ESTABLISHING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN TEACHER LEADERSHIP AND STUDENTS' SELF-EFFICACY: INVESTIGATING THE MEDIATING ROLES OF STUDENTS' CAREER ADAPTABILITY

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ABSTRACT

This paper investigates the impact of teacher leadership on students' self-efficacy, considering the intermediary functions of students' career adaptability. Utilizing a cross-sectional survey approach, this study emphasizes quantitative analytical techniques to scrutinize the data procured from 221 students in a public university. Confirmatory factor analysis alongside structural equation modeling methodologies was employed. The results indicated that, in particular, teacher leadership has direct and indirect effects on students' self-efficacy through career adaptability. This study concludes that firstly, teacher-classroom leadership makes a difference in students' self-efficacy, and secondly, career adaptability is a valuable mediating factor that increases the degree of difference.

INTRODUCTION

Over recent decades, educational research has devoted significant attention to the concept of teacher leadership (TL). The evidence base for the positive impact of teacher leadership on a range of outcomes has grown considerably over time. Studies have demonstrated that it can enhance academic performance (Adhikary, 2017; Mujis & Harris, 2003), support student development (Uysal & Sarıer, 2019; York-Barr & Duke, 2004), and foster Career Readiness (Akert & Martin, 2012). Furthermore, recent research has expanded the purview of teacher leadership (TL) by demonstrating its influence on teacher self-efficacy, which subsequently affects student self-efficacy (S-EF). Klassen and Chiu (2010) have elucidated the relationship between teacher self-efficacy (S-EF) and critical student factors like academic achievement and motivation, as well as teacher-related aspects such as commitment and job satisfaction. Additionally, Xie et al. (2022) have demonstrated that teacher S-EF is shaped by factors like perceived principal leadership, collegial collaboration, and pedagogical tenure. Moreover, research conducted by Ma and Marion (2019) has substantiated the direct and positive impact of instructional leadership on teacher efficacy, particularly with regard to the establishment and maintenance of an optimal learning environment.

The extant literature indicates that the examination of the effects of TL is not yet fully comprehensive. This study aims to examine the multifaceted nature of teacher leadership within a Turkish public university, with a particular emphasis on its impact on students' S-EF and adaptability skills, which are essential for success in the dynamic and challenging demands inherent in their chosen careers. The objective is to conduct a rigorous examination of the specific TL methodologies that facilitate the comprehensive growth of students at this public university. By identifying effective pedagogical strategies, the research illuminates methods for enhancing comprehensive student development.

This investigation demonstrates how TL contributes indirectly to enhancing student S-EF, thereby providing them with the capacity to overcome challenges, make prudent decisions, and maintain resilience in the face of adversity. The argument is put forth that teacher leaders play a pivotal role in the creation and nurturing of an environment conducive to learning and in attaining educational success by serving as exemplars (Jimerson et al., 2015; Smith & Engelsen, 2013). Furthermore, the study articulates the manner in which these leadership practices facilitate the nurturing of adaptable skills, thereby empowering university students to navigate varied career trajectories within their sphere proficiently.

The objective of this research is to examine the influence of teacher leadership (TL) on the self-efficacy (S-EF) and career adaptability (CA) of students attending a Turkish state university. The aim of the present study is to ascertain how different TL strategies, including pedagogical approaches, mentorship, and role modeling, affect the development of these competencies. This study is guided by two primary research questions: (1) How does TL influence the self-efficacy of students within a university environment? (2) Which specific TL practices are most effective in enhancing students' career adaptability? The study proposes that TL significantly contributes to the improvement of students' self-efficacy and career adaptability, thereby equipping them to successfully navigate the multifaceted challenges of their future careers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature explains the approaches used to conceptualize TL, S-EF, and CA. TL behaviors can influence not only students' performance in lessons but also their self-confidence, goal-setting skills, and career-related abilities. These leadership styles can shape students' S-EF and enhance their motivation toward career goals.

Teacher Leadership

TL involves teachers directing and shaping the educational environment in their schools. This includes guiding other teachers, participating in school decision-making processes, and taking on administrative responsibilities within the school (Brownell & Pajares, 1999; Can, 2009; Crowther et al., 2009; Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015; Mujis & Harris, 2003). We believe that for TL to emerge, appropriate contexts need to be created and provoked. TL is influenced by several factors, such as school culture, administrative support, teacher attitudes and behaviors, professional development, and organizational structure. A school culture that values teachers' contributions and collaboration can create an environment where TL thrives (Mujis & Harris, 2006). Teachers who view themselves as leaders and believe they can make a positive impact exhibit strong leadership qualities (Nadelson et al., 2022; Wenner & Campbell, 2016). Teachers need professional development opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills required to become effective leaders. Opportunities such as these can greatly contribute to the development of teachers' confidence in assuming leadership positions. Teacher leaders are expected to participate in curriculum preparation, select appropriate course materials, influence student behavior, provide input on administrative decisions, guide students based on their interests and abilities, and lead the professional development of colleagues (Barth, 2001). The concept of TL is the combination of two important roles in a teacher: teaching and leading. Teacher leaders are defined as those who have teaching experience and are respected by their colleagues. The concept of TL refers to the process by which teachers influence colleagues, administrators, and other members of the school community to improve various teaching and learning activities, thereby ensuring students' learning and increasing their achievement (York-Barr & Duke, 2004).

