



Understanding the Attitudes of the Employees towards Women Managers: A Research in Small Sized Enterprises

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Abstract

The women in managerial positions have received much concern especially in the developing countries for a long time. The preset social roles of women such as being a mother and wife, the presence of the glass ceiling and the so-called unvoiced prejudices towards women echo in business. Taking this into consideration, this paper aims to explore the employee attitudes towards women managers in a developing country, Turkey. The employees are selected from small sized business companies in Manisa Organized Industrial Zone (MOIZ). In this regard, this paper aims to analyze factors that affect the attitudes towards women managers.

Keywords: Women Managers, Attitudes, Small Sized Business

Introduction

The issue of women in the workplace has become an important topic widely studied in the context of discrimination, gender-biases and glass ceiling especially after the industrial development. One of the main reasons why these studies gained momentum over a half century is the increasing women employment particularly in the managerial positions. Not only in the fewer developing countries but also in the developed ones there are strong stereotypical role expectations of women (Guney, Gohar, Akıncı and Akıncı, 2006). In the view of societal gender point of view, there are roles that are divided between men and women and in this regard, women are raised so as to fulfill these certain role behaviors (Acker, 1988). Trying to be a successful working women as well as fulfilling the societies' female expectations is not easy for women.

This role conflict is not only valid for women managers, but also for the employees. Employees who are working as subordinates of women managers find it hard to accept this role which is beyond what is expected (Cole, 1997). Women are seen appropriate for certain work activities such as caring and helping others as well as maintaining the relationships; however, men are more associated with achievement, success, competition and hierarchy (Rudman and Phelan, 2008). Having said this, it is not surprising to expect the employees who are working in small sized business in a developing country to develop prejudiced attitudes concerning these stereotypical role behaviors. And as a result of these attitudes and behaviors, women encounter several obstacles preventing them to get promotion, salary increase, employment and access to decision making process.

In this sense, this study aims to show the attitudes of employees who are working in small sized business in a developing country towards women managers. With this research, the women managers will understand their subordinates' attitudes and behaviors more clearly.

Literature Review

Small Sized Enterprises

Small sized enterprises are defined as organizations where fifty people or less are employed and the yearly sales revenue or financial statement is below eight million Turkish Lira (KOSGEB). As few

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people are engaged, small businesses are much more relationship oriented because people are frequently in touch with one another. In these kinds of organizations, human and relationship oriented approach from managers gains importance in the sense that those companies are human centered. According to KOSGEB, 98% of the companies in Turkey are small and medium sized companies. And the contribution to the GDP is between 70% and 90% (FFI, Inc.). In European Union, small sized business account for 66 % of total employment, therefore, they enacted Small Business Act legally (TOBB).

One of the disadvantages of the small sized business is that they are generally managed by the rules, standards and limited knowledge of the founder-manager (Sevim, Gümüştekin, Sarıkaya and Sayılır, 2013). Therefore, apart from the founder manager, majority of the small sized businesses have also middle managers. In this regard, the knowledge, attitude, effect and the behavior of this second-manager becomes really important and effective in shaping the culture of the organization as well as its effectiveness. This paper concentrates on the women in middle or top management positions and the attitudes towards women managers.

Attitudes Towards Women Managers

Attitude is defined as the positive or the negative cognitive evaluation of an object such as person, thing, event etc. (Guney, Gohar, Akıncı and Akıncı, 2006). The developed attitudes will turn into behaviors (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2012). Therefore attitudes are important for understanding the certain behaviors. Nevertheless, as Kağıtçıbaşı (2012) argues, it is not easy to measure the attitudes, therefore it is important for the sake of this research to use a reliable and valid measurement which is appropriate for Turkish culture in order to collect a clear data. And for the sake of this research Aycan, Bayazit, Berkman and Boratav's (2011) Attitudes towards Women Manager scale which has been developed in Turkey will be utilized and more information will be provided in the following methodology section.

