EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN SCHOOLS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

SINEM ARSLAN-DÖNMEZ

English Preparatory Program, School of Foreign Languages, Alanya University, Turkey
sinemarslan.donmez@alanyauniversity.edu.tr | https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4816-420X

ABSTRACT

This study examines lecturers' perceptions of the instructional leadership roles of administrators in Schools of Foreign Languages (SFL) at Turkish universities. Using a phenomenological design within the qualitative research paradigm, maximum variation sampling ensured diversity in institutional backgrounds and professional experiences. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 13 lecturers from SFLs in Istanbul, Ankara, and Antalya. The findings provide insights into how instructional leadership is experienced and interpreted by academic staff in the higher education context. A participatory leadership style emerged as a key component of effective instructional leadership. Successful leaders were expected to encourage stakeholder involvement in educational processes and foster shared responsibility. The results also highlighted the importance of prioritizing teaching quality and creating a collaborative, respectful learning environment.

KEY WORDS

instructional leadership; leadership; higher education; schools of foreign languages.

SISYPHUS
JOURNAL OF EDUCATION
VOLUME 14, ISSUE 01,
2026, PP 10-31

DOI: https://doi.org/10.25749/sis.41479

LIDERANÇA EDUCACIONAL NAS ESCOLAS DE LÍNGUAS ESTRANGEIRAS

SINEM ARSLAN-DÖNMEZ

English Preparatory Program, School of Foreign Languages, Alanya University, Turquia
sinemarslan.donmez@alanyauniversity.edu.tr | https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4816-420X

RESUMO

Este estudo analisa as perceções dos docentes sobre os papéis de liderança instrucional dos órgãos de gestão nas Escolas de Línguas Estrangeiras (ELE) das universidades turcas. Com base numa metodologia fenomenológica inserida no paradigma da investigação qualitativa, foi utilizada a amostragem por variação máxima para assegurar a diversidade de contextos institucionais e de experiências profissionais. Realizaram-se entrevistas semiestruturadas a 13 docentes de ELE em Istambul, Ancara e Antália. Os resultados oferecem uma visão sobre como a liderança instrucional é vivenciada e interpretada pelo corpo docente no contexto do ensino superior. Um estilo de liderança participativo surgiu como um componente-chave de uma liderança instrucional eficaz. Espera-se que os líderes bem-sucedidos incentivem o envolvimento das partes interessadas nos processos educativos e promovam um sentido de responsabilidade partilhada. Os resultados também sublinharam a importância de priorizar a qualidade do ensino e de criar um ambiente de aprendizagem colaborativo e respeitador.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

liderança instrucional; liderança; ensino superior; escolas de línguas estrangeiras.

SISYPHUS
JOURNAL OF EDUCATION
VOLUME 14, ISSUE 01,
2026, PP 10-31

DOI: https://doi.org/10.25749/sis.41479

LIDERAZGO EDUCATIVO EN LAS ESCUELAS DE LENGUAS EXTRANJERAS

SINEM ARSLAN-DÖNMEZ

English Preparatory Program, School of Foreign Languages, Alanya University, Turquía
sinemarslan.donmez@alanyauniversity.edu.tr | https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4816-420X

RESUMEN

Este estudio examina las percepciones del profesorado sobre los roles de liderazgo instruccional de los órganos de gobierno en las Escuelas de Lenguas Extranjeras (ELE) de universidades turcas. Utilizando una metodología fenomenológica dentro del paradigma de investigación cualitativa, se empleó un muestreo por variación máxima para asegurar la diversidad en los antecedentes institucionales y las experiencias profesionales. Se realizaron entrevistas semiestructuradas con 13 docentes de ELE en Estambul, Ankara y Antalya. Los hallazgos proporcionan información sobre cómo se vive e interpreta el liderazgo instruccional en el contexto académico del sistema de educación superior. Un estilo de liderazgo participativo surgió como un componente clave para un liderazgo instruccional eficaz. Los líderes exitosos deben fomentar la participación de las partes interesadas en los procesos educativos y promover la responsabilidad compartida. Los resultados también destacaron la importancia de priorizar la calidad docente y crear un ambiente de aprendizaje colaborativo y respetuoso.

PALABRAS CLAVE

liderazgo instruccional; liderazgo; educación superior; escuelas de lenguas extranjeras.

SISYPHUS

JOURNAL OF EDUCATION

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 01,

2026, PP 10-31

DOI: https://doi.org/10.25749/sis.41479

Educational Leadership in Schools of Foreign Languages[1]

Sinem Arslan-Dönmez[2]

INTRODUCTION

The quality of education in universities is a critical determinant of a nation's capacity to establish a skilled, innovative, and competitive workforce in order to be able to contribute to the development of the society (Aydın, 2016). In this context, universities require a program that aligns with their objectives, qualified staff and well-equipped physical environments that facilitate quality education as well as a positive organizational climate and leaders capable of ensuring the provision of all these essential conditions (Karaaslan & Akın, 2019). Thus, leadership at all levels of the university structure plays an essential role in shaping academic standards, instructional practices, and institutional culture (Gibbs, 2010). This situation directs our attention to one of the important leadership models: instructional leadership (Hallinger & Wang, 2015). Instructional leadership, which started to grab attention with the researches on successful and effective schools by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) in the 1980s, was traditionally conceptualized within the domain of K–12 education. However, as instructional leadership stresses the role of educational leaders to improve teaching and learning outcomes through the supervision of instruction, promotion of clear academic goals, and supporting a positive learning climate (Hallinger, 2005; Hallinger & Murphy, 1985), it can be regarded as adaptable to higher education contexts (Shaked, 2020), particularly within teaching-intensive units such those taught in School of Foreign Languages [SFL] in Turkish higher education.

In Turkey, higher education is a highly centralized system governed by the Council of Higher Education [Yükseköğretim Kurulu, YÖK] under the framework of the Higher Education Law No. 2547, enacted in 1981. This law regulates both public and private universities, and ensures a unified structure across the country (YÖK, 1981). All teaching and research processes in faculties, institutes, colleges, conservatories, and SFLs are run under the supervision and coordination of YÖK. Within this higher education framework, SFLs occupy a critical role, particularly in universities offering English-medium instruction where the primary mission is to equip students with the linguistic and academic skills needed to successfully pursue their studies in English-medium programs (Aydın & Hockley, 2019). These schools are managed by a director (head), appointed by the rector, who is responsible for both administrative and academic operations. Thus, the management and development of the teaching capacity of the SFLs as well as the administrative supervision, planning and execution of necessary changes are under the authority of the head of the SFL (YÖK, 1981).