Teacher leadership can significantly impact student S-EF, which is the belief in one's abilities to complete a task or achieve a goal (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Effective TL can serve as a positive role model for students by demonstrating belief in their abilities to overcome challenges. This role modeling can help students increase their S-EF. Teacher leaders can increase their students' confidence in their abilities by believing in them and helping them to see their own potential. They can provide challenging projects or assignments that allow students to use and develop their skills, and when students succeed at these tasks, their S-EF can increase (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). When students realize that their abilities can be improved through effort and practice, they are more likely to believe in their own capabilities. In summary, TL can positively impact student S-EF by providing supportive and empowering experiences in the classroom. Effective TL can create an environment that fosters students' confidence and resilience. TL has been shown to have a significant impact on student academic success. Several studies have highlighted the influence of TL on student outcomes. For instance, Robinson et al. (2008) emphasized that school leaders have small and indirect effects on student outcomes that are essentially mediated by teachers. Additionally, Nafi'a and Suyatno (2020) found that teachers' leadership is an important factor that influences students' motivation and learning success. Moreover, Khan et al. (2020) hypothesized that principals' instructional leadership indirectly enhances students' academic performance through teacher organizational commitment. Furthermore, Trigueros et al. (2020) demonstrated that TL positively predicted academic resilience and motivation, which in turn affected academic performance. Similarly, Thien and Chan (2020) highlighted that with the support and supervision from school leaders, teachers are likely to believe that students are capable of academic success regardless of their learning styles, abilities, or needs. These findings emphasize the critical significance of TL in promoting a constructive academic environment in which students can attain success.

Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1982) pioneered the concept of S-EF, defining it as an individual's conviction in their capability to accomplish specific tasks or succeed in certain situations. This notion has garnered extensive investigation across diverse disciplines, including developmental psychology, science education, mathematics, and computer science. As a cognitive factor influencing behavior and performance, S-EF encompasses an individual's confidence in their competencies and its impact on their decision-making, level of effort, and persistence in goal attainment (Bandura, 1982). S-EF exerts a tripartite influence on human behavior. Firstly, it guides the selection of behaviors, with individuals gravitating towards tasks that resonate with their skill set and engender a sense of security while avoiding those perceived as beyond their competencies. Furthermore, S-EF influences the magnitude and persistence of effort, particularly in contexts characterized by anxiety and uncertainty. Finally, it impacts cognitive and emotional responses; individuals with diminished S-EF may encounter heightened anxiety and worry in challenging circumstances, potentially impeding effective problem-solving (Telef & Karaca, 2011). The causal contribution of personal action mechanisms to individuals' psychosocial functioning is significant, with S-EF beliefs standing as a particularly central and pervasive element. As delineated by Bandura (1999), these beliefs reflect an individual's perceived capacity to manage prospective situations. Such beliefs exert a profound influence on aspects of cognition, motivation, and behavior in individuals.

S-EF, as defined by Bandura (1997), encapsulates a student's conviction in their capacity to successfully execute tasks or attain goals. This concept serves as an index of a student's self-confidence regarding their learning abilities and their adeptness at navigating obstacles. Students exhibiting high S-EF levels tend to demonstrate enhanced motivation, superior performance, and

more favorable academic results. Conversely, low S-EF can precipitate reduced motivation and a diminished capacity to cope with challenges (Pajares & Schunk, 2001). Educators are pivotal in fostering S-EF among students by creating environments conducive to success, along with providing constructive feedback and support.

Empirical studies indicate that students who perceive a congruence between their teachers' leadership styles and their cognitive orientations tend to exhibit heightened motivation and improved academic performance. Within this dynamic, S-EF beliefs emerge as a critical determinant influencing the interplay of leadership and student motivation. Elevated S-EF levels in students enhance the impact of TL on them. In scenarios where teachers articulate higher performance expectations, students endowed with greater S-EF are more inclined to embrace their teachers' visionary declarations and demonstrate increased motivation toward attaining educational objectives (Öqvist & Malmström, 2018).

