European Sport Management Quarterly

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Published online: 26 May 2015.

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Gendered perceptions about female managers in Turkish sport organizations

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Research question: This study examines the views of employees working in Turkish sport organizations on the qualities of sport managers, their preference for female or male sport managers, and their attitudes toward female managers.
Research methods: A quantitative research design based on the data of 244 female employees and 492 male employees was chosen.
Results and findings: The results of the Women as Managers Scale indicated that gender, education, marital status, the preference for female or male sport managers, and the type of organization significantly affected gender role stereotypes and attitudes toward women's career advancement. In addition, the under-representation of women can be partly explained by dominant meanings, which are framed in the sport and sport experience given to a sport manager.
Implications: In line with role congruity theory, management in Turkish sport organizations is stereotyped as a masculine domain requiring agentic characteristics and sport experience is more strongly attributed to men. As a result, employees have a general preference for male sport managers and male employees in particular have negative attitudes toward female managers.

Keywords: role congruity theory; women; management; sport organizations

Introduction

Even though there has been a significant increase in the number of female managers over the past several decades (Ayman, Korabik, & Morris, 2009; Powell, Butterfield, & Parent, 2002), women are still under-represented in senior management positions in both Western (Davidson & Burke, 2011; Growe & Montgomery, 2000; Morrison, White, & Van Velsor, 1992; Stelter, 2002) and Eastern countries (Cinar, 2001; Mostafa, 2003). This is despite women's considerable contributions to professional and managerial positions, such as providing different perspectives and experiences while demonstrating leadership skills as successfully as men do (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Studies that have investigated the possible explanations for women's under-representation in management positions found that most traits associated with management are still generally considered to be masculine (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992; Martell, Parker, Emrich, & Crawford, 1997; Schein, 2007), employees are more likely to prefer a male manager to a female manager (Carroll, 2006; Elsesser & Lever, 2011; Stoker, Velde, & Lammers, 2012), and men have relatively more negative attitudes toward female managers than women do (Adeyemi-Bello & Tomkiewicz, 1996; Aycan, 2004; Heilman, Block, Martell, & Simon, 1989; Mihail,

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2006); therefore, women's access to leadership positions remains limited (e.g., Aycan, 2004; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Stelter, 2002).

Studies on under-representation of women in sport organizations have also suggested that there are far fewer women than men in senior positions in sport organizations (e.g., Acosta & Carpenter, 2000; Chen & Henry, 2012; Hall, Cullen, & Slack, 1990; Hovden, 2000; Ottesen, Skirstad, Pfister, & Habermann, 2010; Pfister & Radtke, 2009; Whisenant, Miller, & Pedersen, 2005). These studies showed that dominant discourses about sport valorize masculine qualities, such as mental and physical toughness and competitiveness (Messner, 2002), and that dominant discourses about managerial roles in sport organizations have always been allied with the constructions of masculinities within the sporting context. Dominant (gendered) discourses about sport managers may therefore contribute to the lack of women in senior management positions in sport organizations.

Most of these studies examine the opinions and experiences of managers in sport organizations (Hovden, 2010; Ottesen et al., 2010; Pfister, 2010; Pfister & Radtke, 2009). There has not been enough consideration of the importance of sport organizations, which are accepted as a traditionally male territory, in explaining employees' attitudes toward female managers. Furthermore, the vast majority of these studies are conducted in Western countries. More work is needed to develop an understanding of women's representation in management positions of sport organizations, with varying degrees of access to power and resources in different social and cultural contexts. Assumptions about female or male capacities, limitations, and opportunities are produced and reproduced within everyday practices, power relations, and institutional arrangements of the social order in general, and more specifically through sport (Fullagar & Toohey, 2009). Moreover, employees' perception of men and women in the workplace can influence the consequences of women in leadership roles (Carli, 1999). Therefore, perception of women's ability to lead can shape the preferences and attitudes of men and women. Consequently, in this paper, we would like to explore the perceptions of employees of Turkish sport organizations on the qualities of sport managers, their preference for female and male sport managers, and the factors influencing their attitudes toward female managers.

Without an understanding of the sociocultural context of Turkey, we cannot fully understand the underlying factors of the under-representation of women in Turkish sport organizations. Therefore, the social and cultural environment of Turkey that forms the basis of this study will be outlined. First the theoretical framework regarding women's under-representation in management positions and related studies in the general management literature, and then the reasons for the under-representation of women in management positions of sport organizations will be discussed.

