

Atatürk, The National Agricultural Leader, Father of Modern Turkish Agriculture and the National Development: A Review From the Perspective of Agricultural Communications and Leadership

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Abstract

This study examines Atatürk's national agricultural leadership in the context of transformational theory from the perspective of agricultural communications and leadership by reviewing the literature. It also examines Atatürk's national agricultural leadership in making of and shaping the new modern Turkey within the scope of the role of agriculture, modernization of agriculture, and the national development by reviewing the literature within the framework of examples on agricultural issues and, thus, put forward to the conceptualization of 'father of modern Turkish agriculture'.

Keywords: Atatürk, leadership, agricultural communications, agricultural leadership, national development.

Ulusal Tarım Lideri, Modern Türk Tarımının Babası Atatürk ve Ulusal Kalkınma: Tarımsal İletişim ve Liderlik Perspektifinden Bir Değerlendirme

Özet

Bu çalışma, Atatürk'ün ulusal tarım liderliğini transformatif (dönüşümcü) teori bağlamında literatürü gözden geçirerek tarımsal iletişim ve liderlik perspektifinden incelemektedir. Ayrıca, tarımın rolü, tarımın modernleşmesi ve ulusal kalkınma kapsamında yeni modern Türkiye'nin oluşturulmasında ve şekillenmesinde Atatürk'ün ulusal tarım liderliğini, tarımsal konulardaki örnekler çerçevesinde literatür taraması ile irdelemekte ve böylece 'modern Türk tarımının babası' kavramsallaştırmasını ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Atatürk, liderlik, tarımsal iletişim, tarımsal liderlik, ulusal kalkınma.

Introduction

Communication and agriculture are ancient activities of human beings distinguishing humans from other living things. They have always been important in human history as they have radically changed and transformed life for centuries. Both are also evolutionary, revolutionary, indispensable, and vital elements of life. Indeed, the relationship between them not only contributed to the enhancement of humanity but also hanged and shaped them. As Erdoğan (2011) notes "Without communication (a) material life cannot be produced; (b)

thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and language related to life cannot be produced, and (c) not only material life but also thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and feelings cannot be produced” (p.91). Accordingly, the needs arising from the development of human beings within the agricultural production and economic activities improved the communication activities, agriculture, and agricultural activities. In this respect, Zumalt (2012) states that “every sector of the food and agricultural enterprise of societies has a dimension of human interaction. Communications touches and serves all aspects of agriculture - in fact, it is integral to each and woven throughout each” (p. 4). Thus, the relationship between them is both complex and integrated.

Agricultural communications, which combines two different disciplines, represents a new interdisciplinary field of social sciences consisting of two words: agriculture and communications. The concept of agricultural communications, defined as any communication activity that regulates the relations of human beings with agriculture, food, natural resources, and environmental systems, emerges as a part of communication and agriculture literature (Budak, 2020). In this context, agricultural communications is an effort related to communication and agriculture. It covers all kinds of human communication related to agriculture, food, natural resources, and rural issues and it also brings human relations and leadership skills to the fore.

Agriculture and agricultural activities play a great and significant role in the survival of humans and the economic, political, social, cultural, and environmental development of civilizations. In fact, throughout history, human beings have existed and continued their existence thanks to agriculture and agricultural activities. Agriculture was certainly of great importance for Atatürk as well. He recognized its significance since the years of the National Struggle. Atatürk was mainly interested in agriculture and agricultural issues for the construction of the new Republic of Turkey and focused on the agricultural activities for the overall development of a country that heavily relied on agriculture. As a matter of fact, it can be argued that the very first study of agricultural communications and leadership in new Turkey started during the National Struggle years in the early 1920s and was carried out by the national agricultural leader Atatürk. The geographical advantages of Anatolia, its fertile lands and ancient agricultural culture, the agricultural population inherited from the Ottoman Empire, and the importance of land and agriculture as main sources of income and livelihood can be seen as the leading factors in the emergence of agricultural communication studies. Nevertheless, the strategic role of agriculture and agricultural issues in providing food, clothing, fiber, energy, mine, and fuel, the fact that the country's development was based on agriculture and agricultural industrialization were the main reasons (Budak & Kihtir, 2021).