The quality of the teaching has a profound influence on both learning outcomes and well-being of students. Put differently, while meaningful learning processes foster a sense of accomplishment, academic progress, and overall satisfaction among students

[1] The article is based on the presentation "Educational Leadership in the School of Foreign Languages" at the 29th Annual ENIRDELM conference, Norway: Democracy and Educational Leadership, held digitally on September 16th, 2021.

[2] Alanya University, Cikcilli Mah. Saraybeleni Cad. No 7, 07400, Alanya, Antalya, Turkey.

(Govorova et al., 2020), monotonous instructional process results in disengagement, poor academic performance, and even diminished self-esteem (Liu et al., 2019). The SFL heads, therefore, hold a critical responsibility to cultivate a learning environment that support academic achievement, sustain active engagement, and promote student well-being. Considering the strong interconnection between teaching, learning, and the outcomes of the academic studies, it is essential that higher education leaders prioritize instructional leadership as a strategic mean of enhancing the quality of learning and fostering a positive climate (Shaked, 2024). Consequently, the role of instructional leadership remains critical in teaching-intensive SFLs where the effectiveness of leadership directly influences both instructional quality and student outcomes. In other words, the head of the SFL is expected to exercise instructional leadership by overseeing teaching quality, facilitating the professional development of lecturers, and guiding curriculum enhancement. However, current accessible studies indicate only a limited focus on the instructional leadership roles of higher education administrators (Ersözlü & Saklan, 2016; Karaaslan & Akın, 2019; Shaked, 2020).

The case of the teaching-intensive SFLs within the Turkish higher education context can be described as a typical case that reflects the organizational and instructional challenges faced by similar language-teaching-oriented schools in many non-English-speaking higher education systems. At the same time, it bears critical features due to its focus on a context where English-medium instruction and internationalization pressures intersect with traditional hierarchical structures. Thus, this case offers both a contextually grounded and internationally relevant perspective on how instructional leadership is enacted in higher education settings. This study interrogates common practices in instructional leadership in teaching-focused units, and specifically aims to uncover the instructional leadership roles of SFL heads from the perspectives of lecturers, with emphasis on administrative processes, instructional practices, and the institutional climate. By linking these empirical findings to the broader literature on instructional leadership, the study contributes to understanding how leadership is enacted in teaching-intensive, language-oriented academic units, offering implications for policy and practice at local, national, and international levels.

THEORETHICAL FRAMEWORK

EVOLUTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The role of the school administrators has evolved considerably over time. While they were primarily responsible for administrative and organizational tasks, such as maintaining school safety, enforcing policies, and managing facilities, their role has expanded to instructional leadership and positioned them as key agents responsible for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in contemporary educational settings (Glickman et al., 2018; Murphy et al., 2016).

Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) seminal model of instructional leadership, which focuses on three dimensions: (i) defining the goals of the school, (ii) managing the school program, and (iii) providing a positive school environment, serves as a foundation for understanding how administrators can influence teaching quality. In this context, the first dimension emphasizes the administrator's mission to create the main goals of the school,

the second dimension focuses on the supervision of the teaching and the instructional program, and the third dimension highlights the school that focuses on effective and continuous development by creating a positive school climate (Hallinger, 2011).

In its early stages, instructional leadership was viewed as a top-down function, with leaders primarily focused on maintaining order rather than fostering professional growth. Over time, however, this perspective has evolved into a more collaborative, distributed, and transformational approach. Leithwood et al. (2008) advanced this concept by integrating elements of transformational leadership, emphasizing vision setting, staff empowerment, and the development of professional learning communities. Accordingly, instructional leadership has become a shared responsibility distributed across multiple institutional roles (Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood et al., 2008; Vedøy & Møller, 2007). This shift has placed greater emphasis on the leadership contributions of department heads, curriculum coordinators, and teacher leaders in shaping instructional practices (Jones & Harvey, 2017; Lambert, 2002).

Extensive research has demonstrated the effectiveness of instructional leadership in enhancing teaching quality (Hallinger et al., 2020), improving school effectiveness (Boyce & Bowers, 2018), and promoting students' academic outcomes (Murphy et al., 2016) in K-12 institutions. Although higher education differs from K-12 education, instructional leadership remains a key determinant of teaching quality and institutional effectiveness. Effective instructional leaders promote a culture of continuous improvement by promoting faculty engagement, reflective practice, and professional development (Hallinger et al., 2020). Such leadership not only enhances instructional quality and student learning outcomes but also fosters a supportive academic climate that promotes well-being of all members of the school. When faculty members feel supported in their teaching efforts, their motivation and job satisfaction increase; similarly, students who experience high-quality, well-supported instruction demonstrate greater engagement and academic success (Shaked, 2024). As educational leadership enables leaders to contribute effectively within diverse local, cultural, and political contexts (Feldfeber, 2020), it is particularly well-suited to the higher education context, where academic diversity and contextual responsiveness are critical (Munna, 2022). Accordingly, this study suggests the utility of the instructional leadership framework in higher education, providing insights into how instructional leadership practices operate and may be enhanced in teaching-intensive units.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Over the past decade, the leadership in higher education has undergone a significant conceptual and practical transformation, moving from a hierarchical model towards more collaborative paradigms (Potter & Devecchi, 2020). Bryman's (2007) literature review on higher education leadership emphasized that effective academic leadership depends largely on fostering a collegial environment, aligning with the rise of distributed leadership, which has become a dominant framework in higher education research and practice (Jones, 2017). In addition, the imbalance between teaching and research (Light & Calkins, 2015), which prioritized research output as the primary measure of academic success and prestige (Chen, 2015) and favoured scholars with research success over those with strong teaching profiles (Goodall et al., 2014) has begun to change. Universities have recognized the importance of teaching quality and student learning outcomes. Thus, the need for leadership in improving instructional quality, enhancing

student learning outcomes, and aligning instructional practices with institutional goals has started to gain prominence in higher education (Macfarlane, 2011). Ersözlü and Saklan (2016), for instance, examined the instructional leadership roles of faculty members, highlighting its potential in promoting diverse teaching methods, visual materials, professional development, collaboration among colleagues, and serving as role models through behaviour and attitudes. Karaaslan and Akın (2019) noted in their research that while department heads recognized the value of curriculum guidance, constructivist course planning, extracurricular activities, and positive leadership qualities such as expertise, self-renewal, and effective communication, they tended to focus more on administrative tasks and social-psychological support for faculty. Similarly, Shaked (2020) reported that higher education leaders demonstrated minimal instructional leadership, largely due to the emphasis on faculty autonomy, the low prioritization of teaching quality, and entrenched beliefs about academic teaching norms in his study conducted in Israel. On the other hand, Chhourn (2019) concluded in his PhD dissertation that instructional leadership in five Cambodian private universities was moderately practiced and significantly correlated with outcome-based education.