Literature review

Under-representation of women in management

In this study, role congruity theory developed by Eagly and Karau (2002) was employed to advance a comprehensive understanding of under-representation of female managers in sport organizations. Role congruity theory provides a theoretical basis for understanding the dynamics of the different evaluations of women and men in the managerial world. It explains the negative evaluations of female managers by the perceived incongruity between the managerial role and the feminine role ascribed to women (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Role congruity theory has its roots in social role theory which explains that the contrasting social positions of men and women produce differing gender roles (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). Gender roles describe the qualities or behavioral tendencies believed to be desirable for men and women (Eagly & Karau, 2002, p. 574). As Eagly and Karau (2002) stated, agentic attributes, such as being assertive, dominant, forceful, aggressive, and ambitious, are ascribed more strongly to men whereas communal characteristics, such as being sensitive, gentle, affectionate, and helpful, are ascribed more strongly to women. These differential attributions between men and women seem to form the essence of the gender typing of the managerial position. As Eagly and Karau (2002) argue, since leadership has been largely a male prerogative, there might be incongruity between the female gender roles and leadership roles. Several studies reveal that leadership abilities were perceived as important managerial characteristics and much more likely to be associated with male roles rather than female roles (e.g., Eagly et al., 1992; Martell et al., 1997; Schein, 2007), and females are evaluated less favorably than their male counterparts for leadership positions characterized by masculine or agentic roles (e.g., Eagly et al., 1992; Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs, & Tamkins, 2004). Therefore, employees have a general tendency to prefer male managers rather than female because of these less favorable attitudes (Elsesser & Lever, 2011).

Based on the aforementioned literature, role congruity theory may also help to explore employees' perceptions of the qualities of sport managers, their preference for female or male managers, and their attitudes toward female managers in male-dominated fields such as sport organizations.

Preference for the gender of managers

Role congruity theory was selected based on how it might explain employees' preference for the gender of managers. In line with the theory, women are seen as having less potential for management and several studies found that there is a general preference for male managers by both women and men (Elsesser & Lever, 2011; Powell et al., 2002; Stoker et al., 2012). A recent US national survey indicated that although the greatest percentage (54%) of subordinates showed no preference, there was a general preference for male bosses over female bosses (Elsesser & Lever, 2011). The researchers also argued that employees in the field of architecture/engineering, the most male-dominated profession, preferred male bosses more than those in the female-dominated professions such as personal care and social services.

Studies show that an employee's previous and current experience with male and female managers is also associated with their preferences for the gender of managers (Elsesser & Lever, 2011; Stoker et al., 2012). The researchers found that employees who currently have a male manager are more likely to prefer a male manager. However, there are inconsistent results about women. While Stoker et al. (2012) concluded that those who currently have a female manager are more likely to prefer a female manager, Elsesser and Lever (2011) found that even a majority of women who were currently managers themselves were more likely to prefer male managers.

Attitudes toward female managers

In line with role congruity theory, the stereotypes about personal qualities that are needed for managerial roles and gender roles that are attributable to men and women are also

expected to influence attitudes toward female managers. Additionally, negative attitudes toward female managers have been found to influence women's career advancement (Eagly & Carli, 2003). According to role congruity theory, the gender of the perceiver (or of the employees of the organization) influences the incongruity between leader and gender roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002). In many studies, female perceivers (e.g., students, employees, and professionals) have been found to have more positive attitudes toward female managers compared with male perceivers (Adeyemi-Bello & Tomkiewicz, 1996; Aycan, 2004; Lewis, 2010; Mihail, 2006; Sakalli-Uğurlu & Beydoğan, 2002; Tomkiewicz, Frankel, Adeyemi-Bello, & Sagan, 2004). However, Koca, Arslan, and Aşçı (2011) found that both women and men held more negative attitudes toward female managers in Turkish sport organizations. Researchers emphasized that this finding stems from the male-dominated organizational culture of Turkish sport organizations and Turkish patriarchal society.

Another factor that influences attitudes toward female managers is education. Participants with higher levels of education tend to hold the most positive attitudes toward female managers (Pereira, 1978). According to Vuković, Birkelund, and Štulhofer (2006), it is expected that more educated people tend to be more liberal and less traditional compared with the less educated; thus, more educated people tend to have more positive attitudes toward female managers. Additionally, studies on the attitudes of female managers investigated whether age impacted attitudes. A study by Mihail (2006) showed no significant differences between age and attitudes toward female managers. However, when compared with older American women, younger American women were found to be more accepting of female bosses (Moore, 2002).