Atatürk was a leader who made radical changes and transformations in the agricultural field for constructing modern Turkey. He also revealed in his speeches and statements that when agriculture was recognized as a primary sector, economic and social development was possible with the agricultural sector and agricultural production. Throughout history, there have been figures who had an effective communication and human relations and leadership skills, leading and influencing the others - either a group or a nation - for a cause. Among all these historic figures, Atatürk has been the most exceptional figure. He was the leader of Turkish National Movement, the founding father, and the first president of the Republic of Turkey. In addition to that, he was the nation's leader in the construction and the development of modern Turkey by initiating many reforms that were political, economic, judicial, social, educational, and cultural. He has therefore been studied with regard to different leadership approaches, styles, and features. Moreover, his leadership has also been studied in various fields by referring to his different titles such as military leader, national leader, national liberator, founding leader, political leader and so on. Additionally, his versatile leadership has another aspect to consider which is agricultural leadership. In relation to that, in my former conceptualization, I have put forward Atatürk's "national agricultural leadership" from the perspective of agricultural communications for understanding his outstanding leadership in the field of agriculture in making of and shaping the new modern Turkey, from the National Struggle years to the end of his life (Budak & Kihtir, 2021).

In this study, Atatürk's national agricultural leadership will be examined in the context of transformational theory and his national agricultural leadership will be addressed. In addition, the modernization of agriculture and the role of agriculture on national development will also be discussed. In this context, the relationship between Atatürk's national agricultural leadership in making of and shaping the new modern Turkey, modernization in agriculture, and national development will be examined from the perspective of agricultural communications and leadership by reviewing the literature. Furthermore, on the basis of the transformational influence of Atatürk's national agricultural leadership, a conceptual evaluation of Atatürk as the 'father of modern Turkish agriculture' will be presented.

Defining the Field of Agricultural Communications and Leadership

The general conceptual evaluation regarding the relationship between agriculture and communication draws attention to the fact that communication and agriculture are at the center of human life and human existence, and both are carried out by humans (Budak, 2020). In this respect, the term agriculture, as a human action, is "the artificialization by man of the natural environment so as to make it more suitable for the development of plant and animal

species, which are themselves improved (Robert Diehl, 1984)”, with the objective of obtaining food, drinks, fibers, energy, raw material for clothes, buildings, medicines, tools, or just for aesthetic contemplation” (Agriculture, n.d.). Also, “agriculture or farming is the cultivation and breeding of animals, plants and fungi for food, fiber, biofuel, medicinal plants and other products used to sustain and enhance human life” (Agriculture, n.d.).

The other action carried out by humans is defined as communication, which is a broad term including the transmission, exchange, and sharing of any thoughts, feelings, or information etc. between a sender and a recipient. Communication studies contain different approaches for understanding and interpreting this concept, and these approaches differ among the scholars. According to Erdoğan (2005) communication is defined as follows:

“Some communication scholars affirm that communication is an old occurrence, beginning in prehistoric cave paintings (Schramm, 1988), whereas other communication scholars state that communication is a modern invention, rooted in nineteenth century ideologies and technologies (Mattelart, 1996). Some communication theorists and researchers view communication as a pervasive phenomenon, identifiable in humans as well as animals, in all times and all places (Budd & Ruben, 1972), whereas some other communication theorists and researchers view communication as a particular endeavor of current, Western humans (Schiller, 1996). Specialists in the field of communication maintain that communication is the basis of individual and social formation and transformation, the core of anthropological and social studies (de Sola Pool et al, 4 1973), whereas academics in other areas of the social sciences hardly recognize communication among important cultural and social processes (Honigmann, 1973; Ritzer & Smart, 2001)” (pp. 4-5).

In its simplest form, communication is the transmission of a message from a source to a receiver (Baran, 2019, p. 48). As is known, there are many more definitions, but none of them are the ultimate definition. However, “As an umbrella concept, the term communications embraces all means of human interaction - interpersonal, group, organizational and mass” (Zumalt, 2012, p. 6). In this sense, in agricultural communications, communications refers to the efforts of providing and disseminating information for different goals, effects, and functions through various mass media tools such as newspapers, magazines, radio and television as well as others.