During the course of engaging in various activities, students are subject to the influence of situational elements such as personal incentives or teacher feedback. These factors, including goal-setting practices, serve as markers of their educational progression. According to Schunk (1995), students' S-EF reaches its peak when they perceive an enhancement in their performance or skill proficiency. A belief among students that increased effort or the adoption of more efficacious strategies can improve performance ensures that concerns about potential failure do not diminish their S-EF.

Research findings have demonstrated that individuals' behavioral responses vary following their S-EF perceptions. Individuals with high S-EF perceptions are more likely to exert greater effort in accomplishing their tasks. In contrast, those with low S-EF perceptions may exhibit reduced effort and are inclined to ascribe their failures to external circumstances, as noted by Duman (2007).

Career Adaptability

CA denotes the degree of congruence between an individual's employment or vocational path and their intrinsic values, interests, competencies, and personality attributes. It evaluates the degree of alignment between an individual's professional endeavors or chosen vocational route and their inherent predispositions, abilities, and personal traits. Rottinghaus (2005) posits that an individual's disposition significantly influences their perceived capability to strategize and adjust to evolving career trajectories and job duties, especially in contexts of unpredictability.

CA is characterized by an individual's proficiency in managing both the anticipated roles associated with job preparation and execution, as well as the unforeseen shifts that may occur in a professional setting. This evolution from the concept of career maturity to CA streamlines the understanding of lifespan and life domain theories, offering a unified framework to account for developmental processes across various age groups. It's crucial to acknowledge that this delineation deliberately omits subjective assessments unless explicitly identified as such. Moreover, this conceptual refinement enhances the coherence between the lifespan, life domain, and self-concept categories by centering on the individual's adjustment to their environmental milieu and underscoring a singular motivational catalyst, as discussed by Savickas (1997).

Individuals must achieve a harmonious balance between occupational demands and their environmental repercussions. The concept of CA places a greater focus on an individual's tangible skills and dispositions, moving away from more abstract, hypothetical frameworks such as maturity level. This shift accentuates the interplay between the individual and their surrounding environment, underscoring the importance of specific individual actions. Contrasting with the previous emphasis on the maturation model, which highlighted the ontogenetic processes behind these actions, the

current approach advocates for counseling methodologies and assessment techniques that prioritize an operational perspective, concentrating on the manifest abilities and competencies of the individual, as delineated by Super and Knasel (1981). Carrier adaptability plays a crucial role in shaping student S-EF. Research has shown that CA is positively related to career decision S-EF, indicating that students with higher CA feel more efficacious in making career decisions (Duffy et al., 2015). Additionally, the mediating role of CA in influencing entrepreneurial S-EF has been highlighted, emphasizing the positive impact of CA on entrepreneurial intention among college students. Moreover, a proactive personality has been found to affect CA, with career decision-making S-EF playing a mediating role in this relationship (Hou et al., 2014). Furthermore, psychological adaptation has been linked to academic S-EF, indicating a significant relationship between students' psychological adaptation and their S-EF in academic settings (Bulgan & Çiftçi, 2018). Academic S-EF has also been found to influence academic adjustment in students, highlighting the impact of S-EF on students' adaptation to academic challenges. Additionally, the relationship between social media usage, multitasking, and S-EF has been explored, revealing a positive and significant association between social media usage, multitasking, and students' S-EF (Mohammed et al., 2021). Moreover, academic S-EF has been identified as a significant factor influencing students' academic performance, emphasizing the crucial role of S-EF beliefs in determining students' academic success (Boahene et al., 2019).

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The literature provides compelling evidence that Teacher Leadership (TL) significantly impacts students' perceptions and thoughts about Self-Efficacy (S-EF), as well as their beliefs and attitudes toward better career adaptation. Recognizing that teachers serve as instructional leaders who are expected to elevate students' S-EF and professional Career Adaptability (CA) while enhancing academic achievement, this study aims to establish a clear connection between TL and students' S-EF. The importance of this research lies in its potential to demonstrate how effective TL not only boosts academic performance but also fosters individuals who are better equipped to adapt to their future careers through a process-oriented approach. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to propose that TL directly influences students' perceptions of CA and S-EF. We specifically hypothesize that CA mediates the relationship between TL and S-EF. Additionally, considering our first two hypotheses, we argue that the General Academic Value of Education (G-AVE), which affects student achievement, also impacts students' CA and S-EF. By investigating these relationships, this study seeks to contribute valuable insights into how teacher leadership can be leveraged to enhance students' self-efficacy and career adaptability, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes.

