained a global character and ethics has begun to be seen as an international question (Çelik, 2000, p. 115, cited in Turhan, 2007). In this sense, there have been discussions and approaches in the professional institutions in all areas for the restructuring of the boundaries and principles of ethics, especially in some international organizations have turned into these practices and sanctions. The countries under the European Union are examples of it. It is seen that this process continues today and it is supported by other countries and unions and supported by legal regulations.

Ethics is a philosophical discipline which investigates the values, norms and rules which form the fundament of human relations at individual and social level defining them in concepts such as right-wrong or good-evil from ethical point of view (İnal, 1996:43, cited in Aydın, 2006). In other words, right and wrong are the criteria of ethics. Morality and ethics have been used to mean the same thing even though they are two different concepts and the notion of morality has generally been given more preference in terms of use (Aydın, 2006). Professional ethical rules are principles, apart from laws and cultural values that comprise of right behaviors with universal character that generally receive broad social acceptance (Erdoğan, 2007; cited in Baştuğ, 2009).

Professional ethics has nowadays secured its place on the top of the agenda as a significant and fundamental fact and consequently professional practices, and their outcomes and reflections, leave deep and lasting impacts on individuals. It is a well-known fact that ethics that sets boundaries and imposes behaviors in professional environments also has, in a sense, an impact on the relationship of mutual confidence and social fellowship in social life. Today work sharing and cooperation, responsibilities, tasks and professions, in short all domains receiving social acceptance cannot be thought without ethical values.

The professional leadership of a school principal is also affected by factors beyond the school fence. Contextual forces that educational leadership should take into account are the contours of the education system in which school leadership, organizational change and development are to occur, as well as societal and international contexts (Wolhuter, Walt & Steyn, 2016, p. 1). Leaders are challenged not to succumb under the pressure of challenges like service delivery and lack of support from parents and provincial departments of education, or new policies, which demands development and change for teachers (Heystek, 2016:1). Being an ethical leader requires developing a reputation for ethical leadership. Developing a reputation for ethical leadership depends upon how

others perceive the leader on two dimensions: as a moral person and as a moral manager (Trevino, Hartman & Brown, 2000, p. 141). Critics argue that transformational leadership is unethical. They contend that its rhetoric may appeal to emotions rather than to reason. They contend that it lacks the checks and balances of democratic discourse and power distribution. They contend that it violates the principles of the Organization Development (OD) Movement and that it manipulates followers into ignoring the followers' own best interests (Bas & Steidlmeier, 1999).

Since appropriate values are at the root of moral conduct, the business leader of today must possess a set of values that will not only enhance a favorable perception in the eyes of both internal and external stakeholders, but also lead to greater effectiveness and efficiency of organizational members (Edward, 2001). If we can accept the fact that the human mind has an infinite, creative capacity to trick itself, we can guard against irrational, unethical decisions (Messick & Bazerman, 1996).

At the beginning, I described the task of managerial ethical leadership as responsible decision making in a complex context. Admittedly, ethical reflection can entail a sharpening of conflicts surrounding a particular decision (at least in the conscience of the manager); but it also provides orientation in situations of insecurity (a characteristic of every situation in the real world) and bestows legitimacy (Enderle, 1987).

Education and the professions associated with education assume a leading role in the core of social development and change. As all the educational levels play an essential role on the long-term development and evolution of an individual and have a determinant effect on social structures, there arose the need of forming a system based on ethical requirements as vital principles. In this sense, we can say that education, and educators, need to work under ethical principles at highest level and have a responsibility of serving as a role model in terms of forming ethical values and putting them into practice in other professions. Concerns about ethics and leadership have dominated recent headlines about business and shaken public confidence in many organizations (Brown et al., 2005).

It is an essential factor determining the efficiency of a leader whether an organization has a strong or weak organizational culture (Çelik, 2007). It is the task of a leader to motivate people for a specific purpose and enable them to reach a common goal. Therefore, a leader must have a sense of responsibility against his/her followers and reflect it in his/her behaviors. In short, a leader must display ethical leadership skills (Yılmaz, 2006: 28). Leadership in Organizations has a specific focus on managerial leadership in large organizations and is an attempt at bridging the gulf between academics and management practitioners (Yukl, 1981). Today, the expectation of ethical behaviors and practices from the leaders started to increase. It can be said that this expectation has started to turn into an approach that is accepted by large sections of individuals and societies.

We believe that, through the study of ethics, educational leaders of tomorrow will be better prepared to recognize, (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2010:4). By encouraging employee voice, ethical leadership may not only develop a more positive and collaborative atmosphere in the work unit, it may also be associated with higher levels of task or process conflict without correspondingly high affective and relationship conflict (Fred, Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009).