Agricultural communications, which emerged as part of communication and agriculture literature and which is also part of science communication, is an interdisciplinary field of social sciences related to agriculture, food, natural resources, environmental systems, and rural issues. In this field, briefly expressed as agricultural issues, food, fiber production, livestock, renewable energy, and all rural issues are defined in encompassing natural resources and environmental systems, also including nutrition and health issues. So, in the

field of agricultural communications, the main efforts are related to human communication in the context of agriculture and agricultural issues. In addition to this, all efforts are directed at reaching agricultural and non-agricultural publics as well as the general public. These efforts include agricultural extension, agricultural education, agricultural literacy, and agricultural advocacy along with risk and crisis management in agriculture, food, natural resources, and environmental systems (Budak, 2020).

According to Telg and Irani (2012), “Agricultural communications is an academic discipline and a professional field whose historical roots extend as far back as the passage of the Morrill Act of 1862 and even earlier. It can be argued that the process of communicating about farm practices can be traced back to the early development of agrarian societies” (Irani & Doerfert, 2013, p. 6). The term is also defined as an academic major: “The agricultural communications major combines the study of agricultural sciences, practices and policy with the study of communications media and methods. Professional communicators in agriculture are vital to relaying crucial scientific or technical information from scientists to producers to businesses to consumers” (Auburn University Agricultural Communications Major, n.d, para. 1).

On the other hand, the leadership studies generally focus on effective leadership in the context of how to lead, impact, and motivate followers in a relevant field. Northouse (2016, p. 6) defines the term in the following manner: “Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal”. Furthermore, the basic principle of agricultural communications and leadership discipline is to combine leadership and communication skills in the field of agriculture. Thus, in this field, communications and leadership focuses on developing leadership, communication, and human relations skills (University of Missouri Agricultural Leadership, Communication and Education, 2021).

In this regard, leadership is a highly desired characteristic for agricultural communications. It is related to having effective leadership and communication roles concerning the principles and practices of agriculture and agricultural issues for the (better) existence, maintenance, and improvement of humans, human life, and the nature. The concept can be defined as a leadership position equipped with skills that are effectively and efficiently performed for planning, developing, maintaining, and assessing communication and leadership management in the context of agricultural issues in government, institutions or in organizations, industries, and businesses, and in national/international environments. Therefore, this role is performed with the aim of leading to change and transformation for a better existence and life under a highly influential leadership.

The National Agricultural Leadership of Atatürk within the Framework of Transformational Theory

Atatürk, also known as the Father of Turks, has been considered as a phenomenal figure of the 20th century in addition to being the founder and the first president of The Modern Turkish Republic. Indeed, a distinguishing human and leader, Atatürk went down in Turkish and world history as a great value and a versatile leader. It can even be argued that Atatürk was the most respected leader of the recent history. As a matter of fact, his leadership is still honored by prominent figures all over the world and “tributes have been offered to him through the decades by such world statesmen as Lloyd George, Churchill, Roosevelt, Nehru, de Gaulle, Adenauer, Bourguiba, Nasser, Kennedy, and countless others” (Columbia University, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, 1994, para. 4). According to Ortaylı (1980) Atatürk’s leadership is also characterized as follows:

“Macedonia is well known in history for its great sons: Alexander the Great and Justinianus are two distinguished figures among these outstanding statesmen. Another leader, who led history into new paths, was also born in this land. He created a new republic in Anatolia. The historical role of this leader has been variously interpreted and evaluated among his countrymen and among foreigners. Official Turkish historiography and some popular western sources seem to argue that Turkey, a country living under the despotism of sultans, and a people with a medieval standard of living, were led through Atatürk's reforms into the modern age. According to their descriptions, Atatürk was a superman even among the leading figures of history” (p. 229).

Leaders are exceptional assets for every community. Leadership theories thus try to understand these exceptional figures in society and reveal the reasons as to why some people are considered as leaders. Upon reviewing the leadership theories, it can be seen that leadership literature consists of "Great Man, Trait Theories, Behaviorist Theories, Situational Leadership, Contingency Theory, Transactional Theory, and Transformational Theory" (Bolden, Gosling, Marturano & Dennison, 2003).