METHOD

This study utilized a cross-sectional survey design and quantitative research techniques. According to Cohen et al. (2017), a cross-sectional survey gathers data from a designated population or a representative sample at a singular temporal instance. The primary goal of this type of survey is to get a snapshot of how the participants feel or look at a given moment. Consequently, it helps to understand how often certain characteristics, results, or opinions occur within the group being studied. This segment delineates the composition of the study sample, methodologies employed for data acquisition, the variables and instruments utilized for measurement, and the strategic approach adopted for data analysis.

Sample and Collection of Data

The present study was executed in Istanbul, the most populous city in Turkey. The participants employed various scales for data gathering, engaging a cohort of 221 university students enrolled at a public university. These participants were involved during the 2021-2022 academic year. Before the commencement of the study, approval for the use of these scales was duly obtained from the University's Ethics Committee. The method of data collection entailed the distribution of an electronic questionnaire, developed using Google Forms, to the participants. The respondents, in this case, the students, completed this electronic form. It is pertinent to note that within the context of this study, the term 'universe' is utilized in lieu of 'sample' to describe the group under investigation.This is because the entire universe was reached. The majority of students who took part in the study were male (n=211, 95.5%), while only a small proportion of female students participated (n=10, 4.5%). Students' ages were 17 (n=2, 7.7%), 18 (n=40, 18.1%), 19 (n=91, 41.3%), 20 (n=72, 32.6%), 21 (n=15, 6.8%), and 22 (n=1, 0.5%). Students' birthplaces were mostly metropolises (n=206, 93.3%), and few were from small cities (n=15, 6.7%). Their Grade Averages (G-AVE) were 90-100 (n=19, 8.6%), 80-89 (n=91, 41.2%), 70-79 (n=71, 32.1%), 60-69 (n=35, 15.8%), and below 59 (n=5, 2.3%).

The TL Scale is a 25-item, 5-point Likert scale developed by Karabağ-Köse (2019), categorized into four factors: interaction, motivation, classroom processes, and out-of-school processes, with ratings from 1 (never) to 5 (always) and no reverse-scored items. While the original scale met validity and reliability criteria, this study reexamined these aspects. Due to the strict hierarchical structure of boarding students and the limited impact of out-of-school processes, exploratory factor analysis reduced the dimensions to three, excluding questions like "Teachers are open to criticism" and "Teachers are interested in students' problems outside of school and the classroom." After removing items with low factor loadings, 14 questions remained. Factor loadings in the interaction dimension ranged from 0.523 to 0.756, and in the classroom processes sub-dimension from 0.665 to 0.773. Finally, in the final classroom processes dimension, the factor loadings ranged from 0.424 to 0.827. In the next stage, confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the scale. The fit indices of the scale produced an acceptable fit (χ^2= 113; *df* = 72; χ^2 / *df* = 1.56; Standardized Root Mean Square Residual [SRMR]= .03; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation [RMSEA]= .05; Comparative Fit Index [CFI]= .96). The dimensions' internal consistency coefficients are as follows: 0.91 for the interaction dimension, 0.87 for the motivation dimension, and 0.71 for the classroom processes dimension. The main variable's Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated as 0.96, indicating high reliability.

The Academic S-EF Scale is a 33-item, 5-point Likert scale measuring four factors: cognitive practices, social status, technical skills, and cooperation, with responses ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always) and no reverse-scored items. Developed by Owen and Froman (1988) and adapted into Turkish by Ekici (2012), the scale's validity and reliability were re-examined in this study. An exploratory factor analysis confirmed four dimensions. Since the study focused on preparatory school language students, items like "Using simple math calculations" and "Judging the opinion of an instructor in class" were excluded due to incompatibility.

Questions with low factor loadings were excluded from the initial exploratory factor analysis. Twenty questions remained for analysis. Factor loadings for the cognitive practices dimension ranged from 0.839 to 0.409; for the social status sub-dimension from 0.740 to 0.396; for the technical skills sub-dimension, from 0.813 to 0.403; and for the cooperation sub-dimension from 0.931 to 0.572. The next step involved conducting a confirmatory factor analysis on the scale. The fit indices of the scale produced an acceptable fit χ^2 = 322; *df* = 161; χ^2 / *df* = 2; SRMR (Standardized

Root Mean Square Residual)= .04; RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation)= .06; CFI (Comparative Fit Index)= .91). The dimensions demonstrate internal consistency with coefficients of .82 for cognitive practices, .81 for social status, .84 for technical skills, and .77 for cooperation. Additionally, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the primary variable was .91, providing strong evidence of reliability.

The CA scale comprises four subscales: anxiety, control, curiosity, and confidence. The scale was a five-point Likert type and had 19 questions. Participants answered the items ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The scale provides construct validity and a satisfactory level of reliability in the field of social sciences. To apply the scale, validity and reliability studies were repeated for this study. In this study, an initial exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted, leading to the exclusion of items with inadequate factor loadings and the retention of 9 questions.