Collectively, these observations form the basics of a systemic approach to the challenges of ethical leadership and suggest some responses that offer potential for raising the level of ethical behavior in organizations (Fulmer, 2004, p. 307). Managers overwhelmingly emphasized the importance of corporate culture, ethical leadership, and open communication channels in any effort to institutionalize ethics (Jose & Thibodeaux, 1999, p. 139). In conclusion, each of the ethical leadership dimensions addressed in this paper focuses on leading in a positive or people-focused manner (Resick et al., 2006, p. 357).

Education realizes in a long process, and the activities and behaviors put into practice to support the practical life can be regarded as a phenomenon and an outcome expected to come into focus, take shape and be observed in this process. The level of higher education which represents the last level in terms of educational processes and a phase of maturation after which an individual assume tasks and responsibilities in social life is a very critical level burdened with strategic responsibilities. These responsibilities have legal and administrative dimensions and they are especially associated with moral and ethical sanctions. In all application areas of education, teachers and academicians are conceived and valued as a model, as a leader by students; for this reason there exists a rather different social dimension as far as their duties are concerned.

Leaders are the unique actors that enable an organization to have ethical principles and be administered in accordance with such principles (Özdemir, 2003). Hitt (1990, p. 1) argues that ethics and leadership are concepts that are woven one in the other. For this reason, a leader has the responsibility to form those ethical rules or norms, which regulate the human behavior in an organization. Moreover, it is just this responsibility that reflects the ethical leadership role of the leader of an organization that is of critical significance in terms of an efficient

leadership and organizational success in the long term (cited in Turhan, 2007). Socialization of learners presupposes a focus on what acceptable social and moral behaviors are. If schools play a meaningful role in this process, it means that schools have a direct impact on how their learners will one day interact with other members of society, and it is these interactions that will dictate either social cohesion or social implosion (Smit & Scherman, 2016, p. 1). The present study suggests that ethical leadership is associated with less counterproductive behavior and more positive behavior. An important caveat of this study is that while ethical leadership at all organizational levels is important, immediate supervisors are the lens through which employees see what the organization values and therefore they likely have the most direct influence on employee ethical behavior (Mayer et al., 2009). We interpret this leader as seeking integrative solutions that benefit all stakeholders (Caldwell, Bischoff & Karri, 2002).

The role model leadership attributed to the teaching profession in every level of education takes its final shape in universities and makes a great contribution on the way how professional ethics is perceived. It is possible to say ethics, which is based on regulations of facts, and values observed and applied in every sphere of social life are given priority in educational organizations.

It is observed that all the stakeholders especially in educational organizations create perceptions in association with ethical leadership models and behaviors. For this reason, it is evident that ethical leadership behaviors produce striking and essential reflections on the life of students in the long term. This is especially the case for universities as institutions that occupy a unique position in the correlation between individual, profession and society in their character enabling the engagement of academic staff in professional formation.

The fundamental role of a leader is to raise awareness in ethical issues and questions, indicate what is right and what is wrong from ethical viewpoint and help employees analyze the values contradicting each other (Burns, 1978, p. 20, cited in Teyfur, Beytekin, & Yalçınkaya, 2013). Schools and especially universities are universal spaces where different values, judgments and diversity are combined. It can also be defined as areas where these values clash at the highest level. It is expected that academicians create and develop awareness of this diversity, and establish common ethical values by managing conflicts in accordance with the objectives. Secondly, given the large number of possible factors that have been suggested, another aim was to test the relative significance of ethical leadership in different institutional settings as well as examine the possible interactions between variables (Chen, 2010, p. 47).

Ethical leaders are persons who display ethical behavior, pay regard to individual needs, act without prejudice and impartially, defend the rights of employees and create a feeling of confidence on employees. It is thought that the decisions of leaders based on ethical values have significant influence in creating organizational confidence (Teyfur, Beytekin & Yalçınkaya, 2013, p. 86). It can be argued that the influence of leaders who ignore ethical values will decrease. It is known that education leaders, in particular, have a critical responsibility in this respect. Academicians give information about ethical behaviors and emphasize that ethical values must be adhered to so it is not acceptable for them to behave contrary to these practices because they are a model for their students.

Leaders can take actions to establish ethical practices within organizations. Apart from developing the formal documents on ethical conduct, leaders need to demonstrate ethical leadership in their daily behaviors, decisions, and actions (Toor & Ofori, 2009, p. 544). It is thought that academic staff has a privileged leadership role of great importance and a role definition in this sense because of duties and responsibilities they assume in social layers and professions. Apart from field-specific competences and skills in professional education, it is perfectly clear that academic staff also have a distinctive responsibility in terms of inspiring and displaying ethical behavior and creating ethical values.

