

A Sociological Analysis of Leadership in Turkish Women (Fatma Aliye and Halide Edip Adıvar Cases)

Aylin Görgün-Baran

Department of Sociology, Faculty of Letters,
Hacettepe University, Ankara, Turkey

Abstract: Therefore this research, oriented from the theory of leadership qualities, examines the position of leadership of Turkish women's struggle during the process of independence. In this regard, their assumed responsibilities in dispatching and management during the national struggle make it possible for their leadership to be examined. The subject of leadership in Turkish women is explained through only two of these women who have had great contributions to the struggle of national independence, Fatma Aliye and Halide Edip Adıvar. As such, these two women leaders have presented a planned, scheduled, strategizing personas with strong organizing, decision making and public speaking and influencing skills while drawing the image of the modern Turkish woman. A final common point is that they have both seen the founding of modern Turkey and been a part of the process. In conclusion, both Halide Edip and Fatma Aliye are charismatic and visionary leaders who have become a source of pride and inspirational role models for Turkish women.

Key words : Leadership • Turkish women leaders • Historical perspective • Sociological analysis • Leadership theories • War of independence

INTRODUCTION

With the fast paced globalization, the phenomenon of leadership has become of significant importance not only in business affairs but social life as well; but the term leadership is associated solely with firms and businesses because a good management and therefore a good leader are two of the foremost basic factors that drive a company to success. The success of the organization is almost of equal value to the leader's management and human relations. If the dispatching and management aspects of leadership are considered, it is possible to say that women in Turkey have both leadership and management skills [1]. The meaning of leadership is especially strong in the minds of people who have been through a time of war. War, as stated by Oetinger *et al.* (2002:62-67) is a time of danger [2]. Therefore it is important to strategize and develop tactics. Also, it takes a great amount of courage to apply these tactics and strategies. Therefore decisiveness is a must. Decisiveness is a reflection of courage and is interconnected with wits. When it comes to leadership, experience and action intelligence* are joint with courage. These indicators help the leader strategize with the guidance of wits. Therefore this research,

oriented from the theory of leadership qualities, examines the position of leadership of Turkish women's struggle during the process of independence. In this regard, their assumed responsibilities in dispatching and management during the national struggle make it possible for their leadership to be examined. The subject of leadership in Turkish women is explained through only two of these women who have had great contributions to the struggle of national independence, Fatma Aliye and Halide Edip Adıvar. The subject of leadership in contemporary Turkish women is considered as the subject of a different research.

Leadership Theories: It is a fact that leadership has a growing importance with globalization on the rise. Theories developed in this regard, while making the analysis of leadership easier on one hand, cause ambiguity on the other. Ethics in leadership is a particular one of these because the idea of success, at the times it clashes with personal benefits, may become a factor which breaks ethics. Let us close this subject and move on to leadership theories. Three basic criteria lead to three different leadership theories. These are: The theory of leadership qualities, behaviouralism and situational

favorableness. In regard to the subject, we will try to analyze the Turkish women during the process of liberation with the aid of leadership theories.

The basic principle of the leadership theory is that leadership is not acquirable but an innate set of skills. The superior skills those are innate to some show a measure of characteristics that set them aside from other people. These characteristics are listed under three categories. The first category is personal traits. These are: Adaptation, adjusting normality, aggressiveness and seeking remedy, superiority, emotional balance and control, independence, authenticity and creativity, characteristic integrity and confidence. The second category is skills. These are: Intelligence, estimation and certainty, knowledge and articulation. The third category consists of social skills. These are: Cooperation, coordination, management, solidarity, popularity and prestige, being social, social exchanges, courtesy and diplomacy. In regard to these criteria, K. Lewin talks about two types of leaders; autocratic and democratic. However, further research by Tannenbaum and Schmidt emphasize that a leader should be autocratic and democratic depending on the situation. These authors mention the importance of a leader being able to balance himself between autocratic and democratic to adapt to different situations. If time is limited and an immediate decision is of the essence, the autocratic style of the leader is important. On the other hand, a factor in the autocratic and democratic attitude of the leader is the capabilities of his subordinates. Working with subordinates of low capabilities causes the autocratic approach to be leaned towards [2,3]. Therefore who the leaders work with and the unit's attributions are defining factors of autocratic or democratic leadership. It is without a doubt that leadership and management have different meanings. It is observed that while management requires an educational process, leadership is based on characteristic traits. However; it is only after these traits have been forged with managerial education that a successful leader is born. Therefore, the title leader is given to those who take responsibility to direct change that will benefit the society and who impose these responsibilities on their decisions and actions based on intuition, intelligence and knowledge. A leader has strong elocution. He has a vision. He listens to people patiently to understand them. He creates opportunities for people around him to improve their good aspects and creates an environment for change and constant learning. He is charismatic because of his social values and characteristic traits. He