The revised EFA revealed that factor loadings for items within the self-improvement dimension fluctuated between 0.699 and 0.859. In the self-refinement sub-dimension, these loadings ranged from 0.556 to 0.837. Following this, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed on the refined scale. The resulting fit indices suggested an acceptable fit for the model: χ^2= 119; *df*= 46; χ^2/df= 2.58, RMSEA=.08 (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation), CFI= .97 (Comparative Fit Index), and SRMR= .03 (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual). Regarding the internal consistency of the scale, the coefficients were robust, with the development dimension scoring .95 and the improvement dimension scoring .89. Furthermore, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the primary variable was determined to be .95, which underscores the high reliability of the scale. The Students' survey was employed to evaluate teachers' classroom leadership practices (TL) associated with students' S-EF, and students' CA. We asked students to assess their perceptions of their teachers' TL, and their perceptions of their CA. The use of different variables for the study decreased the risks of common method variance. G-AVE was included as the exogenous factor for the SEM model.

Statistics

In addressing the posed research inquiries, a comprehensive methodology was employed. The initial phase involved conducting exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses on a trio of distinct scales to evaluate their structural robustness and delineate the attributes of the latent variables under examination. Subsequently, Cronbach's alpha test was applied as a mechanism to ascertain the internal consistency prevalent within these measures. Next, descriptive analysis of students' perceptions of TL, S-EF, and CA, and correlation analysis to examine the relationship between TL, S-EF, and CA were accomplished. ML (Maximum likelihood) calculations were conducted and model fit was held by SRMR (standardized root mean square residual), RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation), TLI (Tucker-Lewis index), and CFI (comparative fit index) as indices (Hu & Bentler, 1998). Model fit was considered acceptable with CFI (comparative fit index) > 0.90, SRMR (standardized root mean square residual)< 0.11, TLI (Tucker-Lewis index) > 0.90, and RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation) < 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1998). JAMOVI 2.3.28 was used to define the measurement model and analyze the structural parameters between the constructs. For the mediation analysis, bootstrapping tests were employed to calculate the indirect effect of an independent variable using a resampling estimation technique that generates confidence intervals (CIs) for the results. When bootstrapping, the point estimates for the total effect, indirect effect, and direct effect are the means calculated over 5,000 bootstrapped samples (Williams & MacKinnon, 2008). In this survey, the direct effect of TL on S-EF, and the mediating effect of CA on S-EF were tested. In the SEM model TL and G-AVE were used as exogenous covariates.

RESULTS

In this section of the recent study, we start with an explanation of the model, and right after, we go on to address the research questions.

Characteristics of The Assessments of The Research Construction and Model

In this section, descriptive statistics, Cronbach alpha coefficients, and correlation analysis results were provided. We searched for reliability employing convergent validity. All three scales fulfilled the necessary reliability value of .70 in Table 1. The composite reliability (CR) and convergent validity which were measured by Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were above 0.70. Convergent validity was met showing that CR was larger than AVE (Hair et al., 2009).

The mean scores indicated that they were high for all three scales on the 5-point Likert-type scale. The values ranged from 3.57 to 4.25. The mean and standard deviation values for the scales were TL (M=3.64, SD=0.71), S-EF (M=3.57, SD=0.61), and CA (M=4.25, SD=0.77). The mean values are quite above average which means relatively high. Also, the standard deviation values were high meaning that teachers' responses were heterogeneous. G-AVE (M=2.62, SD=0.92) has values that are above the mean. As for SD, it is heterogeneous. Table 1 shows, a moderate, positive, and significant correlation between TL and S-EF (r= .52; p < .001) and CA (r= .228; p < .001). S-EF also has a low-level correlation with CA (r= .295; p < .001). Other variables showed no significant correlations.

Table 1. Means and standard deviation of variables in the research model and correlation values

	M	SD	G-AVE	CR	A	TL	S-EF	KU	G-AVE
ÖSL	3.64	0.71	0.68	0.96	0.92	-	-	-	-
ÖZY	3.57	0.61	0.71	0.92	0.91	0.520***	-	-	-
KU	4.25	0.77	0.65	0.91	0.95	0.228***	0.295***	-	-
G-AVE	2.62	0.92	-	-	-	-0.139	-0.214	0.086	-

*Note. TL=Teacher Leadership, S-EF=Self-Efficacy, CA=Carier Adaptability, Grade Average=G-AVE, n=221 Students, p < .05, **p < .001, ***p < .0001*

How Does TL Affect Students' CA and Students' S-EF?

We built a model about the effect of TL on student S-EF and how career adjustment mediates this effect. We also added G-AVE which we predicted to have an effect on the S-EF and career adjustment of students (see Fig. 1).