In this evolving landscape of higher education, instructional leadership provides a useful framework for understanding how academic leaders can influence teaching and learning processes within their institutions. Although instructional leadership has been examined across various school levels, its application within university settings, particularly in SFLs where intensive teaching occurs and leaders are responsible for overseeing instructional practices, professional development, and curriculum implementation has received comparatively less focused attention. The broader literature on higher education leadership tends to emphasise academic leadership (e.g., Bryman, 2007; Floyd & Preston, 2018), prioritising research-oriented leadership behaviours over those directly shaping instructional quality; yet, studies on instructional leadership in teaching-focused units such as SFLs remain underexplored despite their practical significance, and represent an area open to further investigation. Given that SFLs operate within universities yet function as instruction-centred environments, examining leadership through the lens of instructional leadership offers important insights that academic leadership frameworks alone do not fully capture. Within this scope, the current study explores lecturers' views on the instructional leadership roles of SFL heads in Turkey, aiming to contribute to both theoretical understanding and practical improvement in leadership in teaching-intensive units in higher education institutions.

METHOD

RESEARCH DESIGN

Building on the influential methodological perspectives of Ragin and Becker (1992), Stake (1995), Becker (1998), and Yin (2018), this study examines what the case of instructional leadership in SFLs in Turkish higher education represents. Thus, the current study adopts a dynamic approach by combining Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) model with the transformational component of Leithwood et al. (2008) to examine the instructional leadership roles of SFL heads based on the perceptions of the lecturers. Accordingly, a phenomenological research design, one of the qualitative research approaches that aims

to understand how individuals experience and perceive a specific phenomenon (Creswell, 2013), was used to investigate how lecturers in SFLs perceive and experience the instructional leadership roles of their heads in relation to administration, instructional processes, and the creation of a positive school environment, as well as the meanings they attribute to these roles.

PARTICIPANTS

The study group consisted of 13 lecturers working in various SFLs located in three major provinces in Turkey, including Istanbul, Ankara, and Antalya, which were selected due to the number of universities, high population of university students, and distinctive educational dynamics. A purposeful sampling strategy was employed, utilizing maximum variation to ensure diversity (Patton, 2015) in terms of educational backgrounds, levels of seniority, and institutional demographics of participants, thereby, enabling the collection of rich data and providing a comprehensive understanding of the instructional leadership roles assumed by SFL administrators.

The selection criteria included lecturers who had been working at their current institution for at least one year at the time of data collection. Of 20 lecturers initially contacted, 13 agreed to participate in the study. The demographic information of the participants of the study is given in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic information of the participants

Participant	Gender	Education	Seniority	Experience at the School
Lecturer 1	Female	PhD	12	9
Lecturer 2	Female	MA	12	9
Lecturer 3	Female	BA	12	9
Lecturer 4	Male	MA	8	8
Lecturer 5	Male	MA	10	7
Lecturer 6	Female	MA	6	6
Lecturer 7	Male	BA	10	6
Lecturer 8	Female	MA	11	5
Lecturer 9	Female	BA	4	4
Lecturer 10	Female	PhD	10	2
Lecturer 11	Female	BA	10	2
Lecturer 12	Female	BA	8	2
Lecturer 13	Male	MA	9	1

As seen in Table 1, nine of the participants were female and four were male. Five of the participants held BA degrees, six held MA degrees, and two held PhDs. Their teaching experience ranged from 4 to 12 years, and their tenure at the school where the data were collected ranged from 1 to 9 years.

DATA COLLECTION

The data were collected through individual interviews between January and May, 2021. A semi-structured, in-depth interview form was used as the data collection instrument, allowing participants to elaborate on their perspectives and enabling the researcher to ask follow-up questions when necessary to gain a deeper understanding of the data (Creswell, 2013). The semi-structure interview form developed by the researcher in accordance with the aim of the study consisted of six open-ended questions, designed to elicit in-depth responses that allowed participants to elaborate on their experiences and insights concerning instructional leadership roles of their heads in terms of administration, instructional processes, and the creation of a positive school environment.

For data collection, first the researcher contacted to lecturers working in SFLs in Istanbul, Ankara, and Antalya and informed them about the study purpose. Following getting consent, interviews were carried out with lecturers who volunteered to participate in the study. As the study was conducted during the post-pandemic period, interviews were carried out both face-to-face and via online meeting platforms, depending on the participants' preferences regarding in-person contact. All interviews were recorded with participants' consent to facilitate accurate transcription. The duration of the interviews ranged from 30 to 90 minutes.

The data were analysed via thematic analysis in six phases including familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing potential themes, defining themes, and producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2012). They were then organized systematically according to the thematic framework to ensure a transparent presentation of the findings (Patton, 2015). Using an inductive approach, content analysis was conducted in a way that both reflected the theoretical framework and allowed new insights to emerge. Specifically, the data were coded deductively according to key dimensions derived from the literature, such as defining the goals, managing the school program, and providing a positive school climate while also being coded inductively to capture participants' own perspectives and experiences, including emerging patterns such as monitoring instructional quality (e.g. feedback from lecturers, students), supporting professional development (e.g. flexible schedule), and learning environment (e.g. open door policy). Codes which explicitly referred to leadership behaviours, instructional processes, or the organizational climate within SFLs were included while those describing broader institutional or personal issues unrelated to these areas were excluded. After iterative comparison and refinement, related codes were clustered into categories, and categories with strong conceptual connections were grouped to form overarching themes. This process ensured that the themes accurately represented how participants articulated their perceptions of instructional leadership and its expression in practice.