Several researches conducted on women in business for several decades have increased our knowledge of women's positions, problems and conflicts. Table 1 summarizes the selected research on the attitudes towards women managers. Nevertheless, there is not enough study on the developing countries such as Turkey. This study enables the reader to get an insight of the attitudes taken towards the women managers in a male-dominated industry in a developing country. The study is also valuable as it constitutes data collected from small sized organizations which together with middle sized organizations have 98% of share in Turkish industry.

"At almost every level, female managers – regardless of location – complained of having to deal with blocked mobility, discrimination, and stereotypes" (Omair, 2011). Wang (2010) suggests, for the female managers it is a strong obstacle to prioritize either the children or the work (Cole, 1997). This dualism of female instinct to nurture and care both the family and the business creates advantageous and disadvantageous situations. It is disadvantageous because it creates a stress and a feeling of inner conflict between being domestic or career oriented for the female manager (Gardiner and Tiggemann, 1999; Folker, 2008). As an advantage, these characteristics of women enable them to support and keep the business together, solve problems and by nature they are more likely to prioritize the togetherness and peace (Folker, 2008). In most of the literature women are viewed as transformational leaders caring more about the employees and empowering of them, emphasizing peacekeeping and being more balanced, collaborative, loyal, flexible and committed than their male counterparts. (Dumas, 1998; Vera and Dean, 2005; Wang, 2010; Folker, 2008). This may be one of the reasons why the daughters are generally placed to stereotypically constructed roles in the family business such as secretarial jobs or they are given lower, less crucial tasks in the firm (Dumas, 1992).

The female leaders are considered as more relationship oriented while the men are considered as more task oriented. Previous literature has confirmed female managers face with greater difficulties in their careers than their male counterparts (Wajcman, 1996). Gardiner and Tiggeman (1999) contributes to



this literature by claiming that women who take the leadership positions in the male dominated industries are showing more task oriented leadership behaviors and displaying masculine traits in order to be credible and accepted. (Curimbaba, 2002).

Although women success in leadership positions, neither under representation of women, nor “negative attitudes” towards them changes (Aycan, Bayazit, Berkman and Boratav, 2011). Nevertheless, in order to appreciate the women’s contribution to the work force and have the best performance from the women, we need to understand the roots of these attitudes (Eagly, 2007; Lyness & Terrazas, 2006). Aycan (2004) emphasized the importance of the attitudes of the workers towards women managers on the internalization of her career by female manager.

Objectives

This research will shed a light on the attitudes towards women managers in small sized business. The goal of this study is to explore how the attitudes towards women managers change according to gender, age, tenure and experience. The research bares an exploratory nature. Stebbins (2001) argues that exploratory research is not definitive, it is a long, cumulative, interest-governed process”; it can bear quantitative or qualitative nature and test hypothesis. Clarification and understanding are two key elements of exploratory research. In this respect, survey method is chosen in order to collect the data among a representative industrial sample.

Hypothesis

There are five hypothesis in this research testing the profile data obtained from respondents and their attitudes towards women managers.

H1: The women participants have more positive attitude towards women managers than men.

H2: The younger employees will have more positive attitudes towards women managers.

H3: The more experienced workers will have more positive attitudes towards women managers.

H4: The employee with higher education will have more positive attitudes towards women managers.