We can say that the observations of students with respect to ethical values in universities are remarkable and clear due to ongoing applications. In this context, ethical behaviors of academic staff are certainly of special importance as they have a determinant role model and leadership function in creating of such values and integrating them into behavioral patterns in the process of professional and academic studies and practices in universities.

The goal of the study: The goal of this study was to collect data about the perceptions of undergraduate and graduate students in universities regards ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff and probable effects of such behaviors in terms of model formation. Another purpose was to define the level, importance and value of ethics on social and professional life.

‘How Are the Perceptions of Undergraduate and Graduate Students about the Ethical Leadership Behaviors of Academic Staff?’

Sub-goals: Do such perceptions differ when factors such as; 1. education level, 2. gender, 3. age are taken into

consideration?

2. Methodology

The study was carried out in descriptive survey model. The aim of the study is to reveal and describe the existing situation due to the fact that the research is conducted between the undergraduate and graduate students. Survey models are research approaches aiming to describe a situation that exists in the past or the present as it exists (Karasar, 2003, p. 77). In the research, it was tried to determine the perceptions of students about ethical leadership behaviors of academicians.

2.1 Universe and Sample

Third-year undergraduate students who studied in the departments of Physics, Chemistry, History, Geography, Mathematics, Turkish Language and Literature and Painting of Ziya Gökalp Faculty of Education of Dicle University in the academic year of 2013-2014 and those who continued their studies in the graduate programme without dissertation in the Institute of Educational Sciences, Educational Administration of the same university in the same academic year formed the population and sample of the study. Everyone in the study population was included in our sample. 158 undergraduate and 58 graduate students, namely altogether 216 students, were included in the sample.

2.2. Data Collection

“Ethical Leadership Scale (ELS)” developed by Yılmaz (2005) specially adapted with permission for this study was used to collect data. Ethical Leadership Scale; is a Likert type scale with 5 level scaling items: strongly agree (5), agree (4), undecided (3), disagree (2), strongly disagree (1). This adapted scale (ELS) is comprised of four sub-dimensions and 44 items in total;

- 1) Communicational Ethical Leadership: It's comprised of the items appearing in the assessment instrument. There are 15 items in this sub-dimension intended to assess the communicational skills and competences of the academic staff.
- 2) Behavioral Ethical Leadership: This dimension includes 9 items used to assess whether, and how far, the academic staff behave in accordance with ethical principles.
- 3) Ethical Decision Making and Ethical Leadership: There are 9 items altogether in this assessment instrument utilized to assess the ethical dimensions in the decisions taken by the academic staff.
- 4) Ethical Climate Leadership: There are 11 items in total in this data collection instrument used to assess whether the environment the academic staff share with other shareholders, and their relations with each other, are positive or negative.

Cronbach's Alfa internal consistency test was used to assess the reliability of the study. We have found a coefficient of .97 for the whole scale. The following Cronbach Alfa internal consistency coefficients have come out in the sub-dimensions of the scale: .93 in communicational ethical leadership, .90 in behavioral ethical leadership, .85 in ethical decision making and ethical leadership and .90 in the sub-dimension of ethical climate leadership.

2.3 Analysis of Data

Descriptive statistical methods such as mean and standard deviation, independent sample t-test and ANOVA variance analysis were used to analyze the data collected.

3. Findings

The findings obtained in the study have been organized in sub-problems and sorted in sub-dimensions of ethical leadership as communication ethics, climate ethics, ethics in decision making, behavioral ethics.

Table 1. The results of mean and standard deviation of the perceptions of students about the ethical leadership dimensions of academic staff

Dimensions	n	X	Sd
Communicative ethical leadership	215	2.87	.85
Behavioral ethical leadership	215	3.00	.86
Ethical decision making and ethical leadership	215	3.02	.82
Ethical climate leadership	215	2.83	.83
Ethical leadership	215	2.92	.79

Examining the Table 1, we observe that the mean of the conceptions of the participating undergraduate and graduate students about the ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff has been 2.92 and the result of standard deviation has been .79. As for the sub-dimensions of ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff, the highest mean score has come out as 3,02 scores in the dimension of decision making and ethical leadership, and the lowest mean score has been the one obtained in the dimension of ethical climate leadership with 2,83 scores. The mean in the sub-dimensions of the behavioral and communicative ethical leadership have been 3, 00 and 2, 87 respectively.