Informed consent from the participants were secured for the study, and the researcher rigorously maintained confidentiality and anonymity through using codes (L1, L2, etc.) and anonymous demographic details. To enhance the reliability of the study, the researcher's notes were shared with the participants to confirm that the content accurately represented their views. Additionally, the themes and codes derived from the data were cross-validated with an expert in the field to ensure consistency and credibility in the coding process.

FINDINGS

The analysis of lecturers' perceptions revealed that the instructional leadership roles of SFL heads was characterized by three key dimensions: (a) shared governance and leadership, (b) prioritizing teaching quality, and (c) enhancing the learning environment.

SHARED GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

The first concept identified through the analysis of the data was the shared governance and leadership at SFLs, reflecting the transformational leadership components identified by Leithwood et al. (2008), particularly the emphasis on collaboration, shared vision, and participatory decision-making. All participants emphasized the significant involvement of school members (lecturers, students, professional development units, etc.) in decision-making processes, as well as the distribution of leadership across various levels in SFLs they worked as depicted in Table 2. This finding aligns with a recent study by Carbone et al. (2017), who highlighted the importance of distributed leadership in higher education, showing that collaborative leadership among academics and coordinators enhanced teaching and learning. Likewise, Jones and Harvey (2017) suggested that distributing leadership was particularly more suitable for addressing the complex challenges and pressures faced by higher education institutions than traditional leadership models. The current study also underscored that involving multiple school members and distributing leadership responsibilities not only facilitated participatory decision-making but also supported alignment of institutional practices with educational quality objectives.

Table 2
Shared governance and leadership

Themes	**Codes**	**Lecturers**
Involvement in decision making	General meetings	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,1 1, 12, 13
	Focus group discussions	1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9
	Evaluation reports/ surveys	6, 9, 10, 12
Distributed leadership	Academic team leadership	1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9

Involvement in decision making

As seen in Table 2, regarding the involvement of the school members, all participants indicated that their opinions and feedback were actively solicited through **general meetings, focus group discussions, and reports/surveys** in both setting the school's goals and managing the programs. Participants emphasized that such practices enabled

all parties, including lecturers, unit members, students, and student families to engage meaningfully in the governance of the academic processes within the institution. As Lecturer 2 said, "*Our administrators regularly get feedbacks from academic coordinators, lecturers, and students to determine the curriculum and goals of the school*." Similarly, Lecturer 3 asserted, "*Feedback is received from students regularly through classroom chats or informal meetings. The feedback received is conveyed to the vice-head or the head of the school, and necessary arrangements are made through mutual exchange of ideas*." Lecturer 5 also stated, "*In any decision to be taken, they get the opinion and feedback of the stakeholders who will be affected by the decision; there is no understanding of imposition from above*." He also added, "*Also sometimes focus group meetings are held. In these meetings, evaluations are made about the program, success and teaching process with certain participants and administrator/s*." Lecturer 10 emphasized that sometimes families are contacted as well saying, "*Though it's not regular formal meetings, families also visit the school and share their opinions with us or with the head of the school*." According to the lecturers, providing opportunities for students, lecturers, and other members to offer feedback on both the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching practices was regarded as critical for enhancing the quality of education and for cultivating a democratic school environment. This finding echoes prior studies (e.g. Munna, 2022) that instructional leadership enables the academic leaders in higher education institutions to establish a shared belief about the learning procedures and can improve the learner's achievement.

Distributed leadership

The second concept highlighted was the distribution of leadership through various **academic teams and units**. Distributing leadership provided a participatory or collaborative decision-making mechanism in which administrators, lecturers, students, and families were involved. As Harris (2005) noted, it shifts leadership from a single individual to multiple actors, extending influence and responsibility across all levels of the organization. For example, Lecturer 1 stated, "*We have small groups with responsibility for program, mission and evaluation. These groups constantly exchange information with the administrative staff and teaching staff.*" Likewise, Lecturer 5 noted, "*There are many different groups responsible for various issues in the school like testing, professional development, curriculum etc. They constantly get feedback from students and lecturers, and make necessary changes through the leadership of the administrator.*" Lecturer 6 also mentioned about the distribution of leadership saying, "*Different teams are responsible for curriculum, testing, etc. The administrator does not interfere with their business but gets information about the work done and helps if needed*."

PRIORITIZING TEACHING QUALITY

Prioritizing teaching quality was the second theme consistently highlighted by lecturers as a central focus of SFL heads' instructional leadership role. Lecturers noted the main focus of the SFLs is teaching rather than research; therefore, the leaders place significant emphasis on improving the quality of instruction by supporting professional

development and regularly evaluating the instructional program. This aligns closely with Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) instructional leadership model, which emphasizes setting clear educational goals, monitoring instruction, and supporting faculty growth as demonstrated in Table 3. The present study also revealed that SFL heads not only provided instructional support through in-house seminars and peer-observation practices but also offered various forms of administrative support, including establishing a professional development unit within the department to enhance lecturers' professional growth, allocating financial resources for lecturers' participation in professional development initiatives, and ensuring flexibility in weekly teaching schedules to enable their engagement in such activities. Furthermore, in the context of program evaluation, the study showed that SFL heads enabled not only lecturers but also members from different units and students to participate in the evaluation of the instructional program, thereby promoting a more comprehensive and inclusive assessment process.

Table 3
Prioritizing teaching quality

Themes	**Sub-Themes**	**Codes**	**Lecturers**
Professional development support	Educational support	In-house seminars	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
		Peer (class) observation	1, 7, 9, 12, 13
	Administrative support	Flexible schedule	2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
		Professional development unit	5, 7, 9
		Financial support	6, 8, 13
Evaluation of the instructional program	Instructor evaluation	Feedback from lecturers	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
		Feedback from unit members	1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13
	Learner evaluation	Feedback from students	2, 3, 7, 10, 11, 13