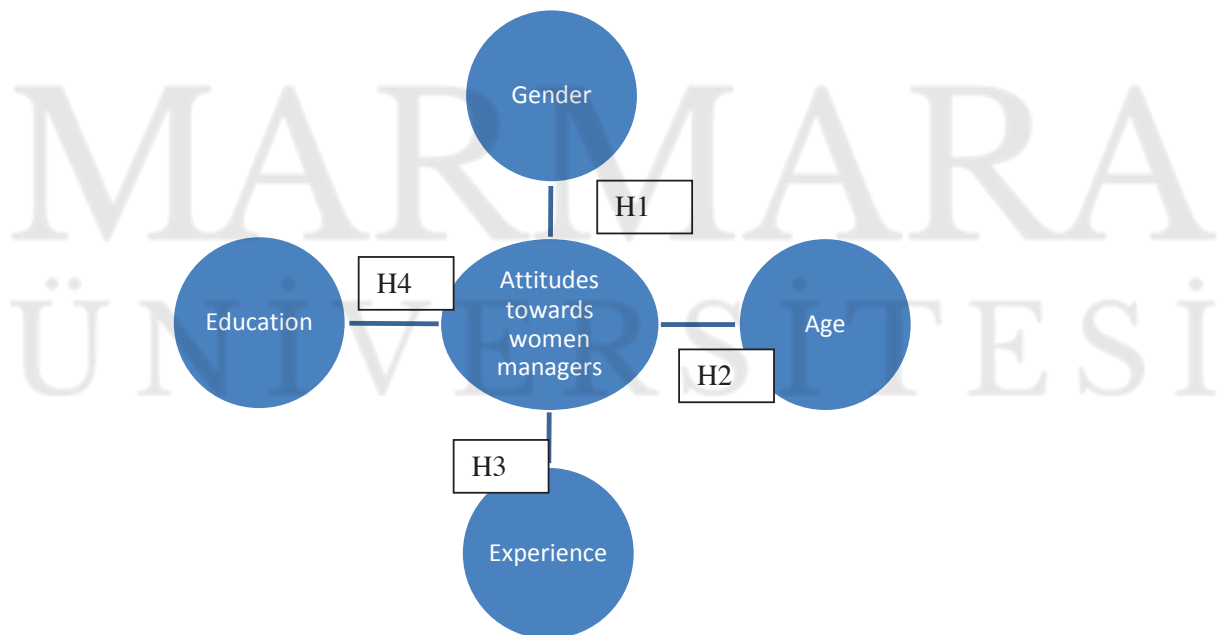


Figure 1: The Model of the Research



Table 1. Selected Research on Attitudes towards Women Managers

Author(s)	Year	Article Title	Methodology	Contribution
Dumas	1992	Integrating the Daughter into Family Business Management	Descriptive	An important guideline for female successors to the family firms has been given.
Abdalla	1996	Attitudes towards women in the Arabian Gulf region	Quantitative-Scale development	Very traditional approaches towards' women's stereotypical roles are found in Kuwait and Qatar.
Dumas	1998	Women's Pathways to Participation and Leadership in the Family-Owned Firm	Quantitative – Survey (Questionnaire)	The effect of women in business and their paths to management are described by an understanding of their participation and leadership.
Gardiner and Tiggeman	1999	Gender Differences in Leadership Style, Job Stress and Mental Health in Male- and Female-Dominated Industries	Quantitative - Survey (Questionnaire)	Women in male-dominated industries reported worse mental health when they utilized an interpersonally oriented leadership style.
Aycan	2004	Key Success Factors for Women in Management in Turkey	Qualitative-In depth & Quantitative – Survey (Questionnaire)	Despite high support of women's career advancement gender-role stereotypes cannot be erased. Women help more positive attitudes towards men but overall the attitudes towards women managers are slightly positive.
Vera and Dean	2005	An Examination of the Challenges Daughters Face in Family Business Succession	Qualitative- In depth	Daughters face employee rivalry, experienced work-life balance problems and they could not see themselves as the possible successor one time.
Guney, Gohar, Akıncı and Akıncı	2006	Attitudes towards Women Managers in Turkey and Pakistan	Quantitative – Survey (Questionnaire)	In accordance with Aycan (2004) findings both women and men in Turkey have a negative attitude towards women managers especially when compared to Pakistani respondents.
Abdallah and Omair	2010	Males' Attitudes Towards Working Females in Saudi Arabia	Quantitative - Survey	Age was found to be the most important predictor of the males' attitudes towards working females
Omair	2011	Women Managerial Careers in the Context of United Arab Emirates	Qualitative – In depth	Career experiences and difficulties that are faced by Arab women managers are examined and guideline is indicated.
Aycan, Bayazit, Berkman and Boratav	2011	Attitudes towards Women Managers: Development and Validation of a New Measure With Turkish Samples	Qualitative & Quantitative – Scale development	Aycan et. al. developed a strong scale whose validity and reliability found sufficient and they developed this scale in Turkey which is a valuable contribution in the sense that the items measuring the attitude will yield highly reliable answers.

