

Determination of the characteristics of Turkish managers: a case study in five star hotels

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to study the select aspects of characteristics of managers in five star hotel enterprises in Turkey. The study focuses on the variables of age, gender, education, and years of experience. The managers such as general director, vice and departmental managers, who are leading the administrative positions are included in this study. According to the findings of the study, in five star hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean regions, the managers' attitude and judgment reflect statistically significant differences regarding the gender, educational level, the size of the hotel enterprise and the level of the professional training. Moreover, the study revealed a significant difference between the size of the hotel enterprises and the wish of the managers to get to know about everything taking place, the tendency of the managers to share it with the others while making decisions, and the tendency of the managers to supervise the junior ones closely and caring their private lives in order to be a role model for them.

Keywords: Five star hotels, characteristics of managers.

INTRODUCTION

In a globalized and intensely competitive hotel business environment, scrutinizing the characteristics of individual senior managers may shed valuable light on significant factors that may influence their decision making process.

The prior experiences of managers would affect their perception of and managing the events (Melone, 1994: 449; Gupta, 1984: 406; Govindarajan, 1989: 252; Data and Rajagopalan, 1998). In these studies, the emphasis was generally laid upon the organizational seniority in terms of its effects on managerial/ administrative decisions. Other studies have indicated that there is a corresponding relation between the high level of organizational seniority and the tendency towards the protection of the current managerial/ administrative decisions. Bantel & Jackson, 1989; Thomas, 1991; Miller, 1991; Hambrick and Fukutomi, 1991)

Studies also show that the educational level of managers markedly shape and affect the managerial/administrative decisions faced by the managers. (Hitt & Bar, 1989; Bantel & Jackson, 1989; Thomas et al., 1991; Wiersama & Bantel, 1992, Wally & Baum, 1994; Tyler & Steensma, 1998: 943-945; Papadakis et al., 1998: 130; Roper, 1998: 19). Other studies signify the correlation between the educational level and being open to innovations. (Hambrick & Mason, 1984).

The characteristics of managers

While the management, in general, is defined as the art of performing an action by means of others; professional management is defined as fulfilling the whole work that the entrepreneur accomplishes by adopting the management as a profession and getting a salary in return for this service without becoming the owner of the enterprise. (Koçel, 2005: 22)

Aksan and Özbaşar (1980: 124-125) and Atkan (1996: 9) identify the main dimension and principles of “professional” management. The nucleus of being a successful manager is the possession of the relevant and authority-based knowledge and the power of persuasion.

Like their other counterparts, the managers in the hotel enterprises play the key role in setting and implementing strategic goals and assuming the responsibility. In order the managers to fulfill their duties effectively and efficiently, Eren (1996: 8-9 identifies three crucial characteristics that managers need to have:

- 1- Intellectual Characteristics:** Based upon the intellectual aspect, the characteristics that managers need to possess are those that require the managers to be such a person, who can due to their positions, read and reason and interpret; who have the ability to analyze and synthesize; who can give appropriate decisions on the right time, and who can make plans and put them into practice.
- 2- Characteristics related to the personality:** Looking from this perspective, a good manager is to keep each and every item in its own place by developing the archive file system and to be neat. Besides, a good manager should be able to put the things in a priority order and upon perceiving any emergency situation and/or problems he should get the works done rapidly and on time.
- 3- Social characteristics:** The capabilities of a good manager that requires attention are as follows: his dressing up, cleanness, well balanced attitudes,

ability to communicate, work discipline, ability to employ the juniors effectively in a liaison with them by asking for their opinion as well.

Barutcugil (1984: 81) also asserts the characteristics that a good manager serving in tourism enterprises needs to possess. Ward (1997: 47) states that successful managers are those who can focus on their job, who are energetic, who can focus themselves on performance objectives and who have the capacity to be able to become transformational/transformationist leaders. On the other hand, Stormer and his colleagues express that the entrepreneurs actually have more motivation for success. (1999: 47). Wilson indicates that women have more motivation for success than men do (1995: 133-135).

Hamerick and Mason study shows the relationship between the personal characteristics of managers and the courses of action they chose to take (1984: 193-194) and they provide three basic recommendations:

- To consider the manager characteristics in administrative theory
- To supply the business enterprises with data regarding the accommodation of strategic managers
- Looking upon the characteristics of competitor enterprises' managers, to foresee the possible preferences.