In the context of leadership, there is no doubt that Atatürk is the greatest, most exceptional leader of the Turkish nation. His remarkable leadership and communication skills have played a key role in changing and transforming all the aspects of the lives of Turkish people. In this respect, he declared a program of agricultural reforms and domestic development for his nation and the newly established state. He developed and implemented his development plan and launched his major development initiative for the economic development of Turkey in the field of agriculture. In relation to that, in my former conceptualization I have argued that Atatürk is a national agricultural leader of the Turks within the scope of agricultural communications, in addition to being a national liberator. In

this view, Atatürk is the agricultural leader of the Turkish nation and the newly established Turkish State (Budak & Kihtir, 2021). Moreover, Atatürk's national agricultural leadership should be considered within the context of transformational leadership theory from the perspective of agricultural communications due to the need for and the vital importance of the changes and transformations in agricultural issues for the construction of the Turkish people, Turkish nation, and Turkish state. Indeed, only the transformational theory may prove to be capable of providing a conceptualization of Atatürk's national agricultural leadership.

An encompassing approach, transformational leadership can be used to describe a wide range of leadership forms from very specific attempts to influence followers on a one-to-one level to fairly broad attempts to influence whole organizations and even entire cultures. Although the transformational leader plays a pivotal role in precipitating change, followers and leaders are inextricably bound together in the transformation process (Northouse, 2016, p. 162). The transformational leadership as a significant approach in leadership studies was introduced by James MacGregor Burn (1978) in his book *Leadership*. However, it was Downton (1973) who first introduced the term (Northouse, 2016). Bass (1985) also improved the concept of transformative leadership as transformational leadership in which the leaders transform the followers for a social change (Bolden, et al., 2003). Corvey (1991) also notes that “The goal of transformational leadership is to ‘transform’ people and organizations in a literal sense – to change them in mind and heart; enlarge vision, insight, and understanding; clarify purposes; make behavior congruent with beliefs, principles, or values; and bring about changes that are permanent, self-perpetuating, and momentum building” (p. 287).

According to Bass and Avolio (1993, p. 112), “Transformational leaders have been characterized by four separate components or characteristics”, which are also known as the 4 I's of transformational leadership, namely idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. As stated by Bass and Riggio (2006) in the context of Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), descriptions regarding the components of transformational leadership are as follows:

“Idealized Influence (II). Transformational leaders behave in ways that allow them to serve as role models for their followers. The leaders are admired, respected, and trusted. Followers identify with the leaders and want to emulate them; leaders are endowed by their followers as having extraordinary capabilities, persistence, and determination. Thus, there are two aspects to idealized influence: the leader's behaviors and the elements that are attributed to the leader by followers and other associates. These two aspects, measured by separate subfactors of the MLQ, represent the interactional nature of idealized influence—it is both embodied in the leader's behavior and in attributions that are made concerning the leader by followers. A sample item from the MLQ that represents idealized influence behavior is ‘The leader

emphasizes the importance of having a collective sense of mission.’ A sample item from the idealized influence attributed factor is ‘The leader reassures others that obstacles will be overcome.’ In addition, leaders who have a great deal of idealized influence are willing to take risks and are consistent rather than arbitrary. They can be counted on to do the right thing, demonstrating high standards of ethical and moral conduct.

Inspirational Motivation (IM). Transformational leaders behave in ways that motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers’ work. Team spirit is aroused. Enthusiasm and optimism are displayed. Leaders get followers involved in envisioning attractive future states; they create clearly communicated expectations that followers want to meet and also demonstrate commitment to goals and the shared vision. A sample MLQ item for IM is “The leader articulates a compelling vision of the future.” Idealized influence leadership and inspirational motivation usually form a combined single factor of charismatic-inspirational leadership. The charismatic-inspirational factor is similar to the behaviors described in charismatic leadership theory (Bass & Avolio, 1993a; House, 1977).

Intellectual Stimulation (IS). Transformational leaders stimulate their followers’ efforts to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways. Creativity is encouraged. There is no public criticism of individual members’ mistakes. New ideas and creative problem solutions are solicited from followers, who are included in the process of addressing problems and finding solutions. Followers are encouraged to try new approaches, and their ideas are not criticized because they differ from the leaders’ ideas. A sample item from the MLQ that represents intellectual stimulation is ‘The leader gets others to look at problems from many different angles.’