The other important factor affecting attitudes toward female managers might be the gender of the current manager (Elsesser & Lever, 2011; Stoker et al., 2012). For instance, Lortie-Lussier and Rinfret (2002) found that attitudes toward female managers are more favorable among respondents who have been supervised by a woman. Aycan, Bayazit, Berkman, and Boratav (2012) pointed to the quality of relationships with female managers and concluded that having high-quality encounters with female managers is related to positive attitudes toward women in management. They also found that attitudes toward women in managerial positions also determined the preference to work with women. The employees, who have positive attitudes toward female managers, have a general preference for working with them (Aycan et al., 2012). Therefore, the attitudes toward women, which influence the women's career advancement, may determine whether the employees prefer to work with female managers or not.

Social-role theory (Eagly, 1987) suggests that roles are influenced by contextual issues (or organizational culture), and that the extent of gender-related division of labor is associated with more or less egalitarian norms about men's and women's behavior, rights, and privileges. For example, in sport as a male-dominated field, men may have better opportunities to receive prestigious positions than women do. As Flynn and Chatman (2001) argue, an organizational culture acts as a system of social control and can influence employees' attitudes and behaviors through the values and beliefs operating in organizations. Bearing this in mind, it is essential to examine the (gendered) culture of organizations to understand the reasons for the under-presentation of women in management positions as well as the employees' preference for the gender of the manager and attitudes toward female managers. Many authors have claimed that masculine-oriented organizational cultures, which are characterized by hierarchical authority, independence, autocratic leadership styles, and top–down communication

(e.g., Klenke, 1996; Marshall, 1993), are barriers to women's career advancement (e.g., Dainty & Lingard, 2006; Marshall, 1993; Simpson, 1998). This is particularly evident in sport organizations where organizational practices are explicitly organized on a gender basis (Messner & Sabo, 1990). Therefore, the next section will discuss the under-representation of women in management positions in sport organizations with a particular focus on the (gendered) culture of sport and sport organizations.

Under-representation of women in management positions of sport organizations

Sport, as a microcosm of the larger society (Wolfe et al., 2005), is argued to be a dynamic social space where dominant (class, ethnic, gender, etc.) ideologies are perpetuated as well as challenged and contested (Messner, 2002). Sport, more than any other context, provides a unique area that enables the routine and systematic reinforcement of the ideology of male superiority and resistance to the inclusion of women (Hall, 1990; Messner, 2002; Messner & Sabo, 1990). As Cunningham (2008) argues, 'gender inequality is an institutionalized practice within sport organizations' (p. 137), and the levels of gender inequality, such as the access to middle and upper managerial positions, career appraisal, and progression opportunities in management, are exaggerated within sport and leisure services in which the legacy of male-dominated provision relative to other service sectors is more pronounced (Aitchison, 2005).

Analyses of the decision-making committees in sport organizations have revealed the extent to which women are excluded from leadership positions in Canada (Hall et al., 1990), Denmark (Ottesen et al., 2010), Germany (Pfister & Radtke, 2009), Sweden (Ottesen et al., 2010), and the US (Acosta & Carpenter, 2000; Whisenant et al., 2005). A study of nearly 70 Canadian national sport organizations revealed that although nearly half of the entry-level positions were held by women, they comprised 28% of the executive directors, 23% of the technical directors, and less than 10% of the national coaches (Hall et al., 1990). Acosta and Carpenter (2000) found that between 1998 and 2000, men received 89% of 418 administrative jobs in the athletic programs of National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) schools in the US that had female athletic programs.

In this study, based on role congruity theory, we argue that this chronic under-representation of women in management positions in sport organizations may in part be attributed to the shared conceptions/stereotypes about the qualities of sport managers, which are influenced by the masculine culture of sport. Dominant discourses favoring men's sport and the qualities that are associated with masculinity, such as mental and physical toughness and competitiveness (Messner, 2002) and male domination in sport, may also influence the organizational culture of sport organizations. As many researchers have indicated, sport organizations are often places that reproduce traditional gender roles and male dominance (Cunningham, 2008; Shaw & Hoeber, 2003).