(Source: Compiled by the authors)



Methodology

Data Collection instrument

The questionnaire is composed of two parts. In the first part, profile questions are asked. The profile questions are important for this research as it aims also to compare the results on the basis of gender, age, occupation. Some of these questions are based on nominal scale while some are open ended. In the second part; Aycan, Bayazit, Berkman and Boratav's (2011) Attitudes towards Women Managers scale (ATWoM) will be used to measure the employee attitudes towards women managers. As the scale has been developed in Turkey in 2011, the reliability and the validity of the scale are expected to be high and it is as indicated in the article. The items are not misleading and appropriate for Turkish culture. Other scales measuring the same construct, attitudes towards women managers, are not showing high results in Turkish setting because of the effect of the collectivist culture as well as religion (Aycan, Bayazit, Berkman and Boratav, 2011). The scale is based on Likert type 7 measurements and it issued in its original form in this research without any additions and adaptations.

Sample

This research has taken place in small businesses operating in Manisa Organized Industrial Zone (MOIZ). MOIZ is one of the biggest and most precious OIZ of Turkey. According to Chinese investors, MOIZ is the best OIZ for investment in the world. MOIZ is located on 9.591.600 square meters. There are nineteen one-hundred percent foreign capital investment including Ferrero, Bosch, Schneider, Imperial Tobacco and others. There are twelve companies with foreign stakeholders such as Vestel, Hayes-Lemmerz Inci etc. (MOIZ). The foreign trade volume of MOIZ is 7.400.000.000 USD which is nearly 1/5 of Turkish foreign trade volume (TUIK). There are 26.500 employees working currently in MOIZ which is a high amount. According to a survey by Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, among top 500 companies of Turkey, 16 companies are from MOIZ. In total, there are 215 companies in MOIZ and among them 55 are small sized business companies.

Table 2 : The Overview of Employees of Selected Industrial Companies

Company Code	Sector of the Company	Total Employee Working in the Company	Employees Attending the Survey
1	Plastic	48	8
2	Plastic	50	16
3	Machine Manufacturing	31	22
4	Construction	11	5
5	Plastic	24	8
6	Metal Industry	22	15
7	Food	15	6
8	Industrial Kitchen	25	3
9	Food	49	3
10	Insurance company	14	8
11	Otomation	45	8
TOTAL:		334	102

In this research, 11 of these small sized businesses are involved. These businesses are all in manufacturing and 4 of them are in plastic injection sector, 2 are involved in food production, 2 are in service business and the rest is from construction and machine production sectors. The average employee number of the companies is 30 and the average number of employees attending the survey is 10. From those companies 125 participants received the questionnaire and 102 of them replied back



(Table2). For those respondents surveys, 3 of them are unusable; therefore, the number of the clean data is 99, the response rate is %79.2.

The difference between the number of female and males are narrow. There are 44.4 % female and 53.5 % male participants. Two of the participants did not give a reply to gender question. The age of the participants ranges between 18 and 64. Most of the participants, 33 % belong to the 26-30 age group. After that comes the employees whose age range between 31 and 40 with 27% share. 41.4 % of participants are high school graduates. Employees who received undergraduate education are 12.5 %. Majority of the employees, 25.3%, have experience between 7 and 10 years. And the tenure of the employees is concentrated on 2 years, 18.2% and 3 years, 10.1%. Table 3 summarizes the distribution of employees according to profile question variables.