Individualized Consideration (IC). Transformational leaders pay special attention to each individual follower’s needs for achievement and growth by acting as a coach or mentor. Followers and colleagues are developed to successively higher levels of potential. Individualized consideration is practiced when new learning opportunities are created along with a supportive climate. Individual differences in terms of needs and desires are recognized. The leader’s behavior demonstrates acceptance of individual differences (e.g., some employees receive more encouragement, some more autonomy, others firmer standards, and still others more task structure). A two-way exchange in communication is encouraged, and ‘management by walking around’ workspaces is practiced. Interactions with followers are personalized (e.g., the leader remembers previous conversations, is aware of individual concerns, and sees the individual as a whole person rather than as just an employee). The individually considerate leader listens effectively. The leader delegates tasks as a means of developing followers. Delegated tasks are monitored to see if the followers need additional direction or support and to assess progress; ideally, followers do not feel they are being checked on. A sample MLQ item from the individualized consideration scale is ‘The leader spends time teaching and coaching’” pp. (6-7).

As can be seen, “transformational leadership is a process that changes and transforms people. It is concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals. It includes assessing followers’ motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings. Transformational leadership involves an exceptional form of influence that moves followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected of them. It is a process that often

incorporates charismatic and visionary leadership” (Northouse, 2016, p. 161). Consequently, transformational leadership takes leadership to the next level (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Therefore, in this context, the most appropriate approach to evaluate the leadership of Atatürk is considered to be the transformational approach, which is an encompassing approach. In fact, a research study on Atatürk’s leadership behaviors within the context of transformational leadership approach has also revealed and enlightened the leadership characteristics of Atatürk with the dimensions of transformational leadership. In accordance with this study, “Ataturk possessed all four main characteristics of transformational leadership” (Sigri, Tabak, Gurbuz & Mert, 2009, p. 6). As Culpan (2009) also notes, “Only transformational leaders with great visions, inspirations, strong personalities and behaviors, determinations, and competencies can accomplish grand reforms. Atatürk demonstrated all those features aptly” (Conclusion, para. 24). According to Cora (2016) Atatürk’s leadership is defined as follows:

“When we look at the historical process, we see that the most suitable example for the leadership is M. Kemal Atatürk, founder of the Republic of Turkey (Mango, 2004, Cora, 2014). He has realized a fundamental transformation process in administrative, social, economic and cultural life by establishing a new state of an empire with all aspects (Ataturk, Nutuk 2016, Atay, F. R. 1966). He has all features of leadership, such as Constituting a Collective Vision, Sharing, Mental Stimulation, being Creative, Having a Charismatic Influence, Efficient Communication, High Motivation Skill, Being Representative of the Change, Emotional Endurance, Being Brave, Taking Risks, Empowerment (Authorization), Flexible Administration Understanding, Reliability, Having Self-Confidence, Valuing the Teamwork, Life Long Learning etc (Cora, 2014, Ozdemir, 2006, Gibson, F. 2016, Mango. A. 2009, Miller, M. and Lencioni P, 2013)” (p. 150).

As a result, Atatürk’s transformational influence on Turkish agriculture in terms of making of and shaping the new modern Turkey is a clear indicator of Atatürk’s national agricultural leadership. In this respect, it is also obvious that Atatürk’s thoughts and statements about agriculture and farming as a discourse express his national agricultural leadership. It is due to the fact that the political, economic, cultural, social, and environmental existence and survival of a nation and a country depends in a sense, on having an effective and exceptional leader with regard to agricultural matters. Indeed, his agricultural leadership ensured the existence and survival of our young republic and nation. In this context, Atatürk conducted multi-faceted and comprehensive strategic studies starting with the development of policies and extending their implementation to enable the development of agriculture and industrialization based on agriculture. Besides, during this period the ideas he put into practice revealed the importance of agriculture, agricultural production, agricultural industry, and the agricultural publics. Furthermore, agriculture, food, natural resources, environmental systems,

and the management of rural issues undoubtedly constituted an integrated part of these efforts and studies (Budak & Kihir, 2021). Therefore, it seems that Atatürk's national agricultural leadership should be considered only within the framework of transformational leadership theory as well as characteristics and behaviors of transformational leadership.