The organizational culture of sport organizations that defines the ideal qualities, skills, and behaviors of an employee in terms of masculinity makes it difficult for women to be defined as valuable by employees and managers (Hovden, 2010; Pfister, 2010). For example, the images and discourses associated with management and leadership in sport are infused with masculine traits and characteristics such as toughness, sport playing experience, and instrumentality (Knoppers & Anthonissen, 2008). Hovden (2000) found that leadership discourses in Norwegian sport organizations were tightly linked to the images of corporate action-oriented leadership, heroic leaders, and associated masculine

skills including possessing unrestricted time resources and an extensive social network. In another study, Shaw and Hoeber (2003) found that senior management roles were heavily dominated by discourses of masculinity (such as competition, the use of businessmen or chairman) that are linked to men and are highly valued in the English national governing bodies of sport. In contrast, women and discourses of femininity (such as being kind, loyal, and feminine) are associated with employment roles that are undervalued within organizations. These studies show that the congruity between female gender roles and sport manager roles can create problems for female managers, as posited by role congruity theory.

There are very limited numbers of studies on the under-representation of women in sport organizations in non-Western countries. As Chen and Henry (2012) indicate it is needed in Muslim-majority societies to look beyond the focus on Islam as the source of women's disadvantage and instead to look to patriarchal forms of dominance in such societies. Therefore, the sociocultural context of Turkey, as a Muslim-majority country, with a specific focus on patriarchal systems will be discussed.

Sociocultural context of Turkey

Turkey, although it maintains a secular state structure, has been steadily turned into a conservative and traditionalist country through recent state policies, which resulted in the deepening of gender inequality (Acar & Altunok, 2013). The Global Gender Gap Report 2013 of the World Economic Forum (2013) states that Turkey ranks 120th out of 136 countries and according to 2012 figures, the labor force participation rate of women is only 29%, while that of men is 71% (Turkish Statistical Institute [Turkstat], 2013).

In terms of employment and the opportunity to obtain a management position, education is one of the biggest problems for women in Turkey. According to 2012 figures, 7.8% of women (15 years of age or older) were illiterate, 14.5% had high school level education, and only 8.8% graduated from university (Turkish Statistical Institute [Turkstat], 2012). The number of women in some specific jobs (especially for management) is still low, and women are generally employed in traditional jobs with low income, limited appointment, and which are compatible with the responsibilities of housewives (Özbay, 1995). While the percentage of female senior executives (e.g., provincial director) was 7.6% in the public sector in the 1990s (Kabasakal, Aycan, & Karakas, 2004), it increased to 9.9% in 2012 (Turkish Statistical Institute [Turkstat], 2013). According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2013 that compared the percentage of women among legislators, senior officials, and managers in 114 countries, Turkey ranked 104th, with only 10% of these positions being held by women.

The lower representation of women in managerial positions in Turkey is a result of factors such as childcare and housework responsibilities (Kuzgun & Sevim, 2004), social disapproval (Ilkkaracan, 1998), and gender stereotypes (Aycan, 2004; Kabasakal et al., 2004). Gündüz-Hosgör and Smits (2008) argued that the effects of modernization are overshadowed by the strong influence of patriarchal ideology that tends to confine Turkish women to the private domain. Turkish society is accepted as highly patriarchal with clear-cut gender role differences (Sakallı, 2001). There is some evidence that suggests that men and women in Turkey see women as being home-makers, more suited for motherly and family roles (Kabasakal et al., 2004). However, Turkish state policies encouraging female employment in professional occupations have not questioned the traditional family ideology positioning women as the prime domestic workers and hence

left the deeply rooted patriarchal assumptions unchanged (Tatli, Özbilgin, & Küskü, 2008).

Given the sociocultural context of Turkey, it is not surprising that the top management positions in Turkish sport organizations are occupied more often by men. In all Turkish sport organizations, 5% of the management positions were occupied by women and 95% by men (http://www.gsb.gov.tr). When this is compared to other European countries such as Denmark (25%) (Ottesen et al., 2010), Finland (27%), Sweden (33%), Norway (37%), and Germany (15%) (European Commission, 2014) Turkish ratios are extremely low. Similarly low results are seen in other Middle Eastern countries such as Syria, Bahrain, and Iran (Benn, Pfister, and Jawad, 2011). For instance, the number of women in senior management position in Syrian sport is around 13% (Karfoul, 2011). That stems from the secondary position of women in Islam, the increasing patriarchal domination, and the complex historical, cultural, and political factors deepening the unequal status of women in society (Jawad, Al-Sinani, and Benn, 2011).