Table 3: Profile of the Respondents

Variables	Numbers
Gender	
Male	44
Female	53
Missing *	2
Education	
Primary School	10
Secondary School	7
High School	41
Undergraduate (BA, B., Sc.)	26
Graduate (MA, M., Sc)	12
Missing*	3
Experience	
0-5 years	26
6-10 years	27
11-15 years	21
16-45 years	25
Missing*	0
Age	
18-25	18
26-30	33
31-40	27
41-50	18
50 and above	3
Missing *	0

*Missing cases are not included in the relative frequencies

Data Collection

The data has been collected during May-June 2014 in Manisa OIZ. The surveys were given from the researcher directly. Among 11 companies, only 1 of them filled out the survey while the researcher was waiting the other companies handed the surveys in a week. All surveys were handed out in closed envelopes and collected with enveloped accordingly. The participants were ensured that their identities would not be revealed and no identity information was asked in the surveys in order to keep confidentiality.



Data Analysis

The data has been analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package Size for Social Sciences) version 18. For testing the hypotheses, descriptive statistics such as relative frequency is used. For figuring the relationship between variables, correlation analysis, and regression methods are used. Hypotheses are based on Likert-type scales, for the comparisons t-test method is used. Means and Standard deviations are also calculated in order to support the t-test results. In the research, factor analysis has also been made and the reliability test has been applied to different factors. The reliability analysis has also been applied for the whole of the scale in order to measure its reliability.

Factor analysis

In Aycan, Bayazit, Berkman and Boratay's (2011) original article, there are three factors of the scale. These factors have been named as "communication focus", "work ethics" and "work focus". In this sample, the factor analysis shows four factors as shown in Figure 2. The factors were named after "communication focus and "work ethics". The "work focus" factor has been divided between "objectiveness in decision making" and "problem solving" (Appendix 1).

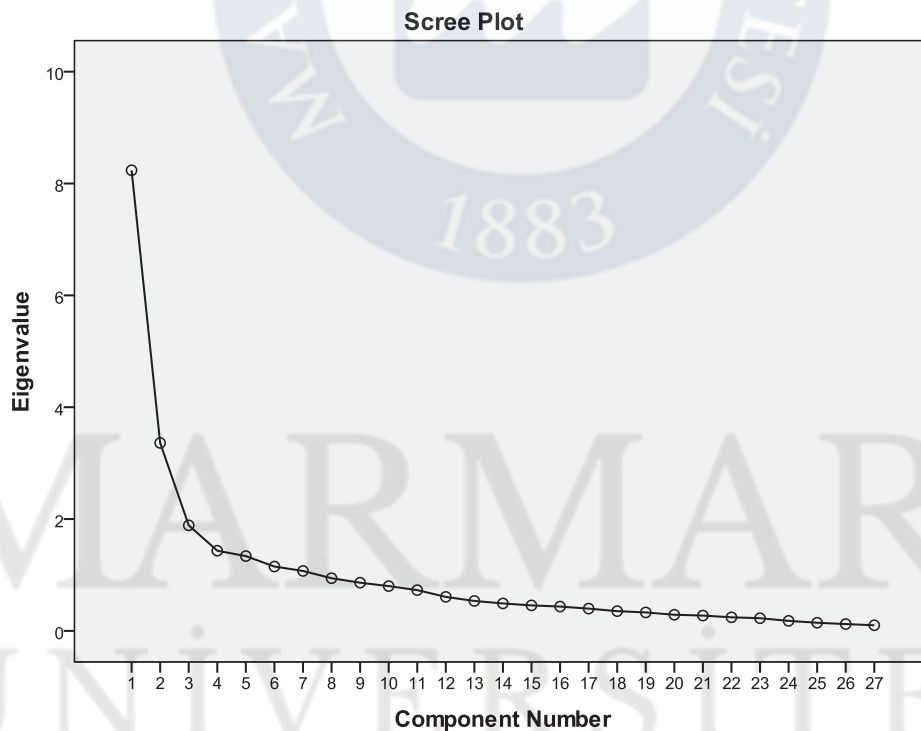


Figure 2: Scree Plot for Factor Analysis

Reliability Analysis

In order to check the internal consistency of the scale and the sample data, reliability analysis was conveyed for both factor groupings and for the scale as a whole. The Cronbach's alpha for the first factor "communication focus" is 0.88 and the mean is 4.86. The second factor "objective decision making" Cronbach's alpha is 0.81 and the mean is 4.64. The third factor "problem solving" has 0.72 Cronbach's alpha with 4.84 mean and the fourth factor has 0.63 Cronbach's alpha with 5.51 mean. The overall Cronbach's alpha for the scale is 0.905. Table 4 summarizes the reliability analysis.