Many researchers have paid their attention to the personal characteristics of managers (generally demographic characteristics) rather than dealing with the mental aspect of the process. However, "an individual's mental dimension is the product of his experiences". According to Verroff, managers' aims and value judgments related to success differ based on age, gender, and cultural level (Wilson, 1995:133-135). While there are supporters of the opinion that aged senior managers take less risk (MacCrimmon & Wehrung, 1990), other studies support just the opposite idea (Hitt & Tyler). It can, however, be stated that this situation generally depends on the operation of the reinforcement mechanism.

Hambrick and Mason (1984:198) explain the reasons of the aged senior managers' being more conservative in administrative decisions under three factors:

- Upon getting older, physical and mental fatigue becomes a matter of question and they are less capable of perceiving the innovations and applying them.
- Aged managers are psychologically inclined to keep the current positions as they are.
- As the safety is more important for the aged managers, they do not want to undergo risks.

Methodology of the study

In this study, the managers included are the general managers and department directors serving the administrative duties in the five star hotel enterprises in the Aegean and Mediterranean regions, in Turkey. The selection of the five-star hotels for this study stems from the presumption that they are managed more professionally. The addresses of the enterprises under discussion were taken from the Otel ve Tatil Rehberi (www.travelguide.gen.tr) (the hotel and holiday handbook) and the information and data about the sample population was obtained mainly from this source.

According to the handbook, there are 125 five star hotel enterprises in Mediterranean region and 42 in Aegean region in total. In order the samples taken from the main body to be sufficient and to have the representative value, the formula (please see below) developed by Anton (1995) and Özkul (2006) was used to determine the proper sample size for this study. Based on the calculations, with a sample population of 167 of five-star hotels, a minimum sample of 116 hotels needed to be included in the study. However, 121 hotels participated in this study which makes the sample size valid and sufficient.

$$\text{Sample Size} = \frac{500 \cdot 167 \cdot (1.96)^2}{[25(167-1)] + [2500 \cdot (1.96)^2]} = 116$$

A survey methodology was used in the study (Altunışık et. al, 2002). The survey, prepared by taking the advantage of the literature review, constitutes two parts: Part 1 - the expressions related to the hotel characteristics and Part 2 - the expressions related to the characteristics of hotel managers take place. The agreement scale to expressions was designed based on the rankings of 1 to five (such as I never agree (1), I agree totally (5)). The data gathered was analyzed by utilizing the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). In the frame of this program, data was processed and analyzed using the frequency distribution, percentage distribution, t-test, ki-square, ANOVA analysis, Scheffe test.

Findings and the Interpretation of the Study

The findings of the study were examined in two parts as the characteristics of the hotel enterprises and the demographic characteristics of the hotel enterprise managers.

Table 1 - The demographic findings concerned with the hotel managers

Gender	Frequency	Percentage %
Male	98	81.0
Female	23	19.0
Total	121	100.0
Education Level		
Elementary	4	3.3
High School	30	24.8
Undergraduate	74	61.2
Graduate	11	9.1
No response	2	1.7
Total	121	100
Whether to get educated on Tourism Management or not		
Yes	75	62.0
No	44	36.4
No response	2	1.7
Total	121	100
The positional in management		
General Manager	10	8.3
The Vice of the General Manager	8	6.6
The Human Resources Manager	9	7.4
The Accountant Manager	8	6.6
The Office Manager	28	23.1
Technical Manager	12	9.9
Sales-Marketing Manager	3	2.5
Foods and Beverages Manager	7	5.8
Others	36	29.8
Total	121	100
The tenure in management		
0-1 year	12	9.9
2-4 years	31	25.6
5-7 years	26	21.5
8-13 years	31	25.6
13 years and more	19	15.7
No response	2	1.7
Total	121	100

Table 2 - The Hotel Information and Specifications

The date of foundation of the enterprise	Frequency	Percentage %
Before 1990	34	28.1
Between 1900-1950	2	1.7
Between 1980-2000	33	27.3
2000 and later	36	29.8
No response	16	13.2
Total	121	100
The legal face of the enterprise		
A.Ş.	67	55.4
Ltd.	45	37.2
Other	1	0.8
No Response	8	6.6
Total	121	100
The bed space of the enterprise		
121-160	13	10.7
161-200	16	13.2
200-240	-	-
More than 240	91	75.2
No response	1	0.8
Total	121	100
The occupancy rate of the enterprise for last 3years		
50 %and less	2	1.7
51-59 %	8	6.6
60-69 %	10	8.3
70-79 %	22	18.2
80-89 %	29	24.0
90-100 %	21	17.4
No response	29	24.0
Total	121	100
The number of the personnel working in the enterprise		
61-80	27	22.3
81-100	4	3.3
101-120	2	1.7
More than 120	62	51.2
No response	26	21.5
Total	121	100