Table 2. The results of mean, standard deviation and t test concerning the conceptions of the students about the ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff defined by the educational levels of the students

Dimensions	Educational Level	n	X	Sd	t	p
Communicative Ethical Leadership	Undergraduate	148	2.61	.76	-7.748	.000*
	Graduate	60	3.51	.74		
Behavioral Ethical Leadership	Undergraduate	148	2.76	.76	-7.605	.000*
	Graduate	60	3.65	.77		
Ethical Decision Making and Ethical Leadership	Undergraduate	148	2.80	.730	-6.813	.000*
	Graduate	60	3.57	.77		
Ethical Climate Leadership	Undergraduate	148	2.54	.69	-9.473	.000*
	Graduate	60	3.56	.71		

* p<.05.

Examining the Table 2, we have observed that the results defined by the educational level of the participating students show that there is a significant difference between the behaviors of academic staff in sub-dimensions of communicative ethical leadership ($t=-7.748$; $p<.05$), behavioral ethical leadership ($t=-7.605$; $p<.05$), ethical leadership in decision making processes ($t=-6.913$; $p<.05$) and ethical climate leadership ($t=-9.473$; $p<.05$).

On the other hand we have specified that the mean scores of graduate students in relation to the behaviors of academic staff in these sub-dimensions (3.51, 3.65, 3.57 and 3.56) have come out higher than those of undergraduate students (2.61, 2.76, 2.80 and 2.54) Thus we can say that the conception of graduate students about the ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff is more positive than that of undergraduate students.

Table 3. The results of the t-test concerning the conceptions of the students about the ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff defined by the gender of the students

Dimensions	Gender	n	X	Sd	t	p
Communicative Ethical Leadership	Male	119	2.95	.89	1.415	.158
	Female	91	2.78	.80		
Behavioral Ethical Leadership	Male	119	3.06	.92	.931	3.53
	Female	91	2.95	.77		
Ethical Decision Making and Ethical Leadership	Male	119	3.05	.89	.504	.615
	Female	91	2.99	.72		
Ethical Climate Leadership	Male	119	2.87	.88	.679	.498
	Female	91	2.79	.76		

*p<.05.

Examining the Table 3 we have observed that the results defined by the gender of the participating students show that there is no significant difference between the behaviors of academic staff in sub-dimensions of communicative ethical leadership ($t=1.415$; $p>.05$), behavioral ethical leadership ($t=.931$; $p>.05$), ethical leadership in decision making processes ($t=.504$; $p>.05$) and ethical climate leadership ($t=.679$; $p>.05$).

On the other hand we have specified that the mean scores of male students in relation to the behaviors of academic staff in these sub-dimensions (2.95, 3.06, 3.05, 2.87) have come out higher than those of female students (2.78, 2.95, 2.99, 2.79).

In this case we can say that the conception of the male students about the ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff is more positive than that of the female students.

Table 4. The results of mean and standard deviation about the ethical leadership conceptions of the participating students by age group variables

Dimensions	Age	n	X	Sd
Communicational Ethical Leadership	18-21 ages	35	2.62	.68
	22-25 ages	99	2.58	.80
	26 and over	77	3.38	.77
	Total	211	2.88	.85
Behavioral Ethical Leadership	18-21 ages	35	2.80	.79
	22-25 ages	99	2.71	.76
	26 and over	77	3.50	.78
	Total	211	3.01	.85
Ethics in decision making and ethical leadership	18-21 ages	35	2.69	.77
	22-25 ages	99	2.84	.75
	26 and over	77	3.42	.77
	Total	211	3.03	.81
Ethical Climate Leadership	18-21 ages	35	2.50	.55
	22-25 ages	99	2.51	.73
	26 and over	77	3.41	.76
	Total	211	2.83	.83

Analyzing the Table 4 we have specified that the conception of the students of and over 26 years of age about the ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff in the sub-dimensions of communicative ethical leadership ($X=3.38$), behavioral ethical leadership ($X=3.50$), ethical leadership in decision making ($X=3.42$) and ethical climate leadership ($X=3.41$) have come out higher than that of the students between 18- 21 ages ($X=3.62$; $X=2.80$; $X= 2.69$ and $X=2.50$) and that of students between 22 and 25 ages ($X=3.58$; $X=2.71$; $X= 2.84$ and $X=2.51$). The results of the ANOVA test carried out by age groups of the students to find out if there is a significant difference between ethical behaviors dimensions are given in Table 5.