Table 2. Baseline Model test scores and Fit indices the model proposed

Model	χ^2	*Df*	P	CFI	RMSEA	RMSEA 90% CI		TLI
						Lower	Upper	
Baseline	118	14	0.001***	0.996	0.022	0.00	0.106	0.986

*Note. CFI = comparative fit index, RMSEA = root mean-square error of approximation, SRMR = standardized root mean square; p < .05, **p < .001, ***p < .0001*

The path model (see Fig. 1) confirmed our model using AMOS 22. The model that we offered generated acceptable goodness-of-fit values according to Hu and Bentler (1999). The path model exhibits that TL showed a strong positive direct effect on students' S-EF ($\beta = 0.98$, $p < .001$), and a strong positive direct effect on students' CA ($\beta = 0.97$, $p < .001$). G-AVE showed a moderate positive direct effect on students' CA ($\beta = 0.24$, $p < .001$), and a moderate negative direct effect on students' S-EF ($\beta = -0.20$, $p < .001$). Thus, we went on with bootstrap analysis to interpret the model we established.

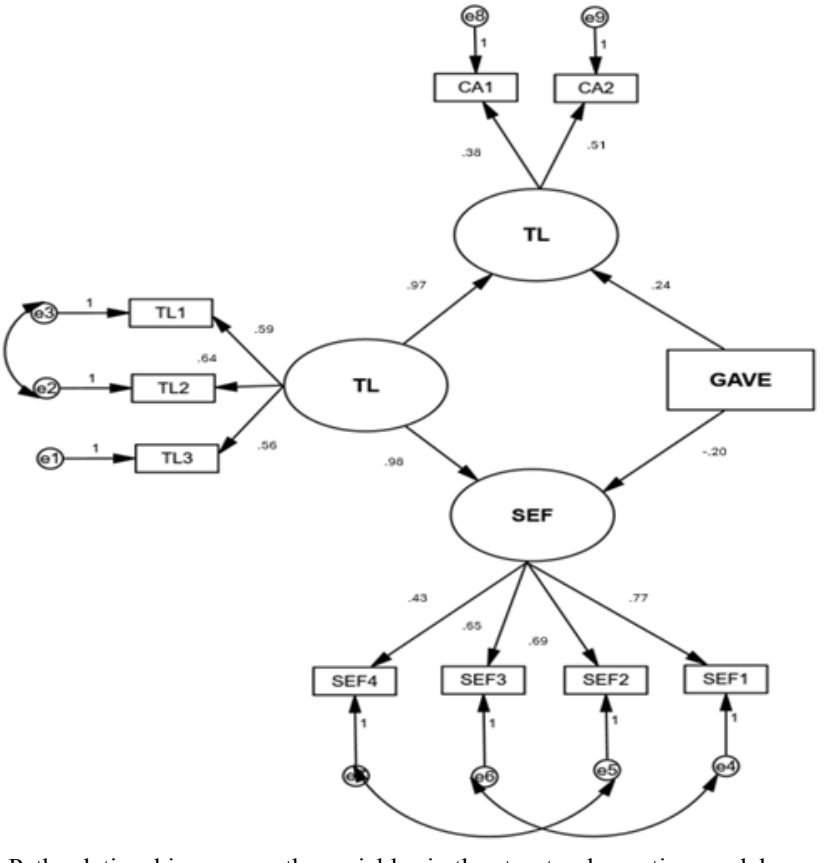


Fig 1. Path relationships among the variables in the structural equation model

We employed bootstrapping to further examine the role of students' S-EF as a moderator of TL effects on students' CA. It explained the test on the first finding given in the SEM analysis. We can assume that the bootstrapping reaffirmed the direct and indirect effects of TL.

Table 3. Bootstrapping mediation estimates of TL and S-EF

Effect	Label	Estimate	SE	95% Confidence Interval		P	Mediation
				Lower	Upper		
Indirect	axbc	0.039	0.026	0.006	0.106	<.001	8.17
Direct		0.441	0.306	0.306	0.565	<.001	91.82
Total	c+axb	0.480	0.362	0.362	0.598	<.001	100.0
Path Estimates							
TL ⟶ S-EF	a	0.248	0.071	0.071	0.385	<.001	-
S-EF ⟶ CA	b	0.158	0.075	0.075	0.335	0.037	-
TL ⟶ CA	c	0.441	0.065	0.065	0.565	<.001	-

Note. TL=Teacher Leadership, CA= Carrier Adaptability, S-EF= Self- Efficacy, , n=221
*p < .05, **p < .001, ***p < .0001*

The impact of TL on students' S-EF was both significant and meaningful (β = 0.480, CI [0.362, 0.598], p < .001). This impact consisted of a significant direct effect (β = 0.441, CI [0.306, 0.565], p < .001) and a smaller indirect effect through S-EF (β = 0.039, CI [0.006, 0.106], p < .001). Additionally, the bootstrap analysis revealed that 91.82% of the impact of TL on S-EF was direct, and 8.17% indirect through CA. In summary, this mediation analysis, based on 5,000 bootstrapped samples, provides additional support for a partial mediation model consisting of moderate effect sizes that are statistically significant.