Although Turkish women's participation and achievements in sporting activities have increased in recent years in national and international contexts, women are still significantly under-represented in coaching and athletics (Koca & Hacisoftaoglu, 2011). For example, based on the data in 2012 (http://www.gsb.gov.tr) women make up only 17.8% of all coaches in Turkey while 25% of coaches in UK and 30% of the coaches in Finland are women (Pfister, 2011). Although the percentages of active female and male athletes in Turkey are 22.3% and 77.7%, respectively (http://www.gsb.gov.tr), according to Gender Equality and (elite) Sport report by Pfister (2011), the percentages of female athletes are given as follows: UK (43%), Denmark (30%), Germany (44%), Slovenia (30%), and Portugal (25%). However, as Pfister, Habermann, and Ottesen (2004) noted, Scandinavian countries are welfare states with a large number of women in the labor market and in which there is broad consensus that gender equality has been achieved.

The differences in the percentages of women in Turkish sport organizations might be related to gender policies (e.g., gender quota, gender mainstreaming, and women leadership program). Women in sport leadership programs have been delivered in many countries such as UK, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. These programs build leadership skills and seek to increase support for women within sport organizations. However, no programs or policies providing career assistance and opportunities for women exist in Turkish sport organizations.

It can be deduced that women's position in society, the percentages of women in all spheres of sport, the male dominance in sport and sport organizations, and the lack of gender policies in sport organizations discussed above might contribute to underpin the existing under-representation of women in management positions in Turkey.

Hypothesis development

Based on role congruity theory, we argue that the masculine culture of sport organizations and the gender roles attributed to men and women in Turkey are expected to influence employees' views on the qualities of a sport manager, their preference for the gender of managers, and their attitudes toward female managers. These understandings may help to explain why women have a lower representation in sport management positions in Turkey as in many Western countries. In the present study, sport organizations in particular were chosen because of their highly gendered nature (Cunningham, 2008; Shaw & Hoeber, 2003), and because they are under-researched in terms of attitudes toward female

managers. We focused on attitudes toward female managers in a sample of Turkish employees working in the Gençlik ve Spor Genel Müdürlüğü (Youth & Sport General Directory [GSGM], 2012) and national sport federations in the understudied context of a non-Western/developing country. Additionally, we examine the under-representation of female managers in sport organizations from employees' perspectives rather than that of managers. We argue that stereotypes about gender roles and manager qualities are produced and reproduced within everyday practices of sport organizations, and employees are influenced by these practices. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine the views of employees working in Turkish sport organizations on the qualities of sport managers, their preference for female or male sport managers, and their attitudes toward female managers.

First, it seems that finding out the views of employees on the qualities of sport managers is important, because it is perhaps the views of the employees on the qualities of sport managers that are partly responsible for employees' preference for the gender of sport managers and their attitudes toward female managers. Thus, before developing the following hypotheses, one research question is asked: what are the views of the employees of Turkish sport organizations about the qualities of a sport manager?

There is evidence showing that the employees from various organizations tend to prefer male managers to female managers and this is strongest in male-dominated environments (Elsesser & Lever, 2011). Furthermore, the vast majority of senior management positions in sport organizations have been held by men rather than women in Turkey and in the world (Acosta & Carpenter, 2000; Hall et al., 1990; Ottesen et al., 2010). Therefore, it was expected that both female and male employees of Turkish sport organizations will have a general preference for male sport managers over female sport managers (Hypothesis 1).

According to previous studies in the general management literature, the participants' preferences for the gender of managers are associated with the gender of the current manager (Elsesser & Lever, 2011; Stoker et al., 2012). In this respect, employees who currently have a male manager are more likely to prefer male managers or who currently have a female manager are more likely to prefer female managers (Stoker et al., 2012). However, Elsesser and Lever (2011) found that even a majority of women who were currently managers themselves were more likely to prefer male managers. Based on these results, in the present study, it was expected that the employees who currently have a male manager will prefer male managers and the employees who currently have a female manager will prefer female managers (Hypothesis 2).