Professional development support

As seen in Table 3, professional development support provided in their school to improve the quality of education was the main concept that all participants noted. In this regard, **educational support** emerged as a key component, and participants emphasized in-house seminars and peer (classroom) observation as important mechanisms for sharing knowledge, exchanging teaching practices, and fostering professional growth. Lecturers particularly highlighted the importance of in-house seminars as valuable platforms for exchanging ideas and discussing professional issues. For example, Lecturer 2 stated, "*Regular professional development seminars and conferences are organized. In these events, the lecturers from the school also give presentations and we all exchange ideas*." Moreover, lecturers acknowledged the

importance of these seminars for the personal development, as Lecturer 9 explained, "*Almost every week, a seminar was organized about someone's thesis, article, and a subject they learned. It was both educative and enjoyable. Thanks to these seminars, we not only learned about language teaching but also about different personal development issues*." Moreover, they pointed out that SFL heads supported professional development practices within the unit, such as peer (class) observation activities and initiated tailor-made development opportunities responsive to lecturers' specific needs. Observation, which is one of the key practices of instructional leadership, was considered an important element of educational support of lecturers. Lecturers noted that observing colleagues' teaching practices not only provided opportunities for constructive feedback but also facilitated the sharing of effective instructional strategies, contributing to both individual and collective professional growth. For instance, Lecturer 1 mentioned, "*We carry out class observations to visit each other's classes and share opinions about weak and strong aspects of the classes. I personally find it useful as it enhances the professional dialogue among colleagues and improve the education quality.*" Similarly, Lecturer 12 stated, "*Professional and academic development of lecturers is supported by peer observations conducted regularly among lecturers."*

In addition, participants underscored **administrative support initiatives**, such as offering a flexible schedule, providing access to a dedicated professional development unit, and ensuring financial support for participating in professional activities. Among these factors, lecturers most frequently underlined the importance of flexible working schedules, especially for those engaged in graduate studies. They noted that graduate studies contributed significantly to the professional development of lecturers and, consequently to the overall quality of education. Regarding the importance of providing flexible working schedules, Lecturer 8 stated, "*Weekly academic leave is given to those who continue their master's and PhD studies,*" emphasizing that SFL heads adjusted lecturers' working time in accordance with their graduate studies so as to support their own professional development initiatives. Similarly, Lecturer 13 noted that class hours could be adjusted to accommodate lecturers' graduate studies saying, "*Course schedules of lecturers can be arranged in accordance with their masters or PhD studies*." Another form of administrative support for the professional development of lecturers identified was the establishment of professional development units within the SFLs. Regarding this, Lecturer 5 stated, *"We have a professional development unit. In this unit, various activities related to the areas needed and demanded by the lecturers are organized,"* indicating that the unit provided continuous, tailored professional support aligned with lecturers' specific needs. Similarly, Lecturer 9 said, "*Professional development unit organizes festivals in cooperation with other universities to contribute to the lecturers every year. These festivals also positively affect inter-institutional professional dialogue,*" emphasizing that the unit not only organized annual events in collaboration with other universities but also leveraged them to foster inter-institutional professional dialogue, thereby expanding lecturers' networks and promoting collaborative learning beyond their own institutions. The final administrative support for the professional development of the lecturers was the financial support. For this concept, Lecturer 6 noted, "*All staff is paid a certain amount each year to participate in professional development-related activities*," indicating that financial assistance reflected the institution's commitment for continuous learning and growth among faculty.

Evaluation of the instructional program

The second key aspect of SFL heads' instructional leadership practices regarding prioritization of teaching quality was the regular evaluation of the instructional program. All participants noted that SFL administrators systematically collected feedback on the program and curriculum from both instructors and learners, and guided the implementation of necessary adjustments based on these evaluations. In particular, **the feedback from lecturers** was underlined as the primary component of the instructor evaluation process. In this regard, Lecturer 6 stated, "*They welcome everyone's ideas and comments about the instruction. From the books to be used to the topics to be taught, lecturers share their comments and curriculum is revised regularly*," emphasizing a collaborative approach that allowed instructors to shape the curriculum continuously. In a similar manner, Lecturer 12 pointed out the program evaluation process saying, "*At the end of each term, lecturers write a detailed report about the program and evaluates the strong and weak aspects of the relevant program. This feedback contributes to the revision of the program,"* illustrating how systematic feedback from lecturers shaped ongoing program improvement and strengthened the alignment between teaching practices and curricular goals.

In addition, participants highlighted the **evaluation of the instructional program by unit members**. They noted that staff working in curriculum, evaluation, and professional development units regularly participated in evaluation meetings designed to enhance teaching quality. Regarding this, Lecturer 7 stated, "*The program is evaluated by different unit representatives at regular intervals and the changes to be made are first submitted to the approval of the school head, then it is shared with the lecturer so as they can share their opinions and suggestions*," reflecting the SFL head's instructional leadership by combining oversight with collaborative decision-making, ensuring program quality while engaging lecturers in the revision process. Likewise, Lecturer 9 stated, "*Responsible units are continuously checking the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and making necessary changes*," emphasizing that the head maintained alignment between teaching practices and institutional goals by supporting ongoing evaluation and necessary adjustments.

Finally, participants focused on **gathering students' perspectives to evaluate the quality of instruction**. Lecturer 3 expressed, "*In addition, student feedback is gathered through in-class discussions or interviews and then shared with those in charge to implement changes if necessary,"* while Lecturer 11 noted, "*Throughout the academic year, the opinions of students are asked about the program and the learning outcomes through meetings, surveys, and interviews,"* reflecting the SFL head's instructional leadership by actively incorporating learner input into program evaluation, ensuring that teaching was responsive to students' needs, and promoting continuous improvement in both instructional strategies and learning outcomes.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AT SFLS

The final concept that emerged from the data analysis was the learning environment at SFLs. The findings indicated that most participants emphasized a positive environment, characterized by a collaborative atmosphere and an open-door policy, both of which contributed to the overall quality of teaching and learning at the school. This emphasis

resonates with the widely accepted notion that school climate is the core of instructional improvement (Hoy & Miskel, 2013), stressing the role of collective efficacy and collegiality in shaping teaching quality. However, three participants also noted the negative aspects of the learning environment, specifically the lack of recognition and inequality among staff, as indicators of insufficient instructional leadership as shown in Table 4. This finding aligns with the literature emphasizing that supportive instructional leadership not only involves facilitating teaching and learning but also ensuring equity, recognition, and professional respect among staff (Leithwood, 2021). However, the present study reveals that when these positive aspects are lacking, they indicate inadequacies in the instructional leadership roles of SFL heads.