Does G-AVE Affect the Students' CA and Students' S-EF?

The model that we offered generated acceptable Goodness-of-fit values according to Hu and Bentler (1999). G-AVE showed a significant positive direct effect on students' CA (β = 0.137, p < .001) and a significant negative direct effect on CA (β = -0.143, p < .001). The effect sizes (β) were statistically significant and in the small range, indicating a robust model. We conducted a bootstrap analysis to interpret the established model and further examine the role of students' S-EF as a moderator of G-AVE effects on students' CA. It explained the test on the first finding given in the SEM analysis (See Table 1). It can be assumed that the bootstrapping process confirmed both the direct and indirect effects of TL.

Table 4. Bootstrapping mediation estimates of G-AVE and S-EF

Effect	Label	Estimate	SE	95% CI		P	Mediation
				Lower	Upper		
Indirect	axbc	0.019	0.016	-0.006	0.052	0.247	10.1
Direct		-0.172	0.306	-0.265	-0.084	<.001	89.9
Total	c+axb	-0.153	0.362	-0.250	-0.058	0.002	100.0
Path Estimates							
G-AVE → S-EF	a	0.072	0.062	-0.045	0.193	0.247	-
S-EF → CA	b	0.268	0.093	0.125	0.474	0.003	-
G-AVE → CA	c	-0.172	0.045	-0.265	-0.084	<.001	-

The total effect of G-AVE on Students' S-EF was negative and statistically not significant (β = -0.153, CI [-0.250, -0.058], p=0.247). This total effect showed a little direct effect (β = -0.017, CI [-0.265, -0.084] p < .001) and a smaller indirect effect through CA (β = 0.019, CI [-0.006, 0.052], p < .001). Additionally, the bootstrap analysis indicated that 89.9% of the impact of G-AVE on S-EF was direct, while 10.1% was indirect through CA. This mediation analysis, which was based on 5,000 bootstrapped samples, provides further evidence for a partial mediation model with moderate effect sizes that are statistically significant.

DISCUSSION

This present research was conducted to show that classroom teachers with classroom leadership ability influence students' self-efficacy, and it enables students' career adaptability for their better careers in the future. In this part of the research, we have discussed the limitations of the study, presented our interpretation of the findings, and explored the implications for both research and practice.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations to consider. Conducted on a faculty at a state university in Turkey, the findings may lack generalizability if participants who did not provide data differ systematically from those who did. The homogenous sample likely limited variance, potentially underestimating associations between constructs. Factors such as school culture, administrative support, teacher attitudes, professional development, and organizational structure significantly influence teacher leadership, with collaborative environments fostering its growth (Muijs & Harris, 2006). The second limitation is that teacher leadership was assessed solely from students' perspectives, overlooking factors like school culture, teacher attitudes, administrative support, and organizational structure. To ease the questionnaire burden, the EFA and CFA scales were shortened. While a more comprehensive scale could provide greater detail, the three-item measures are adequate for assessing psychological constructs. Despite these limitations, this study contributes to understanding the impact of teacher leadership on self-efficacy and career adaptability.

Interpretations of Findings

The first result from the first research question of this study is the confirmation of the partial mediation effect of teacher leadership on students' self-efficacy. In particular, teacher leadership has direct and indirect effects on students' self-efficacy through career adaptability. This finding shows that firstly, teacher leadership makes a difference in students' self-efficacy, and secondly, career adaptability is a valuable mediating factor that increases the degree of difference. The fact that teacher leadership affects both students' career adaptability and self-efficacy is in line with other studies in the field. (Lord & Miller, 2000; Ulusoy, 2007). Teacher leadership can have a significant impact on various aspects of educational settings such as instructional practices in the classroom sharing best practices (Nguyen et al., 2020); playing a crucial role in designing and facilitating professional development opportunities for their students (Fairman & Mackenzie, 2015; Lumpkin et al., 2014); and creating a positive and collaborative school climate (Kilinç, 2014), which can lead to a more supportive and inclusive learning environment (King, 2017). Besides, teacher leaders act as bridges between the school and the community. They can facilitate communication and collaboration with parents, which can lead to greater support for students' education (Vranješević & Frost, 2016). In sum, empirical studies confirm the importance of teacher leadership in educational contexts (West, 2012). The confirmation of our partial model is significant for several reasons. Firstly, career adaptability is recognized as a key competency that plays a crucial role in young people's career success (O'Connell et al., 2007). This refers to the readiness of individuals to overcome unforeseen changes in work conditions by preparing for predictable tasks and participating in job roles (Savickas, 1997). Career adaptability is a psychological construct that indicates the readiness of young individuals to acquire the necessary skills and overcome professional development tasks, job changes, stress levels, and social support in the current and near future (Öztemel & Akyol, 2019). It includes attitudes, competencies, and behaviors that are necessary for young students to adapt to their jobs and changing work life during the career development process (Yousefi et al., 2011).