As indicated earlier, researchers demonstrated that women held more positive attitudes toward female managers than males did (Adeyemi-Bello & Tomkiewicz, 1996; Aycan, 2004; Lewis, 2010; Mihail, 2006; Sakalli-Uğurlu & Beydoğan, 2002; Tomkiewicz et al., 2004). Therefore, it was expected that female employees of Turkish sport organizations will hold fewer gender role stereotypes and positive attitudes toward women's career advancement than males do (Hypothesis 3). Based on the previous studies that found a positive correlation between attitudes and preferences for female managers (Aycan et al., 2012; Elsesser & Lever, 2011), it was expected that employees who preferred female sport managers will hold fewer gender role stereotypes and more positive attitudes toward women's career advancement than employees who preferred male sport managers (Hypothesis 4). Finally, it was also expected that there will be differences in gender role stereotypes and the attitudes of the employees toward women's

career advancement according to marital status, education, the type of organization, the gender of the current manager, and age (Hypothesis 5).

Method

The study context

The study was conducted in the GSGM and all national sport federations in Turkey in 2010–2011. As a government agency, the GSGM was founded in 1989 and has the power to make all arrangements and important decisions about sport events. The GSGM is organized with a national headquarters and 81 provincial districts. In 2010, there were a total of 59 national sport federations (52 autonomous and 7 non-autonomous) in Turkey. Although most of the federations are autonomous, they still receive extensive state funding and have close links to the GSGM. A key characteristic of the Turkish Sport Model as well as the European model is a system of national sport federations, which are linked together in European and international sport federations.

Based on the information from Human Resources departments of the sport organizations, at the time of the study, there were 656 females (12.2%) and 4728 males (87.8%), representing a total of 5384 employees in the GSGM. In GSGM provincial districts, there were 417 female employees (9.0%) and 4211 male employees (91.0%). In national sport federations, there were 173 female employees (32.3%) and 362 male employees (67.7%). In all Turkish sport organizations, 14% of the positions were occupied by women and 86% were occupied by men.

Table 1 shows the number and percent of management positions in each sport organization by gender. In 2010, of a total of 104 management positions in the GSGM, one (1.0%) was occupied by a female department manager in the headquarters (Table 1). In national sport federations, women represented 5.5% of all management positions, whereas men occupied 94.5%. At the time of the study, the presidents of the Turkish Sailing Federation and the Turkish Tennis Federation were women. Additionally, in all

Table 1. Gender distribution of management positions in Turkish sport organizations.

	Female		Male		Total	
	n	%	*n*	%	*N*	%
GSGM						
President	–	–	1	100	1	100
Vice president	–	–	4	100	4	100
Department manager	1	5.6	17	94.4	18	100
Provincial manager	–	–	81	100	81	100
Total	1	1.0	103	99.0	104	100
National sport federations						
President	2	3.3	58	96.7	60	100
Vice president	6	4.0	145	96.0	151	100
General secretary	7	11.7	53	88.3	60	100
Executive board members	38	5.4	662	94.6	700	100
Total	53	5.5	918	94.5	971	100
Total	54	5.0	1021	95.0	1075	100

Note: This information is obtained from the Department of Personnel and Education of the GSGM (http://www.gsb.gov.tr).

Turkish sport organizations, 5% of the management positions were occupied by women and 95% were occupied by men.

Participants

Among 1495 survey recipients from GSGM Headquarters, GSGM Provincial districts, and national sport federations, 853 (57.1%) responded to the survey, of whom 736 were eligible for participation. There were 117 incomplete questionnaires, which were eliminated from the study. Finally, 244 females (M_{age} = 35.13 ± 8.11) and 492 males (M_{age} = 39.51 ± 10, 18) voluntarily participated in this study (Table 2).

All the participants were employed full-time at the time of the study. The socio-demographic information of female and male employees is presented in the Table 3. The majority of the participants were married and had one or two children, and more than half of the employees had university degrees. The participants held different positions, including clerical/technical positions (61%), sport experts (27.2%), and low-level management positions (11.8%). Most of the participants had 10 years or less work experience. It can be seen from Table 3 that the response rate of the women who participated in competitive sport at some stage in their lives was 50% and that of the men were 62.1%. Significant differences were found for the percentage of sports participation and gender (χ_1^2 = 9.65, p < .01). In addition, the percentage of female managers supervising the participants is 11.6 (N = 83), whereas the percentage of male managers is 88.4 (N = 633).

Measures

Data were collected using two instruments.