presents a role model with his exemplary traits and consistent behavior. Also, a leader must control his own behavior, be sensitive in interpersonal relations, be capable of creating team spirit, be able to make fast and correct decisions in complicated situations, be able to motivate, strategize and apply these strategies [1,4,5]. Leadership types other than autocratic and democratic should also be mentioned. These are, as stated by Onay-Özkaya (2004:163-174), charismatic, transformation and visionary leadership [1]. The transformational and visionary leadership styles are better suited for contemporary organizations.

A charismatic leader, as defined by Weber, is someone who can inspire and influence the masses and manipulate them with his personal traits and extraordinary skills. Therefore, the charismatic leader uses these skills as moral, religious and heroic influences. Rationalism is in the foreground of charismatic leadership and the leader's influence over the masses should not be disregarded [6,7]. Having a vision bears an important role in being a charismatic leader. Power, being dominant in his respective field and confidence are other indicators of a charismatic leader [1].

A transformation leader has the characteristics of creating a common vision, transferring the vision, developing the idea of supportive units, guiding the application (exercise), project a personality of dedication and the skill to convert and change these characteristics [1]. On the other hand, as Morris (relayed by: Onay-Özkaya 2004:163-174) indicates, visionary leaders should create alternative solutions to more complicated problems, consider innovations and keep environmental complications in mind [1]. Therefore, he is a goal-oriented leader who solves problems by rational decisions.

Though these leadership types seem different, they usually overlap in the context of traits a leader should possess. It is observed that as leadership theories, behaviouralism and situational favorableness theories have parallel definitions. A leader's courses of action depending on the situation against the complicated problems of our time are related in great measure to leadership types. According to the complexity leadership theory Uhl-Bien & Marion (2007:304) emphasize, a leader should be capable of developing solutions to harmony problems in organizations [8]. The Complex Adaptive System (CAS) is heavily based on adaptation and renovation, flexible, creative, and open to learning and a highly coordinated independent structure. The fast paced

changes of our day from the industrial age to the information age show that the idea of leadership may show changes depending on the situation.

The Leadership of Turkish Women Through Historical Perspective: Historical perspective shows that Turkish women, especially in the palace, are dominant in fields of political power and rulership. As this subject is very broad, we will discuss women leaders who have become legendary during the Huns-Gokturks, Seljuk and Ottomans.

History shows that in Turkic nations since the Huns and especially in the Gokturks, while the sovereign receives his title with a ceremony, his wife is given the title lady (katun; later transformed to the word "hatun", still used but with different connotation - tn). In the Orkhon Inscriptions, Bilge (Piqie) Khan mentions the assembled ascension of his father Elteris Khan and his mother Elbige Hatun. In Turkic states, the Hatun's were chieftains and had a say in the ruling of the government. It is stated that these women who had their own palaces would join the assembly and sometimes welcomed emissaries. Historians relate this to the fact that they were mothers of future Khans [9,10]. On the other hand, it is historically documented that aside from the patriarchal system of the Kirghiz, women in the Altai and Yakut societies had a say in family matters, sold products they grew in the bazaars, made decisions together with their spouses and got a share of inheritance [10]. For example, Turakina, wife of Ogedey Khan, reigned for four years after the death of her husband and Fatma Hatun was head vizier for five years [11]. These facts show that Turkish women have been influential in both familial and public matters and have displayed leadership qualities.

Seljuk (1040 - 1308) women, as with the Gokturks, have been known to show leadership. Three women during the Seljuk's period should Turkan Hatun, wife of Melik Shah (1072 - 1092), Harizm^aah Alaüddin Mehmed's mother Turkan Hatun (identical names with Melik Shah's wife), Ahi Evren's wife Fatma Baci. One of Melik Shah's wives, Turkan Hatun, struggled for her five year old son to take the throne and was successful. She also proclaimed herself as Hatun-ül Celaliye (literary translation: woman of glory) thus rose to power (1092). Her long reign was full of power struggles. These struggles, along with showing her strong personality and ambition for power, point to her ability to strategize, influence masses and create team spirit. Alaüddin Mehmed's mother, Turkan Hatun, has been more effective during her son's reign than him. She has led one of the

strongest judicial organizations of the time, the Divan-i Mezalim. The characteristically strong Turkan Hatun has proclaimed herself as Hüdavend-i Cihan. Her issued orders have been carried out more than her son's. Turkan Hatun has presented a humble, intelligent and just personality. She was supportive of the poor and had great influence on the masses [11]. Her stand is consistent with leadership qualities.