The second research question that constitutes the framework of this study was to determine the effect of students' G-AVE on career adaptability and self-efficacy. In our findings, we found that students' G-AVE positively affected career adaptability. The developmental, cognitive and psychosocial results of a person during his/her career are career development (Herr et al., 2004). This finding shows that achieving high grades plays an important role in ensuring career adaptation. However, it is another finding of the research question that only student G-AVE has a negative effect on self-efficacy. Studies in the field generally suggest that academic achievement is a variable that predicts self-efficacy (Gold, 2010; Pektaş, 2010). However, there are also explanations that self-efficacy is field-specific and cannot be considered in terms of every discipline (Pajares, 1996). To prevent academic failure from adversely affecting self-efficacy, it is believed that self-efficacy can be enhanced when administrators and teacher leaders in education contexts assist students in developing academic and career goals, assess their professional and individual competencies and provide learning opportunities for them.

CONCLUSIONS

Studies on the old concept of leadership in schools have largely focused on the responsibilities of the headteacher (Cisler & Bruce, 2013; Reid, 2021). Yet, the studies that focused on TL aimed to obtain different definitions of the concept (Harris, 2005; Wenner & Campbell, 2016) to provide evidence of how TL affects schools, classes and students (Crowther et al., 2009; Murphy, 2005), and to investigate barriers to TL (Mujis & Harris, 2003). Our study contributes to the field of Teacher Leadership as it affects students' self-efficacy and career adaptibility. The study investigates the

influence of teacher leadership on students' self-efficacy. It has been found that teacher leadership has a direct and immediate impact on students' self-efficacy. This study highlights that teacher leaders can increase students' belief in their own abilities to succeed in specific tasks or goals without any intermediary variables. Teacher leadership affects students' self-efficacy indirectly by enhancing their readiness and resources to cope with predictable and unpredictable changes and tasks in their career development. The presence of strong teacher leadership can foster career adaptability in students, which in turn, can increase their self-efficacy. Another important conclusion of our study is that the higher the academic achievement of the students, the more developed their ability to adapt and be ready for their careers. This indicates that academic achievement is an important factor in developing students' flexibility and adaptability in their career transition and career development processes. This is a call for educational leaders to consider customized strategies to support students' academic performance and self-belief. It highlights the need to shape educational programs and practices in light of such results to ensure that students acquire the resilience and competencies needed to successfully and confidently move forward in both their academic and professional lives.

We would like to underline the following implications for practicing teachers in relation to the study; although there is a strict hierarchical structure, teachers should develop a classroom culture that supports their students' career adaptation efforts. They should also create a democratic climate that favors teamwork among students. They should have the skills to lead a school-wide school improvement initiative. They should be facilitators and coordinators of a professional learning community or groups of teachers working with students to develop their learning abilities which impact students' self-efficacy. They should even go one step further and be a spontaneous leader in the context of a distributed leadership approach in the organization in which they work because leadership is no longer an elite construct developed by one person alone. Gronn (2003) argued that when people cooperate and share their efforts and knowledge, they are more than parts of a whole.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING

This research significantly contributes to educational planning by illuminating the crucial role of teacher leadership in enhancing students' self-efficacy, particularly through the mediating influence of career adaptability. By highlighting the direct and indirect impacts of teacher leadership on students' self-efficacy, educational planners and administrators can design teacher development programs that prioritize leadership skills, aiming to cultivate a more adaptable, self-assured student body.

Furthermore, the identification of career adaptability as a significant mediator underscores the need for curriculum designs that integrate career planning and adaptability training. Consequently, this study offers a compelling argument for the inclusion of teacher leadership development and career adaptability enhancement in educational planning, to prepare students not just academically but also for the challenges of their future careers, thereby enriching the educational ecosystem's responsiveness to the evolving demands of the workforce.

ETHICS PERMISSION

This research's ethics permission was granted by the National Defense University Social Sciences and Humanities Human Research Ethics Committee. Number: E-54589112-770-139795

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