The Research Hypotheses

In this research the administrative approaches have been regarded as dependent variables and gender, education level, and the enterprise's bed capacity have been regarded as independent variables. Consequently, the hypotheses have been formed as follows and related analyses have been made.

Gender and Administrative Style

H₀: The administrative approach in the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey does not differ according to the managers' gender.

H₁: The administrative approach in the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey differs according to the managers' gender.

Table 3 - Statistics Related to the Administrative Approach Difference According to Gender in the Hotel Enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey

Administrative Variables	Averages		t	Sd	Sig. (2-ends)
	Men	Women			
I'm against overtime.	3.26	2.70	2.011	119	.047
As a manager "good wage level" motivates me.	3.97	3.17	3.282	119	.001
As a manager "social rights" motivate me.	4.21	3.83	2.220	119	.028
In our enterprise "the rate of providing equipment" is at an ideal level.	3.94	3.43	2.457	119	.015
In our enterprise "premium – bonus opportunities" are at an ideal level.	3.05	3.83	-2.884	119	.005
I'm thinking of going to another enterprise due to the deficient salary.	2.14	2.74	-2.230	119	.028
I'm not thinking of going to another enterprise since the organization atmosphere and culture are not at a desired level.	2.56	3.30	-2.645	119	.009
The manager should be aware of everything going on in the enterprise.	4.40	3.96	2.095	119	.038
The managers should pay attention to their private lives so as to be models.	4.34	3.91	2.018	119	.046

Table 3 shows the difference between men and women hotel managers in their approach/response to situations that may face. The t test supports the significant difference in the areas listed above. In the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey the administrative approach differs according to gender. H1 hypothesis has been accepted.

Education and Management Style

H₀: There is no significant difference in the management style of the managers in the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and their level of education.

H₁: There is significant difference in the management style of the managers in the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and their level of education.

Table 4 - Statistics Related to the Management Style According Managers' Education Level in the Hotel Enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey

Managerial Variables	F	P
I'm against overtime.	4.002	.004
As a manager "education opportunities and works that have a future" motivate me.	5.308	.001
As a manager "social rights" motivate me.	4.029	.004
I think that there are social rights, one of the motivating factors, in our enterprise.	3.371	.012
The managers should make decisions with their juniors.	3.541	.009
The managers should pay attention to their private lives in order to be models.	11.073	.000

ANOVA test was applied for these variables. In the hotel enterprises in Turkey the management style differs according to the education level. In order to determine the

direction of the difference by ANOVA analysis, the Scheffe test has been applied as shown below:

Table 5 - The Scheffe Test related to the Statement “I’m against overtime”

Education Level	1	2
Primary School	1.00	
High School		3.43
Undergraduate		3.12
Graduate		3.36
Sig.	.057	.983

The results indicate that the managers whose education level is primary school agree less and the ones who have high school, undergraduate, or postgraduate degrees agree more.

Table 6 - The Scheffe Test related to the Statement “As a manager “education opportunities and works that have a future” motivate me.”

Education Level	1	2
Primary School	3.00	
High School		4.23
Undergraduate		4.39
Graduate		4.36
Sig.	.087	.998

The results indicate that the managers whose education level is primary school agree less and the ones who have high school, undergraduate, or postgraduate degrees agree more.

Table 7 - The Scheffe Test related to the Statement “As a manager the social rights motivate me.”

Education Level	1
Primary School	3.00
Postgraduate	4.09
High School	4.13
Undergraduate	4.24
Sig.	.094

While there seems to be a difference in the ANOVA analysis related to the statement “As a manager the social rights motivate me.”, the result of the Scheffe test shows that there is no significant difference.

Table 8 - The Scheffe Test related to the Statement “I think as a manager there are social rights among the motivating factors in our enterprise.”