Table 4: Reliability Analysis of the Scale

	Cronbach's alpha (α)	Mean (M)
ATWoM	.905	
Factor 1 – Communication Focus	.88	4.86
Factor 2- Objectivity in Decision Making	.81	4.64
Factor 3- Problem Solving	.72	4.84
Factor 4- Work Ethics	.63	5.51

Findings

The results of the correlation analysis show that there is only significant negative relationship found between gender and attitudes towards women managers and education and attitudes towards women managers. The other variables have no significant effect to attitudes towards women managers.

The results of independent sample T-test and correlation analysis, the negative relationship between gender and attitudes towards women managers show that males tend to score worse on the scale ($r = -.254$, $p = .01$). That is while women have more positive attitudes towards women managers men are more negative. This result is supported by the literature; Table 5 summarizes the items and testing of the Hypothesis 1.

Table 5: Testing Hypotheses 1

Hypotheses 1: The women participants have more positive attitude towards women managers than men.	Method of Analysis	Support
Items		
Olaylara objektif yaklaşamazlar.	t-test	Not Supported
Olaylara genel bakmaz detaylarda kaybolurlar.	t-test	Not Supported
Düzenlidirler.	t-test	Supported $t=2.351$ $p<0.05$
İnsan ilişkilerinde profesyonel davranamazlar.	t-test	Not Supported
Çalışanlarının yaşadıkları sıkıntıları anlayışla karşılarlar.	t-test	Supported $t=1.307$ $p<0.05$
İşleri başkalarına delege etmekte zorlanırlar.	t-test	Not Supported
Karar alırken aceleci davranırlar.	t-test	Not Supported
Özel hayatlarındaki sorumluluklar nedeniyle kendi işlerine odaklanamazlar.	t-test	Not Supported
Gerektiğinde sert olmakta zorlanırlar.	t-test	Not Supported
Ödün vermeleri gereken noktalarda ödün verirler.	t-test	Not Supported
Çalışanlarıyla nasıl konuşmaları gerektiğini iyi bilirler.	t-test	Supported $t=1.799$ $p<0.05$
Üzerlerinde aile sorumlulukları olduğu için iş hayatlarını ön planda tutmazlar.	t-test	Not Supported
Çalışanlarının hangi sıkıntıları yaşayabileceklerini anlarlar ve onlara destek olurlar.	t-test	Not Supported
İşlerin yürüdüğünden emin olmak için çalışanları takip eder ve sorgularlar.	t-test	Not Supported
Detaylara odaklandıkları için sonuca ulaşmaları zaman alır.	t-test	Not Supported



Çok çalışırlar.	t-test	Not Supported
Çalışanların istek ve sorunlarını zamanında hissederek.	t-test	Not Supported
Çalışanların hissettiklerini anlayabilirler ve ona göre davranırlar.	t-test	Not Supported
Duygusallığı, onların profesyonelliğini artırır.	t-test	Not Supported
Sorunlar karşısında dinamik değildiler, pasif kalırlar.	t-test	Not Supported
Zorluklarla başetmekte sıkıntı çekerler.	t-test	Not Supported
Problemler karşısında çalışanlarına güler yüzle yardımcı olurlar.	t-test	Not Supported
Özel hayatlarından fedakarlık ederek işlerine asılırlar.	t-test	Supported $t=1.055$ $p<0.05$
Rahat iletişim kururlar.	t-test	Supported $t=1.387$ $p<0.05$
Kendi çıkarları doğrultusunda politik davranırlar.	t-test	Not Supported
Sosyal yönleri kuvvetlidir.	t-test	Supported $t=2.090$ $p<0.05$
Karar alırken duygusal davranırlar.	t-test	Not Supported

The other negative relationship belongs to the education. Surprisingly, a negative relationship between the education and attitudes towards women managers has been observed. The higher the education level of the employee, the higher is the negative attitude towards women managers. Although there is not big difference when the means of the groups have been analyzed, there is a significant relationship ($r = -.252$, $p = .01$).