Table 4
The learning environment at SFLs

Themes	**Codes**	**Lecturers**
Positive environment	Collaboration and respect	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13
	Open-door policy	6, 7
Negative environment	Lack of recognition	2, 8
	Inequality	8, 9

Positive environment

All participants emphasized that fostering collaboration and mutual respect among staff was the key feature in creating a positive school environment. **Collaborative practices** were frequently associated with the inclusive and open leadership style of the SFL heads. Lecturer 3 stated, "*Our head is open to all kinds of ideas, so it is easy to talk to her. First of all, she tries to discover the dynamics and constantly exchanges ideas. This creates a positive atmosphere and promotes collaboration*," emphasizing the leader's role in cultivating open communication and trust, which strengthened teamwork and shared responsibility. Similarly, Lecturer 5 mentioned, "*Our workload is high, but there is a collaborative group that does not complain but tries to do what is necessary to do the job right*," indicating that a culture of cooperation mitigated work-related stress and enhanced collective efficacy. In addition to collaboration, **respect** was described as another fundamental dimension of the school's positive climate. Lecturer 5 noted, *"There is a liberal, respectful, helpful, positive atmosphere. In this institution, you can easily experience things that we cannot talk about and live openly in other institutions such as political or sexual identity,"* illustrating that inclusivity and respect for diversity were actively promoted within the institution. Additionally, two lecturers highlighted the significance of an **open-door policy**, which made administrators approachable and fostered a sense of psychological safety. As Lecturer 6 stated, "*Everyone is free and encouraged to share their ideas without being judged. This creates a positive atmosphere*." Collectively, these remarks demonstrated that the SFL head's open and participatory leadership practices contributed to building a collegial and respectful

environment where staff felt valued, supported, and empowered. They also highlighted that the open-door policy operated not only as a managerial accessibility tool, as commonly described in earlier research (Klein, 2012), but as a daily mechanism for pedagogical exchange and emotional support.

Negative environment

In contrast to the positive aspects aforementioned, some participants identified elements of a negative environment, including a **lack of recognition** and **inequality among staff**, as indicators of insufficient leadership to be addressed for an effective academic environment. For instance, Lecturer 2 expressed, *"I also feel sad that we are not appreciated enough by the administrator. While we are doing great things, the fact that the administrators do not mention them or at least do not give a thank you has been very upsetting for us in recent years,"* suggesting that the absence of acknowledgment for professional effort diminished morale and weakened the sense of belonging among staff. Concerning inequality, Lecturer 9 commented, *"On the negative side, there can be inequality between the old and the new staff. Now, I notice it because I am new. For example, sometimes someone can be given permission without a reason, while the other one is not*." Such perception depicted that perceived favouritism or unequal treatment among staff could deteriorate trust and collegiality, emphasizing the need for transparent and equitable leadership to sustain a supportive academic environment.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study investigated lecturers' perceptions of the instructional leadership roles of SFL heads in Turkish higher education institutions and identified three interrelated dimensions: (a) sharing governance and leadership, (b) prioritizing teaching quality, and (c) enhancing positive learning environment. By examining these dimensions within the specific context of SFLs, this study provides empirical evidence on how instructional leadership operates in teaching-focused units in universities, and adds to the literature by illustrating how instructional leadership in higher education can be enacted beyond hierarchical centralized models, emphasizing faculty engagement in teaching, tailored support for professional development, and the promotion of collaborative, respectful environments.

The first dimension of SFL heads' instructional leadership was characterized by the active involvement of the school members in decision-making processes through general meetings, focus group discussions, and surveys. Involving multiple school members (lecturers, unit representatives, and students) in creating and revising the instructional program ensured that decisions were not only strategic but responsive. This participatory approach underscored the shift from a hierarchical model of leadership to a more distributed one, where leadership responsibilities were shared among members of the academic community. Research indicated that traditional, individual-centred leadership remains dominant in higher education, but collective approaches including other members of the institution like distributed leadership were required (Jones & Harvey, 2017; Lambert, 2002;) for current needs in higher education institutions. In this regards,

SFL heads facilitated such participation by encouraging open dialogue, gathering feedback from lecturers, various unit members, and students, and promoting shared responsibility in instructional program evaluation. These findings were in line with the recent evidence suggesting instructional leadership in higher education appeared not as a centralized authority but as a collective practice in which faculty members actively contributed to decisions (Shaked, 2020). Camacho Soto et al. (2022) also revealed that particularly during challenging periods such as the pandemic, leadership in higher education was assumed by teachers who ensured the continuity of education through student-centred, adaptive, and innovative approaches. Consistently, Wang et al. (2022) also showed that shared governance and participative decision making in higher education context could improve faculty commitment, transparency, and institutional trust, which result in enhanced organizational effectiveness.

The second dimension of instructional leadership identified in this study was the prioritization of teaching quality, confirmed through structured professional development and systematic evaluation mechanisms. Considering SFLs were academic units primarily dedicated to fostering high levels of language proficiency, rather than advancing discipline-specific research, this result was in line with earlier studies supporting the importance of teaching quality in language teaching departments (Steele et al., 2009) and the efforts of higher education institutions in improving the instructional quality as well as the research (Lindlom & Kola, 2018). Research underscored that faculty development was one of the fundamental media for enhancing instructional effectiveness if it was ongoing and contextually relevant (Cotta et al., 2024). Supporting tailored professional development of the staff through in-house seminars, peer observations, and professional development unit initiatives responded lecturers' specific needs and contributed to the overall instructional quality in SFLs, aligning with the prior studies in higher education context (Arslan-Dönmez & Şahin, 2022; Balwant, 2017). Similarly, Day et al. (2025) suggested that professional development initiatives designed to foster collective learning, reflection, shared vision, and evaluation enhanced instructional quality when responsive to lecturers' learning approaches. In addition to the professional development opportunities, participants considered systematic evaluation of the instructional program as important leadership qualities of SFL administrators, parallel to earlier studies (Ersözlü & Saklan, 2016). Apkarian and Rasmussen (2021) also concluded that while not all individuals with hierarchical authority directly influence instructional practices, formal leaders, such as department chairs, played an important role in guiding evaluation processes, implementing feedback, and ensuring program alignment with institutional goals.