Education Level	1	2
Primary School		5.00
High School	3,90	
Undergraduate	3.53	
Graduate	3.91	
Sig.	.611	.139

Whereas the managers whose education level is primary school agree more with the statement “I think there are the social rights among the other motivating factors in our enterprise”, the managers who have postgraduate, high school, and undergraduate degrees agree less.

Table 9 - The Scheffe Test related to the Statement “The managers should make decisions with their Juniors.”

Education Level	1	2
Primary School	2.00	
High School	3.83	
Undergraduate	3.53	
Post graduate		4.00
Sig.	.065	.609

According to the result of the Scheffe test related to the statement “The managers should make decisions with their juniors.”, it has been observed that while the managers who have postgraduate degree agree more, the ones who have primary school, high school, and undergraduate degree agree less.

Hotel Size/Capacity (number of beds) and Management Education

H₀: There is no difference between the size of the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and the managers’ education and/or training in their areas.

H₁: There is a difference between the size of the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and the managers’ education and/or training in their areas.

Table 11. Statistics Related to the Professional and Educational Level of Managers and the Size of the Hotels

Bed Capacity	Yes	No	Total
121-160	8	5	13
161-200	12	2	14
more than 240	73	12	85
Total	93	19	112

Ki-Square analysis p was calculated as 0.296. The hypothesis has been rejected at the 0.05 significance level. No relationship could be supported between the size of the enterprise and the manager’s attendance level in the education studies in his area. H1 hypothesis was rejected.

Size of the Hotel and Desire to be Informed of Everything

H₀: There is no meaningful difference between the size of the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and the desire to make the managers be informed of everything that goes on.

H₁: There is a meaningful difference between the size of the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and the desire to make the managers be informed of everything that goes on.

Table 12 - Statistics Related to the Agreement with the Existence of a Relationship between the Size of the Hotel Enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and the Desire to Make the Managers Be Informed of Everything That Goes On

	The Total of the Squares	Sd	The Average Square	F	Sig.
Among the groups	.574	2	.287	.371	.691
In the groups	90.418	117	.773		
Total	90.992	119			

The ANOVA analysis revealed no significant difference between the size of the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and the desire to make the managers be informed of everything that goes on. H1 hypothesis has been rejected.

I. Hotel Size/Capacity and Management Desire to Shared Decision Making

H₀: Statistically there is not a meaningful difference between the size of the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and the tendency to share with others while making decisions.

H₁: Statistically there is a meaningful difference between the size of the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and the tendency to share with others while making decisions.

Table 13 - Statistics Related to the Agreement with the Existence of a Relationship between the Size of the Hotel Enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and the Tendency to Share the Decision making Process with Junior Managers

	The Total of the Squares	Std.	The Average Square	F	Sig.
Among the groups	1.109	2	.554	.484	.618
In the groups	134.058	117	1.146		
Total	135.167	119			

In the ANOVA analysis, no significant difference could be found between the size of the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and the tendency to share with their juniors while the managers are making decisions. H1 hypothesis was rejected.

II. Hotel Size/Capacity and Level of Supervision of Junior Managers

H₀: There is not a meaningful difference between the size of the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and the tendency to closely supervise the junior managers

H₁: There is a meaningful difference between the size of the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and the tendency to closely supervise the junior managers.

Table 14 - Statistics Related to the Agreement with the Existence of a Relationship between the Size of the Hotel Enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and the Tendency to Closely Supervising the juniors

	The Total of The Squares	Sd	The Average Square	F	Sig.
Among the groups	.798	2	.399	.494	.612
In the groups	94.527	117	.808		
Total	95.325	119			

Based on ANOVA analysis, no difference has been found between the size of the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey and the tendency to closely supervising the juniors. H1 hypothesis is rejected.

III. Hotel Size/Capacity and Level of Desire to be a Role Model

H₀: Statistically there is no meaningful difference between the managers' paying attention to their private lives in order to be models to their juniors and the size of the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey.

H₁: Statistically there is a meaningful difference between the managers' paying attention to their private lives in order to be models to their juniors and the size of the hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey.

Table 15 - Statistics Related to the Agreement with the Existence of a Relationship between the Managers' Paying Attention to Their Private Lives in order to be Models to Their Juniors and the Size of the Hotel Enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions in Turkey

	The Total of the Squares	Sd	the Average Square	F	Sig.
Among the groups	2.948	2	1.474	1.768	.175
In the groups	95.552	117	.834		
Total	100.500	119			

The ANOVA analysis did not support any significant difference. H1 hypothesis was rejected.