Records of the Seljuk's have also shown an establishment called "Bacılık" (Sisterhood). Fatma Baci was the leader of this organization established under the Anatolian Seljuk's. This organization has great stature in the Bektashi order. Fatma Baci was an elderly lady whom the saints and dervishes revered and who Hadji Bektash respected and frequently visited. To be respected by someone else depends on characteristics and being a figure of authority. It is said that she is therefore called "kadın ağa" (woman agha). It is said that this old lady was present in the council of saints, has prepared feasts for saints and welcomed guests. The tradition of having a woman in this council of men is a tradition that lives on today. It is clearly seen that Fatma Baci has started a tradition and has posed an example to women. It takes a specific amount of knowledge and experience to organize the council and prepare a feast for the guests as well as dispatching and managerial skills. This shows the leader side of Fatma Baci. Fatma Baci's date of birth and passing are unknown; but it is known that she has lived during and a short while after the Hadji Bektashi period (1213-1271) [12].

In the Ottoman period (1299-1919), mothers of sultans were titled sultanas and their wives were titled woman patrons. Sultanas have had a distinct position in the Empire. They have been deeply respected by their sultan sons and have aided in governing the empire. Therefore sultanas had vast authorities such as collecting revenues from the mint, starting foundations in their own names etc. The harem was a responsibility of the sultana. The most reputable sultana of the Ottoman period is Kosem Sultan, mother to Sultan Murat IV and Sultan Ibrahim. Having a strong personality and great desire for power, Kosem Sultan has stepped into state business and created various tactics and strategies in the fight for power. Kosem Sultan has gained a reputation of being intelligent, skilled and able to organize as well as ruthless [13]. Her ruthlessness has caused her to be viewed as someone who uses leadership skills for personal benefit in the fight for dominance and power. It could be said that her ambition has gotten the best of her. Mehmed III's mother, Safiye was also a sultana influential in state business.

Despite their ruthless rulership, these women were known to have started charities, foundations, aided the needy and have had "kulliye"s (complex of buildings adjacent to mosques similar to community centers of today's western civilizations - tn.) [13,14].

Hurrem Sultan, Suleiman The Magnificent's wife, is another woman with leadership skills which has been a factor in governing [14]. Because the eras of dominance of these three women were plagued with plots and schemes, Mehmed IV's mother Turhan Sultan has ended it. Turhan Sultan's upbringing dictated that women patrons and sultanas should not be involved in state matters and this was in effect until the empire's end [13].

Fatma Hanım, another influential woman of the Ottoman period, first served as a head mistress of the Rüştiye Mektebi (school for students who have come of age-tn.) between 1871-1872. This shows the consistency between managerial and leadership skills. In 1873, however, women teachers have not given any course other than sewing and embroidery [15]. After the beginning of the westernization, female students have been admitted to higher education facilities named "İnas Darülfünunu" to transform the existent social structure in 1914 and seven female students have majored in medicine [16]. These developments were important in the education of women who would later be a part of the governing system. As stated by Göle (1992), the reason for the application of social transformation through women is women's transformative skills [17]. Transformation means to diminish the old, construct the new and aid in its growth and continuity. This is one of leadership's criteria.

During the Turkish struggle for independence, women have been known to found women's associations, known today as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). These associations are "Kasaba İslam Kadınları Cemiyeti (1919)" (Local Women of İslam), Anadolu Kadınları Müdafaa-i Vatan Cemiyeti (1919) (Anatolian Women's Homeland Defense) in Sivas, Müdafaa-i Hukuk Kadınlar Şubesi (1919) (Defense of Rights Women's Branch) in Kastamonu. The year of foundation of these associations are the same. They foresee a change in the Ottoman system with the administrative reforms. Therefore, it is no coincidence that women's support has been sought for the war of independence [15,18]. Founding associations in a country where the administration is dominated by men takes courage and patience which shows the part played by women in the struggle.

After the founding of the republic, women's political rights have been deemed important for making the new ideas settle among the public. Women's success on and

off the front line has been rewarded in a way. After being given suffrage in 1934, women have become equal to men in the political domain [19]. The rights given to women after the founding of the republic has created a perception of "republican woman". These are generally about the opportunities fathers of the republic have given their daughters [17]. Numerous women who have been brought up with the idea of protecting the republic have been able to overcome and rise to important positions and have displayed leadership qualities [1]. Though today their numbers are few, women in leading positions have important duties such as ministers, political party leaders, NGO leaders, district and province governors and rectors [20]. Leadership in women in today's world is the case of another study. We will now, as our subject dictates, examine the struggle of Turkish women through leadership qualities from the time of the administrative reforms (1839) to the founding of the republic (1923). We will use two women, Halide Edip and Fatma Aliye, as examples.