The Modernization in Agriculture and The National Development Under Atatürk's National Agricultural Leadership

*“The foundation of the national economy is agriculture.
For this reason, we attach a great importance to development in agriculture.”*

Mustafa Kemal ATATURK (1937)

The development studies discipline “could not agree on a precise definition of its topic: in part, the term ‘development’ referred to evolutionary processes of social change” (Ziai, 2012, p. 4) and in general, the concept of development can be defined as “a multidimensional undertaking to achieve a higher quality of life for all people. Economic development, social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development” (UNDP, 1997). There are also different approaches in literature regarding the concept of development that changes over time. Basically, economist approach sees development as economic growth and industrialization, as a nation's prosperity by measuring any increase in its gross national product (GNP) development. The sociological approach sees development as a human capital and as raising the productivity capacities of societies. Also, they suggest that the modernization of a country leads to economic development and creates a modern society through the use of the agents of transformation such as education, technology, and industrialization. Others also see development as human development and they focus on measuring the average achievement in key dimensions of human development such as UNDP's Human Development Index. Thus, it can be said that the concept of development has different dimensions and many aspects. In this respect, the concept of development and the role of agriculture in development can be discussed in terms of economic, social, and environmental dimensions of human life and sustainability.

A development plan is a process of transformation of society, so, a great deal of human change is required during this process. It is also a compromise between essential needs among various industries. However, supportive developments are also required to support agriculture and industry in the development process. The supporting developments for the development are the radical changes and transformations in agriculture, the establishment of

social overhead, the mobilizing and upgrading of human resources, and so on (Schramm, 1964). In the context of the relationship of modernization in agriculture and national development, Wilbur Schramm (1964) notes the following:

“Agriculture (the primary sector) must be modernized so that fewer cultivators can grow more food and some of the agricultural population can be released to work in industry (the secondary sector). In many highly developed countries, between 10 and 20 per cent of the labour force can feed the rest of the population; an underdeveloped country, on the other hand, may have 90 per cent of its workers on the farm and still be unable to feed its population adequately. The plain truth is that agriculture in many less-developed countries is not very productive. Behind its lack of productivity are ancient methods of farming, scarcity of fertilizers and pesticides, a lack of agricultural machinery, a high proportion of subsistence farming, and attitudes unfavourable to change. Yet a developing country has a great deal to gain by modernizing its agriculture, and thereby raising its productivity. Not only will release workers for industry; it will also contribute to general health and vigour of the country. In many countries where foods, fruits, or fibres are chief exports, it will contribute to investment capital. To support both agriculture and industry a country must build up the part of its society that some economists call ‘social overhead’, which includes basic transport, irrigation power facilities, and communications” (pp. 7-8).

In the process of transforming, only transformational leaders enable to promote a two-way exchange in communication and personalize interactions with followers. Since transformational leaders are considerate, they listen to the needs of their followers carefully and effectively. In this respect, effective communication is a key factor in the transformation process of a community in terms of securing the desired required change in humans. Effective communication has long been recognized as vital to the food and agricultural enterprises of societies (Zumalt, 2012, p. 2). Moreover, effective communication can lead to economic and social development. In fact, free and adequate communication is not just a purpose, but it is also a way of achieving the desired social change. Otherwise, the economic and social development will unavoidably slow down and perhaps become counterproductive (Schramm, 1964). Therefore, in the process of modernization in agriculture, using effective communication is absolutely required. It can also be clearly seen that modernization in agriculture and effective communication ensure national development. And, of course, achieving this would only be possible with an effective leader. In this respect, agricultural communications and leadership are also required in ensuring the information flow for the nation’s economic, cultural, and social development. The main reason being “An adequate flow of information is, of course, required for knowledge to be shared between those who have more of it and those who have less on any given subject” (Schramm, 1964, p. 8).

As Ortaylı (1980) notes, “Great leaders are neither a simple means of changing the course of history, such as proposed by Tolstoy, nor a major force, as proposed by Carlyle. Great leaders play their role by using the conditions of their time to re-write history” (p.230). During the Atatürk era, Turkey was faced with urgent development issues and suffered from extreme famine and poverty. As a result of long years of wars, famine was widespread, workforce decreased significantly, production decreased, and epidemics spread (Yiğit, 2012). For this reason, under Atatürk's national agricultural leadership, the modernization of agriculture was the main direction for achieving agricultural productivity, which had a great influence on the process of industrialization and the economic, cultural, social, and environmental development. In this regard, Atatürk had already emphasized that Turkish nation was made up of farmers, and agriculture was at the foundation of the national economy. Atatürk thereby attached a great importance to development in agriculture and focused on the overall national development. He initiated a wide range of rapid and comprehensive reforms in national development pertaining to all areas from political, economic, legal to social, cultural, and environmental.