Conclusion

This research bears an exploratory nature and the aim of the research is to analyze different attitudes towards women managers and according to what these attitudes are changing. Although expected, there are no significant relationship found between the tenure, the experience and the age of the employee and their attitudes towards women managers. Nevertheless, in compliance with the existing literature, there is a negative relationship found between gender and attitudes towards women managers. Males tend to have more negative thought towards women managers. Surprisingly, there is a negative relationship found between education and attitudes towards women managers. The higher education levels leads to more negative attitudes. The reasons causing this should be further investigated in another research.

In continuance with this research the authors aim to increase the sample size and analyze the differences in the relationship between employees who work with women managers and male managers. For further research other variables such as marital status, position in the company can be added to the model.

Discussion And Limitations

This research shows that the relationship between education and attitudes towards women managers is negative which was not mentioned in the literature. The reason for this might be the inability to know the necessities of the work when the employee is uneducated or less educated. The more educated he/she is the more unsatisfied he/she can be from his/her manager. One thing worth mentioning here is whether this negative relationship changes according to women – male managers or not. This negative relation between education and attitudes towards women managers might not be special to women managers. For further research one may also consider this factor.



This research has taken place in small business companies in MOIZ. The convenient sampling method has been utilized. The sample size is not big enough to yield productive results. Therefore in another setting, this research could be repeated. Also there will be a difference between small and medium sized businesses. As mentioned in the literature review part, small businesses are companies where people work more in touch and more relationship oriented while in medium/big sized companies the work environment is much more hierarchical and corporate. So the results might change by company size.

Appendix 1

GENEL OLARAK KADIN YÖNETİCİLER;	COMMUNICATION FOCUS ($\alpha=.88$) (M=4.86)	OBJECTIVITY IN DECISION MAKING ($\alpha=.81$) (M=4.64)	PROBLEM SOLVING ($\alpha=.72$) (M=4.84)	WORK ETHICS ($\alpha=.63$) (M=5.51)
İnsan ilişkilerinde profesyonel davranamazlar. (T)	,411			
Çalışanlarının yaşadıkları sıkıntıları anlayışla karşılarlar.	,758			
Çalışanlarıyla nasıl konuşmaları gerektiğini iyi bilirler.	,593			
Çalışanlarının hangi sıkıntıları yaşayabileceklerini anlarlar ve onlara destek olurlar.	,757			
Çalışanların istek ve sorunlarını zamanında hissederler.	,798			
Çalışanların hissettiklerini anlayabilirler ve ona göre davranırlar.	,817			
Duygusallığı, onların profesyonelliğini artırır.	,604			
Problemler karşısında çalışanlarına güler yüzle yardımcı olurlar.	,682			
Olaylara objektif yaklaşamazlar. (T)		,714		
Olaylara genel bakmaz detaylarda kaybolurlar. (T)		,799		
Özel hayatlarındaki sorumluluklar nedeniyle kendi işlerine odaklanamazlar. (T)		,482		
Üzerlerinde aile sorumlulukları olduğu için iş hayatlarını ön planda tutmazlar. (T)		,648		
Kendi çıkarları doğrultusunda politik davranırlar. (T)		,557		
Karar alırken duygusal davranırlar. (T)		,558		
Karar alırken aceleci davranırlar. (T)			,458	
Detaylara odaklandıkları için sonuca ulaşmaları zaman alır. (T)			,476	
Sorunlar karşısında dinamik değildirler, pasif kalırlar. (T)			,842	
Zorluklarla başetmekte sıkıntı çekerler. (T)			,686	
İşlerin yürüdüğünden emin olmak için çalışanları takip eder ve sorgularlar.				,566
Çok çalışırlar.				,781



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