Summary Findings

This study concerned the five-star hotel enterprises in the Aegean and Mediterranean regions of Turkey to determine the manager characteristics and attitudes. The data obtained was analyzed using the SPSS statistical package and the hypotheses were assessed based on the statistical analyses. The significant findings are summarized below:

- In comparison with the women, the men agreed more with the statement "I'm against overtime" which is one of the variables evaluated differently according to the gender. In this case it can be asserted that the men compared to women are more sensitive about overtime and do not make concession. It can, however, be said that when it has been evaluated considering the structure and the traditions of the society.

- On the issue of the well-being and wage level, the male managers are affected more and more motivated compared to the women. Considering Turkish family structure, it must have been thought that mostly the men have the responsibility on the income matter and that's why the men are more sensitive about the wage level than the women. This result has confirmed our hypothesis.
- Compared to women, male managers are more satisfied with their hotel equipment and apparatus. In the research indicates that it is more difficult to satisfy the women on the facility matters as compared to the men.
- Compared to female managers, male manager were less satisfied with their premium and bonus opportunities.
- Study supports that it is less likely for women managers to move to another hotel establishments because of higher wages.
- Organizational atmosphere and culture are more determinant actors for women managers, compared to men, to move into another enterprise.
- Based on this study, it can be said that the male managers are stricter in transferring the authority and the men are more inclined to the centralized management authority.
- Male managers agree more with the statement "The managers should pay attention to their private lives since they are the models." than the women managers. It can be stated that on the issue of the attention paid to the private life, the male managers are unexpectedly a bit more meticulous than the women.
- It can be said that there is a directional relationship between the future educational opportunities through works and the current level of Managers' education.
- The study shows that there is a directional relationship between the education level and being satisfied with the existence of social rights in the enterprise has attracted attention.
- According to the Scheffe test results conducted about the variable "The managers should take care of their private lives in order to be good models.", the ones who have the primary level education agree least, the ones who have undergraduate and postgraduate degrees agree so so, and the managers who are graduates of high school agree most. The findings obtained in this research overlap Bantel & Jackson, Thomas vs., Miller, ; Hambrick & Fukutomi's earlier studies.

Summary Conclusions:

The purpose of this study was to determine the difference in attitudes and characteristics of managers in five-star hotel enterprises in Aegean and Mediterranean Regions of Turkey. Based on the statistical analyses of the data and the findings of the study, it can be asserted that:

- Men Managers are more sensitive about objecting to working overtime compared to their women counterparts.
- Men are more sensitive about the increase in the wage level in comparison with the women.
- Regarding the expectations concerning the equipment and the physical environment to a satisfactory level, satisfying the women managers is more difficult than satisfying the men.
- When have problem with the salary issue, more men think about going to another enterprise than the women.
- Men have more tendency to the central administration structure.
- There is a positive correlation between the education level and being against overtime.
- As the education level increases, the motivation for seeking opportunities with the educational facilities and the jobs which have a future increase. This result also overlaps with Hambrick & Mason, Hitt & Bar, Bantel & Jackson, Thomas vs., Wiersama & Bantel, Wally & Baum, Tyler & Steensma, Papadakis v.d. and Roper's studies that have been conducted earlier.
- As the education level increases, the contentment about the existence of social rights decreases, and the tendency towards the participant administration increases.

Final Remarks

In this study which has been conducted in five-star hotel enterprises in the Aegean and Mediterranean regions of Turkey in order to determine the manager attitudes and characteristics, some differences can be found among the managers on some issues especially according to the gender and the education level. It can be suggested that entrepreneurs should pay attention to some characteristics in order to get advantage from their choices in the long run.

Evaluating the results of this study reveals the existence of the relationship between "gender and education level" and "administrative style and personal characteristics". Hiring well-educated and qualified personnel is sometimes perceived as costly and time consuming. However, when the outcomes achieved in the end are considered, sooner or later it will be seen that the entrepreneurs who prefer to work with qualified and educated workforces get the best in the long run in the tourism sector. On account of the findings of this study, it should be understood that the increase in the education levels of the managers who are employed in the five-star hotel enterprises is not a luxury but an inevitable necessity.

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