On the other hand, it is necessary to point out the unrelenting conditions of the newly established Turkey in which change, and transformation were carried out. In this context, the economy in the Ottoman Empire was based on land and agricultural production. Agriculture was the most important source of income for the state. The needs of the people and army and the revenues of the state depended on agricultural production (Yavuz, 2005). Moreover, it was known that the population of the country was 13 million and 90% of that population was farmers and 80% of the population was illiterate (Erkun, 1998). It can thus be seen that the majority of the population consisted of villagers and farmers who lived in rural areas and made their living with agricultural production. As a result, Republican Turkey inherited not only a ruined country that emerged from Great Wars (Balkan Wars, Dardanelles War, the First World War) but also a devastated, exhausted nation and a very primitive and backward agricultural practices and agricultural structure.

In accordance with the development plan, the first agriculture-related declaration was issued by Atatürk in 1923; Izmir Economy Congress meeting took place in the same year with Atatürk's proposal and the declaration was supported, Tithe (Asar) Tax was abolished in 1925, the land was distributed to the public, statist policies were adopted in the economy, institutionalization and a rapid structuring process were initiated. In addition, after the developments in agriculture, the First Five Year Industrial Plan was created and put into effect

in 1934. Thus, the Republic of Turkey took the first major step in the industrialization policy was directed towards the agricultural industry advances in agriculture (Budak & Kihtir, 2021).

During the Atatürk period, "since national capital was needed to develop the country and solve the problems inherited from the Ottoman Empire, the first attempts aimed to benefit from the rich underground and aboveground resources of the country (Yurtoğlu, 2018, p. 557)". For instance, Atatürk's solution that would affect agricultural issues as a whole was to establish the Atatürk Forest Farm (Atatürk Orman Çiftliği, [AOÇ]). Having a leading role in the making of Turkey and advancing national development, Ataturk Forest Farm was founded in 1925 only two years after the proclamation of the Republic. The farm had a great importance as a training center, a center of agricultural production, modern production facilities, access to safe and healthy food, and it was a model for advancing agricultural and rural development as a social and cultural modern living space (Ataturk Forest Farm, n.d). Atatürk created this model as a gift to his nation by spreading it to different regions throughout the country such as Yalova, Silifke, Tarsus, and Dört Yol. Another example, the first dam of new Turkey was Çubuk Dam, which was built by the orders of Atatürk and was opened in 1936. Atatürk implemented the dam project to control the water of Çubuk Stream, which was an important natural resource with its environmental effects, to prevent floods, to meet the drinking, utility and industrial water needs of the region and to meet the irrigation needs of the Ankara Plain where there was agricultural production. In addition, the dam lake aimed to provide an environmental and social service that created added value to the city and its people as an outstanding recreational area in the city (General Directorate of State Water Management, n. d.).

Moreover, High Agricultural Institute, Soil Products Office, Agricultural Credit Cooperatives were established to train experts in the field of agriculture, agriculture and veterinary schools and farms and seed breeding stations were established to set an example for the villagers with Atatürk's great efforts. Agricultural Bank (Ziraat Bankası) was restructured so as to grant loans to the farmers. Sumerian Bank (Sümerbank) was established to produce cotton, yarn, textile, and textile products and to support and develop the sector. Thus, the welfare and production of the villagers increased with those revolutionary movements in the agricultural field, and agriculture-based industry was developed with the establishment of industrial plants. More than four millions trees were planted. The Ministry of Agriculture established Stud Farm, Cow Houses, State Breeding Farms for the purpose of breeding local breeds and raising high-yielding breeds needed by the farmer. During the Atatürk Period, production continuously increased thanks to the innovations made in the field

of agriculture in the country. The product increases and developments in the field of agriculture led to mechanization in agriculture, an increase in economic activities, capital accumulation, cultivation and reproduction of industrial plants, preparation of the infrastructure of industrialization, and thereby the realization of national development with domestic resources (Kaştan, 2012). Additionally, during the process of modernization in agriculture and national development, Atatürk employed effective communications methods reach to his farmer nation, in other words the agricultural public. In this regard, the definition of agricultural communications can be stated as “the exchange of information about the agricultural and natural resources industries through effective and efficient media” (Telg & Irani, 2012, p. 4). The means that were effectively and efficiently used by Atatürk in his two-way communication efforts mostly aimed at agricultural issues such as agricultural fairs, exhibitions, local excursions and different events and gatherings to reach his agricultural publics consisting of villagers, farmers, and breeders.