Women Leaders During the Administrative Reforms and the National Struggle:

This chapter discusses (with the documentation at hand) the leadership of Turkish women who have fought for their country's freedom. According to research by Kurnaz (1991:9-44) the Ottoman Empire has taken on many changes from the administrative reforms to the second constitutional monarchy (1839-1908). Rusdiyes for women, vocational education, Industrial Schools for Women, Darulmuallim at (a school for the education of female teachers for primary and secondary schools -tn) have been established taking stock of educating and raising women according to modern standards. Jural changes for women have been admitted and female authors have started an intellectual presents in the world of literature. The most recognized among these authors are Fatma Aliye (1864-1936) and Nigar Binti Osman (1856-1918). Also, publications for women have increased in the media. This has allowed women to catch up on westernization. During the second constitutional monarchy, the movement in education for women has continued and women's place in society, their education and mode of dressing have been discussed frequently in the media. But the years of the national struggle has brought up the issue of women joining the battle on and off the front lines. Among women who have joined the war are: Halide Edip, Asker (Soldier) Saima, Kılavuz (Guide) Hatice, Tayyar Rahmiye, Maraşlı Kadın (means woman from Maras, her name is unknown), Fatma Seher Hanım (Kara Fatma - Fatma the Black),

Gördesli Makbule, Binbaşı (Major) Ayşe, Nezahat Hanım, Süreyya Sülün Hanım. These women have made history [15]. To make history, one must be able to be organizing, cooperative, helpful, strategizing and applying those strategies. It is hard to say that these women had a good education but they were well mannered with strong ideas of nationalism and who were all local notables. The leader-like behaviour of these women who have abstained no sacrifice for their country and who have rallied around a common goal are noteworthy. We will now discuss two women who have played an active role before and after the war who were also both authors.

Fatma Aliye (1864 - 1936): Fatma Aliye, daughter of Ahmet Cevdet Pasha, is considered the first woman to take part in the intellectual world with her writing. She was the first woman in literature after the administrative reforms. She is claimed to have started the discussion of Turkish women's issues in society with her work noted by the authorities which was called *Nisvan-ı İslam* (Women in Islam). She is also mentioned to respond to criticism in her articles in newspapers and to take on altercations with her male colleagues. Having received an education abroad, she has also created work in the field of translation. Her translation of George Ohnet's *Volonte* has caused controversy. A Turkish woman translating a novel from another language was thought to lack credibility for a long while. Ahmet Mithat Efendi has defended Fatma Aliye throughout this controversy and has offered her a column in his newspaper and let her voice be heard [21].

Fatma Aliye has partaken in social activities, helped gather aid for the wounded from families during the war with Greece in 1896. Through the newspaper *Tercüman-ı Hakikat*, she has called out to women to aid the soldiers and helped gather goods for the army (clothing etc.), which added up to such great sums that it was difficult to find storage. This has created a big movement and led the way for further charities and campaigns. She was the chairman of the *Cemiyet-i İmdadiye*. Being an activist writer, she has discussed with her guests at her manor the issues of Ottoman women's issues about divorcing, polygamy, veiling and concubinage. During her creation of *Nisvan-ı İslam* (Women in Islam), she has welcomed guests from abroad and informed them on Turkish women's education, place in society, mode of dressing, fashion and concubinage. She has suggested that there is no drawback to Turkish women following up on fashion, wearing domestic fabrics and that it is important to recognize when to dress up in Turkish or western styles [15,22]. Consequently, she has presented a

missionary understanding in defending Turkish women against foreigners. Having taken on the mission of a cultural ambassador, she has shown leadership attributes by informing foreigners both abroad and in the homeland. Being a pioneer, influencing the masses, discussing women's issues in her social cycles and courageously carrying on these discussions in her column can be perceived as a leader's behavior. It is also clear that she was a writer sensitive to women's issues. She bore a high nationally minded approach, not a westernizer but not completely against westernism. She possessed a leader's ferociousness in speaking her opinions and courageously defending them. She is remembered as a writer who acted open heartedly and idealistically to create the image of a modern woman. She has led Turkish women as a role model. These attributes show that she is a leader.