Table 5. ANOVA results in relation to the ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff by age groups of the students

Dimensions	Variance source	Sum of squares	sd	Mean of squares	F	p	Tukey-HSD
Communicative Ethical Leadership	Between-Groups	30.385	2	15.193	25.376	.000*	1-2,3 2-3
	Within groups	124.529	208	.559			
	Total	154.914	210				
Behavioral Ethical Leadership	Between-Groups	28.646	2	14.323	23.614	.000*	1-2,3 2-3
	Within groups	126.162	208	.607			
	Total	154.808	210				
Ethical Decision Making and Ethical Leadership	Between-Groups	19.624	2	9.812	16.806	.000*	1-2,3 2-3
	Within groups	121.436	208	.584			
	Total	141.060	210				
Ethical Climate Leadership	Between-Groups	39.894	2	19.947	38.752	.000*	1-2,3 2-3
	Within groups	107.065	208	.515			
	Total	146.959	210				

* $p<.05$ (note: 1=between 18-21 ages; 2=between 22-25 ages; 3=26 age and over).

We observe, examining the Table 5, that there is a significant difference between the conceptions of the students about ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff defined by their age groups in the sub-dimensions of communicative ethical leadership [$F=25.376$; $p<.05$], behavioral ethical leadership [$F=23.614$; $p<.05$], ethical leadership in decision making processes [$F=16.806$; $p<.05$] and ethical climate leadership [$F=38.752$; $p<.05$].

Tukey-HSD analysis was carried out to find out the source of this difference. The results of this analysis show that there is a significant difference between the conceptions of the students of the age groups of 18-21, 22-25 and the one of and over 26 years of age in respect of the ethical behaviors of academic staff in communicative ethical

leadership, behavioral ethical leadership, ethical leadership in decision making processes, and ethical climate leadership. Furthermore we have found out that there is a significant difference between the students in the group 22-25 ages and those in the group of and over 26 years of age.

4. Conclusion

We have come to the conclusion that the conceptions of undergraduate and graduate students in respect of ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff realize at mid-level.

Concerning the results, it can be claimed that the academic staff do not have ethical leadership applications at the desired level towards under graduate and graduate students. There are especially problems in terms of ethical climate leadership behaviors. Communication barriers, mutual misperception between academic staff and students, the intensity of the courses, and the examination system can be shown as the sources of these problems. In addition, the formal behaviors of lecturers, the permanent rules created by the staff and the ignorance of students in class participations and decision-making processes can be stressed as other significant causes of the failures.

Concerning their educational level, there is a significant difference between under graduate and graduate students' feelings towards academic staff. It was found that the mean of graduate students towards academic staffs' communication ethics, climate ethics, ethics in decision making, behavioral ethics were higher than those of under graduate students'. Since graduate students have a profession, certain roles and responsibilities and thus they can maintain a more desirable communication with academic staff are the reasons for this significant difference. Furthermore, it is an observed fact that academic staffs have different behaviors towards graduate students.

We have realized that the views of graduate students about ethical leadership behaviors of lecturer are more positive than those of undergraduate students'. It can be claimed that this is largely because graduate students have more objective and impartial evaluations than under graduate students.

We have observed that the results defined by the gender of the participating students show that there is no significant difference between the behaviors of academic staff in sub-dimensions of communicative ethical leadership. On the other hand we have specified that the mean scores of male students in relation to the behaviors of academic staff in these sub-dimensions have come out higher than those of female students. In this case we can say that the conception of the female students about the ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff is more negative than that of the male students.

The female students' views on the deficiencies existing in ethical and especially communication ethical leadership behaviors of lecturers seem to be the underlying reasons of this finding. Besides, it can be proposed that lecturers are more open to communication towards male students.

The results of this analysis show that there is a significant difference between the conceptions of the students of the age groups of 18-21, 22-25 and the one of and over 26 years of age in respect of the ethical leadership behaviors of academic staff. It can be argued that the students between the ages of 18-25 do not find lecturers' behaviors ethical and that they have a higher level of expectations. As for those at the age of 26 and over, it can be stated that they have more realistic evaluation criteria about ethical leadership behaviors.

Recommendations concerning the research findings: A course content based on ethical concepts can be prepared and given as a course at under graduate and graduate levels at universities. It is compulsory to stress the importance of social ethics in all courses and situations. Applications illustrating the consequences of desired and undesired ethical behaviors can be conducted by models and samples. Ethic and ethical leadership should be encouraged in education. It is a must to constitute ethical committees in all organizations, especially at universities and educational institutions. Deterrent and effective precautions and punishment should be realized for those breaking ethical values. Especially at universities, the priority must be given to ethical communication between academic staff and students. All stakeholders must be consulted in decision making process for creating ethical rules.

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Note.

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