Furthermore, Atatürk came together with villagers and farmers, who were defined as agricultural audiences in agricultural communications, at almost every opportunity. It is also noteworthy that for disseminating agricultural information he benefited greatly from various printing and publishing media, especially the leading newspapers of the time like Ulus newspaper. Many news and articles were published during this period in the newspapers about Ataturk Forest Farm (Ataturk Forest Farm, n. d.), which was the most important agriculture, food, natural resources, and environmental management model of Atatürk period for national development. Also, newspaper articles featuring Atatürk were at the center of the efforts to produce and publicize information about agricultural issues to the agricultural publics. On the other hand, Atatürk made official statements and speeches related to agricultural issues for agricultural or non-agricultural audiences such as members of the parliament and state authorities during openings, meetings, and congresses.

Consequently, the new Turkish State made unique progress in agriculture and agricultural production, showed considerable growth in agriculture-based industry and modern technology. Also known as social overhead many steps were taken in basic transportation, energy, mining, manufacturing, export, banking, construction, mechanization, and communication as well as the other important areas. Therefore, to comprehend Atatürk's national development moves, it is necessary to consider that he primarily addressed agriculture and agricultural issues, and his effective communication with people through his outstanding leadership on these issues. In this respect, Atatürk's modernization practices and efforts combined with effective communication and leadership had a huge impact on

agriculture and agricultural issues economically, socially, culturally, and environmentally and enabled the development of the nation and the construction of the Turkish people, Turkish nation, and Turkish State. As a matter of fact, all these radical changes and transformations for creating the new modern Turkey under Atatürk's national agricultural leadership also show us that he is the 'father of modern Turkish agriculture'.

Conclusion

This study has presented a conceptual evaluation of the national agricultural leadership of Atatürk in the light of transformational theory by reviewing the literature. In this respect, the concept of Atatürk's national agricultural leadership within the context of transformational leadership has been described and it was emphasized that Atatürk embodied the leadership behaviors and characteristics that are included in the dimensions of transformational leadership. According to that, Atatürk had all four components of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. So, it can be stated that the most appropriate approach in leadership studies to enlighten Atatürk's agricultural leadership is the transformational approach. Additionally, the issues of modernization of agriculture and the national development have been reviewed under national agricultural leadership of Atatürk. In this context, this study also shows that Atatürk's transformational influence on modernization and national development demonstrated his human relations, effective communication, and leadership skills. The great changes and transformations initiated and made by Atatürk, as a national agricultural leader and the father of modern Turkish agriculture, enabled modernization in agriculture and advanced national development. To sum up, from the perspective of agricultural communications and leadership, the relationship between Atatürk's national agricultural leadership, modernization in agriculture and national development has revealed the following: There is no doubt that Atatürk knew very well that agriculture and agricultural issues were the only way to establish a new nation and new Turkey in the modern world along with the national development. Thus, for him modernization in agriculture was the only way to acquire full control/effect on national development. In accordance with this, under Atatürk's national agricultural leadership, Turkey had an extraordinary progress in modern agriculture and the national development. Considering this fact, Atatürk's national agricultural leadership defined under the transformational theory also shows us that he was the 'father of modern Turkish agriculture'. Therefore, he is not only the agricultural leader of his nation but also the father of modern Turkish agriculture. Even today, his views, practices, and efforts are still certainly accepted and considered for the national development.

Recommendation

Conducting discussions so as to determine and disseminate the country's need for agricultural information in future research and studies that will be conducted in the field of agricultural communications is recommended. In addition, it is beneficial to raise awareness with regard to the importance of agriculture and agricultural issues particularly concerning food, natural resources, and environment through different areas of agricultural communications. For further/future studies, it is also recommended to discuss and determine the issues of today's world from the standpoint of agricultural communications for the national development of Turkey.

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