The final dimension of instructional leadership roles of SFL heads emerged as the creation of a positive academic environment, thus enhancing collaboration and respect among lecturers while avoiding negative school environment resulted from lack of recognition of the lecturers and inequality. When school leaders demonstrated respect for all stakeholders and acknowledged their contributions, they fostered a balanced distribution of power, promoting a democratic environment and enhancing perceptions of equality. This result supported prior studies which concluded that the academic environment based on respect facilitated the exchange of ideas and contributed to the fulfilment of instructional purposes (Ersözlü & Saklan, 2016). Similarly, Lambrecht et al. (2022) highlighted that transformational and instructional leadership were closely influential in the creation of collaborative structures, essential for implementing individualized educational practices and fostering an inclusive learning environment. Cervato et al. (2025) also emphasized that leaders in higher education, such as department chairs, significantly influenced departmental climate, setting expectations, and conducting merit assessments, highlighting a parallel with the present study, which

suggests that SFL heads contribute to a positive academic environment by facilitating collaboration and respect and by implementing an open-door policy.

In conclusion, this study provided empirical insights into how SFL heads enacted instructional leadership in teaching-focused units within Turkish higher education institutions. By highlighting the three interrelated dimensions, including shared governance and leadership, prioritization of teaching quality, and fostering a positive academic environment, this study demonstrated that effective instructional leadership extends beyond hierarchical models by emphasizing the distribution of leadership among faculty members. Furthermore, the study highlighted the role of SFL heads in facilitating instructional quality, supporting faculty professional development, and promoting a positive academic climate to enhance institutional effectiveness in teaching-focused higher education contexts.

IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This study highlights the critical instructional leadership roles of administrators at teaching-intensive SFLs in Turkey through shared governance, prioritizing teaching quality, and creating a positive academic environment to contribute to the effectiveness of the school.

Apart from its contribution, the study has limitations as well. As a qualitative study, the results reflect only the views of 13 lecturers working in different SFLs in Istanbul, Antalya and Ankara, in Turkey. Consequently, the results may not be generalizable to other higher education contexts. Future research could examine instructional leadership in SFLs across diverse universities and cultural settings, and in other higher education units to assess the broader applicability of these findings.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am sincerely grateful to all lecturers for their willingness to participate in this study and for their invaluable contributions.

REFERENCES

Apkarian, N., & Rasmussen, C. (2021). Instructional leadership structures across five university departments. *Higher Education*, 81, 865-887. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-020-00583-6

Arslan-Dönmez, S., & Şahin, A. (2022). Peer-coaching based professional development: A sample of a school of foreign languages. *Georgia Educational Researcher, 19*(1), Article 2. https://doi.org/10.20429/ger.2022.190102

Aydın, İ. (2016). *Öğretimde denetim [Supervision in teaching].* (6th Edition). Pegem Akademi Yayınları.

Aydın, B., & Hockley, A. (2019). The role of the directors in language schools. *Eğitimde Kuram ve Uygulama / Journal of Theory and Practice in Education, 15*(4), 283-296. https://doi.org/10.17244/eku.525813

Balwant, P. T. (2017). The meaning of student engagement and disengagement in the classroom context: Lessons from organizational behaviour. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, *42*(3), 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2017.1281887

Becker, H. S. (1998). *Tricks of the trade: How to think about your research while you're doing it*. University of Chicago Press.

Boyce, J., & Bowers, A. J. (2018). Toward an evolving conceptualization of instructional leadership as leadership for learning: Meta-narrative review of 109 quantitative studies across 25 years. *Journal of Educational Administration, 56*(2), 161-182. https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-06-2016-0064

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). Thematic analysis. In H. Cooper, P. M. Camic, D. L. Long, A. T. Panter, D. Rindskopf, & K. J. Sher (Eds.), *APA handbook of research methods in psychology, Vol. 2: Research designs: Quantitative, qualitative, neuropsychological, and biological* (pp. 57-71). American Psychological Association.

Bryman, A. (2007). Effective leadership in higher education: A literature review. *Studies in Higher Education, 32(*6), 693-710. https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070701685114

Camacho Soto, D. F., Guamán Freire, M. R., Guamán Freire, D. E., & Granizo Barreno, M. C. (2022). Liderazgo y gestión docente durante la pandemia: Una visión desde la educación superior [Teaching leadership and management during the pandemic: A vision from higher education]. *Revista Venezolana de Gerencia, 27*(8 special edition), 904-913. https://doi.org/10.52080/rvgluz.27.8.11

Carbone, A., Evans, J., Ross, B., Drew, S., Phelan, L., Lindsay, K., Cottman, C., Stoney, S., & Ye, J. (2017). Assessing distributed leadership for learning and teaching quality: A multi-institutional study. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 39*(2), 183-196. https://doi.org/10.1080/1360080x.2017.1276629

Cervato, C., Peterson, S., Johnson, C. A., Bilen-Green, C., Koretsky, C., Minerick, A., & Okudan Kremer, G. (2025). Department chairs as change agents: A virtual cross-institutional professional development model for chairs. *Innovative Higher Education,* 50, 59-84. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-024-09714-8

Chen, C. Y. (2015). A study showing research has been valued over teaching in higher education. *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, 15*(3), 15-32. https://doi.org/10.14434/josotl.v15i3.13319

Chhourn, B. H. (2019). *The development of an instructional leadership model for outcome-based education at private higher education institutions in Cambodia*. (PhD Thesis). Assumption University, Thailand. https://repository.au.edu/handle/6623004553/22989

Cotta, R. M. M., Ferreira, E. de S., Franco, F. de A., Barros, G. da C. S., Januário, J. P. T., Moreira, T. R., & Martín, R. L. (2024). The effectiveness of faculty development programs for training university professors in the health area: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMC Medical Education, 24*, Article 768. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-024-05735-1

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. (3rd Edition). SAGE Publications.

Day, I. N. Z., Assen, H. J. H. E., Stevens, T. M., & Vermunt, J. D. (2025). Practice what you preach: Lecturers learning about design-based education. *Innovative Higher Education. Advance online publication*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10755-025-09804-1

Ersözlü, A., & Saklan, E. (2016). Instructional leadership in higher education: How does it work? *British Journal of Education, 4*(5), 1-15. https://eajournals.org/bje/vol-4-issue-5-may-2016/instructional-leadership-in-higher-education-how-does-it-work/

Feldfeber, M. I. (2020). Las Políticas Docentes en Argentina a Partir del Cambio de Siglo: Del Desarrollo Profesional al Docente "Global" [Teaching policies in Argentina since the turn of the century: From professional development to the "global" teacher]. *Sisyphus — Journal of Education, 8*(1), 79-102. https://doi.org/10.25749/sis.19198

Floyd, A., & Preston, D. (2018). The role of the associate dean in UK universities: Distributed leadership in action? *Higher Education*, 75, 925-943. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-017-0178-1

Gibbs, G. (2010). *Dimensions of quality*. The Higher Education Academy.