Halide Edip Adıvar (1882-1964): She is recognized as the modern Turkish women's pioneer and the most famous Turkish female author. Halide Edip, who was educated and spoke another language, is a political intellectual in Turkish cultural and political history. H. Edip is remembered with her national identity and as a woman in Turkish history [23]. She has presented an activist pioneer's image early in her life. She was remembered as the Halide Onbasi (corporal) of the war of independence and the duties she has assumed on and off the front lines has made her a leader. It was part of H. Edip's personality and mission that she founded the first organized step for the ascension of Turkish women, a society called *Teali-i Nisvan* (ascension of women), served in social and educational services and as a caretaker during the Balkan Wars. She gained quite a reputation with her speech at the Istanbul-Sultanahmet meeting on June 6, 1919. Her speech has had a great impact on the people. Her eloquent speech about duties to help the nation on its way to freedom and her call to both men and women has been deeply effective. She shaped her country's future not only as an activist, but with her writing as well. Her novel "*Ateşten Gömlek*" (The Daughter of Smyrna or The Shirt of Flame) is an epic recital of the Sakarya Victory [21].

She was in the company that acceded to Izmir during the war of independence and she was given the title Corporal. The name Halide Edip was a symbol identified with the national struggle. After the founding of the republic, Halide Edip's novels took a turn to chronologically describing Turkey's social and political events. *Sinekli Bakkal* (The Clown and His Daughter), *Handan*, *Yeni Turan*, *Ateşten Gömlek* (The Daughter of

Smyrna or The Shirt of Flame), Vurun Kahpeye, Tatarcık ve Sonsuz Panayır in particular contain information on the Turkish nation's history from the period of Abdulhamit II, to the second constitutional monarchy, the Balkan Wars, World War I, the occupation of Anatolia and Istanbul, the national freedom movement and the Republic of Turkey [21]. In this regard, Halide Edip is a role model and a leader to Turkish women who lead the society with their writing. The characters in her novels are active, outward, idealist, moralist, fearless, confident, challenging fighters with high moral courage. This identifies with her own personality and she is an important role model in the Turkish modernization.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

It has been this article's purpose to examine how Turkish women joined the efforts and how they contributed as leaders during the years of struggle for freedom (1919-1923).

According to the leadership attributes theory, a person's bio-psychological and social knowledge and his superior skills make him a leader. It is possible to sometimes recognize someone with low or no education as a leader. The fact that Turkish women of old tribes and states were active in familial matters and bazaars is an example. It is also possible to see this in the Bacılık (sisterhood) of the Seljuk.

In this regard, Turkish women's assumed duties on and off the front lines and their success in carrying them out makes it possible for us to dub them leaders. Historical progress shows that Turkish women have a leadership tradition. Starting from the Gokturks and leading up to the Anatolian Seljuk's and the Ottomans, be it women of the palace or Anatolian women, they have displayed leadership qualities. The conditions of the national struggle especially show how faithful Turkish women are with a nationalist identity. Both Fatma Aliye and Halide Edip have done their part in the movement with their speeches, novels and with their discussions informing their foreigner guests. They have adopted a mission in the concept of leadership. They have become role models for women of their own generations and those to come. They have led not only women, but also men during the national struggle. Examining women's problems under a national identity, they have made their voices be heard and become the voices of those who could not be heard.

Turkish women have contributed to the fight by carrying ammo, supplying clothing and food on the front

line and tending to the wounded, gathering aid off the front line. Though these efforts by Turkish women seem like secondary duties, they have been tested thoroughly on dispatching and managing, preventing breakdowns, posing a decisive front, not giving up in the face of all difficulties and acting with courage and have succeeded. These actions are consistent with leadership. It takes strategizing to evade the dangers brought forth by war. Both women have achieved organization and coordination of their assumed responsibilities by strategizing and developing tactics. They have earned the military bureaucracy's respect with their practical and social intelligence. The fact that both of these highly skilled women had a charismatic personality cannot be ignored. Their displayed behaviour while carrying out their duties in the situational diversification of war time makes them transformative and visionary leaders.

Halide Edip and Fatma Aliye's common point is that they are pioneers in the world of literature. Another common point is that they both handled women's issues. They have written on women thus creating a stand which is clearly the product of a strategy. As such, these two women leaders have presented a planned, scheduled, strategizing personas with strong organizing, decision making and public speaking and influencing skills while drawing the image of the modern Turkish woman. A final common point is that they have both seen the founding of modern Turkey and been a part of the process.

In conclusion, both Halide Edip and Fatma Aliye are charismatic and visionary leaders who have become a source of pride and inspirational role models for Turkish women.

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