Glickman, C. D., Gordon, S. P., & Ross-Gordon, J. M. (2018). *Supervision and instructional leadership: A developmental approach*. (10th Edition). Pearson.

Goodall, A. H., McDowell, J. M., & Singell, L. D. (2014). *Leadership and the research productivity of university departments* (IZA Discussion Paper No. 7903). Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA). https://www.iza.org/publications/dp/7903/leadership-and-the-research-productivity-of-university-departments

Govorova, E., Benítez, I., & Muñiz, J. (2020). How schools affect student well-being: A cross-cultural approach in 35 OECD countries. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 431. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00431

Hallinger, P. (2005). Instructional leadership and the School Principal: A passing fancy that refuses to fade away. *Leadership and Policy in Schools, 4*(3), 221-239. https://doi.org/10.1080/15700760500244793

Hallinger, P. (2011). Leadership for learning: Lessons from 40 years of empirical research. *Journal of educational administration*, *49*(2), 125-142. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/09578231111116699

Hallinger, P., Gümüş, S., & Bellibaş, M. Ş. (2020). 'Are principals instructional leaders yet?' A science map of the knowledge base on instructional leadership, 1940–2018. *Scientometrics, 122*(3), 1629-1650. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11192-020-03360-5

Hallinger, P., & Murphy, J. (1985) Assessing the instructional management behaviour of principals. *The Elementary School Journal*, *86*(2), 217-247. http://dx.doi.org/10.1086/461445

Hallinger, P., & Wang, W. C. (2015). *Assessing instructional leadership with the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale*. Springer.

Harris, A. (2005). Reflections on distributed leadership. *Management in Education, 19*(2), 10-12. https://doi.org/10.1177/08920206050190020301

Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (2013). *Educational administration: Theory, research, and practice.* (9th Edition). McGraw-Hill.

Jones, S. (2017). *Leading the academy: Distributed leadership in higher education*. Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia.

Jones, S., & Harvey, M. (2017). A distributed leadership change process model for higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 39*(2), 126-139. https://doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2017.1276661

Karaaslan, A., & Akın, U. (2019). Yükseköğretimde öğretimsel liderlik: Bölüm başkanlarının görüşleri [Instructional leadership in higher education: Views of department heads]. *Kuramsal Eğitimbilim Dergisi / Journal of Theoretical Educational Science, 12*(3), 992-1012. https://doi.org/10.30831/akukeg.425597

Klein, J. (2012). The open-door policy. *International Journal of Educational Management, 26*(6), 550-564. https://doi.org/10.1108/09513541211251389

Lambert, L. (2002). A framework for shared leadership. *Educational Leadership*, *59*(8), 37-40.

Lambrecht, J., Lenkeit, J., Hartmann, A., Ehlert, A., Knigge, M., & Spörer, N. (2022). The effect of school leadership on implementing inclusive education: How transformational and instructional leadership practices affect individualised education planning. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 26*(9), 943-957. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2020.1752825

Leithwood, K. (2021). A review of evidence about equitable school leadership. *Education Sciences, 11*(8), 377. https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11080377

Leithwood, K., Harris, A., & Hopkins, D. (2008). Seven strong claims about successful school leadership. *School Leadership and Management, 28*(1), 27-42. https://doi.org/10.1080/13632430701800060

Light, G., & Calkins, S. (2015). The experience of academic learning: Uneven conceptions of learning across research and teaching. *High Educ*, 69, 345-359. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-014-9779-0

Lindblom, S., & Kola, J. (2018). The importance of evidence-based development of teaching and learning at university. In A. Heijnen & R. van der Vaart (Eds.), *Places of engagement: Reflections on higher education in 2040—A global approach* (pp. 76-81). Routledge.

Liu, X., Ping, S., & Gao, W. (2019). Changes in undergraduate students' psychological well-being as they experience university life. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 16*(16), 2864. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16162864

Macfarlane, B. (2011). Professors as intellectual leaders: Formation, identity and role. *Studies in Higher Education, 36*(1), 57-73.

Munna, A. S. (2022). Instructional Leadership and Role of Module Leaders. *International Journal of Educational Reform, 32*(1), 38-54. https://doi.org/10.1177/10567879211042321

Murphy, J., Neumerski, C. M., Goldring, E., Grissom, J., & Porter, A. (2016). Bottling fog? The quest for instructional management. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 46*(4), 455-471. https://doi.org/10.1080/0305764X.2015.1064096

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. (4th Edition). Sage.

Potter, J., & Devecchi, C. (Eds.). (2020). *Delivering educational change in higher education: A transformative approach for leaders and practitioners*. Routledge.

Ragin, C. C., & Becker, H. S. (Eds.) (1992). *What is a case? Exploring the foundations of social inquiry*. Cambridge University Press.

Shaked, H. (2020). Instructional leadership in higher education: The case of Israel. *Higher Education Quarterly, 75*(2), 212-226. https://doi.org/10.1111/hequ.12274

Shaked, H. (2024). Advancing wellbeing in higher education through instructional leadership. In K. D. Walker & B. Kutsyuruba (Eds.), *The Emerald handbook of wellbeing in higher education: Global perspectives on students, faculty, leaders, and institutions* (pp. 225-236). Emerald. https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-83797-504-420241017

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Sage Publications.

Steele, T. M., Peterson, M. D., Silva, D. M., & Padilla, A. M. (2009). A year-round professional development model for world language educators. *Foreign Language Annals, 42*(2), 195-209. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2009.01017.x

Vedøy, G., & Møller, J. (2007). Successful school leadership for diversity? Examining two contrasting Examples of working for democracy in Norway. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, *35*(3), 58-67.

Wang, Q., Hou, H., & Li, Z. (2022). Participative leadership: A literature review and prospects for future research. *Frontiers in Psychology,* 13, Article 924357. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.924357

Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods*. (6th Editon). Sage Publications.

YÖK. (1981). *2547 Sayılı Yükseköğretim Kanunu* [Law No. 2547 on Higher Education]. Resmi Gazete, Issue 17506.

*

Received: April 29, 2025

Resubmit for Review: October 1, 2025

Revisions Required: November 12, 2025

Minor Revisions Required: January 8, 2026

Accepted: January 14, 2026

Published online: February 27, 2026