The questionnaire

The questionnaire's first section included the demographic data of the employees: gender (two choices with check boxes: female and male), age (a question requiring the participant to write his/her birthdate in the day/month/year format), marital status (five choices with check boxes: married, widowed, divorced, unmarried, and other), number of the children (an open-ended question), education (six choices with check boxes: from literate to graduate), household income (nine choices with check boxes: from 1000 Turkish Lira to 5000 Turkish Lira and above), employment status (an open-ended question), the number of employment years (an open-ended question), the gender of the

Table 2. Gender distribution of study participants.

| | Participants | | | | | |
| | Female | | Male | | Total | |
Sport organization	n	$\%$	n	$\%$	N	$\%$
GSGM-headquarters	92	37.7	113	23.0	205	27.9
GSGM-provincial districts	84	34.4	310	63.0	394	53.5
National sport federations	68	27.9	69	14.0	137	18.6
Total	244	100	492	100	736	100

Table 3. Socio-demographics of the female and male employees in Turkish sport organizations.

	Female		Male		Total	
	n	%	*n*	%	*N*	%
Gender	244	33.2	492	66.8	736	100
Age						
30 or below	79	34.7	106	22.2	185	26.2
31–40	80	35.1	145	30.3	225	31.9
41–50	60	26.3	153	32.0	213	30.2
51 and over	9	3.9	74	15.5	83	11.7
Total	228	100	478	100	706	100
Marital status						
Married	129	53.3	350	71.6	479	65.5
Widowed	5	2.1	4	0.8	9	1.2
Divorced	15	6.2	9	1.8	24	3.3
Single	93	38.4	126	26.0	219	30
Total	242	100	489	100	731	100
Children						
Two or below	149	86.6	441	89.3	590	88.6
Three or over	4	2.3	16	3.2	20	3.0
No children	19	11.1	37	7.5	56	8.4
Total	172	100	494	100	666	100
Education						
Literate	0	–	1	0.2	1	0.1
Primary school	0	–	6	1.2	6	0.8
Secondary school	1	0.4	12	2.4	13	1.7
High school	50	20.6	133	27.0	183	25.0
University	164	67.5	300	61.0	464	63.1
Graduate	28	11.5	40	8.2	68	9.3
Total	243	100	492	100	735	100
Household income[a]						
1001–2000 TL	95	43.0	289	61.9	384	55.8
2001–3000 TL	65	29.2	104	22.3	169	24.6
3001–4000 TL	38	17.3	42	9.0	80	11.6
4001–5000 TL	14	6.4	22	4.7	36	5.3
5000 above	9	4.1	10	2.1	19	2.7
Total	221	100	467	100	688	100
Employment status						
Low-level management	19	8.1	66	13.6	85	11.8
Sport expert	55	23.5	141	29.1	196	27.2
Clerical/Technical position	160	68.4	278	57.3	438	61.0
Total	234	100	485	100	719	100
Employment years						
10 years and below	159	72.3	277	60.0	436	64.0
11–20 years	38	17.3	75	16.2	113	16.6
21–30 years	22	10.0	100	21.6	122	17.8
31 years and above	1	.4	10	2.2	11	1.6
Total	220	100	462	100	682	100
Sport participation	121	50	298	62.1	419	58

[a]One Turkish Lira is equivalent to approximately 1.8US$.

current manager (requiring two choices with check boxes: as female and male), and participation in competitive sports at some stage of their lives (a yes/no question requiring the participant to write the year and branch of sports).

The second section of the questionnaire included three questions to find out the views of the employees about the qualities of a sport manager, their preference for the gender of sport managers, and gender of their current manager. Based on previous studies (see Hovden, 2000; Knoppers & Anthonissen, 2008), one question asked about the qualities of a sport manager, and respondents were asked to explain their reasoning: 'What do you think the qualities of a sport manager (who works for a sport organization) should be?' Participants were required to keep their responses short and were only permitted three lines to note their responses. In order to assess if participants had a preference for the gender of sport managers, they were asked, 'If you have an option of a female or male manager, what would be your preference?' Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the statement with three options: 'female manager,' 'male manager,' and 'no preference' (Carroll, 2006; Elsesser & Lever, 2011; Stoker et al., 2012). In stating general preferences for male or female managers, respondents were asked to think abstractly. Before this question, the participants were asked to answer the following question: 'What is the gender of your current manager in your department?' By doing this, we wanted the respondents to indicate their preferences for gender of manager in terms of their manager.

Content validity was utilized to make certain that the questionnaire accurately reflected gender and management issues in sport organizations. Two academics with expertise in the areas of gender equity, sport management, and survey methods assessed the questionnaire, and each agreed that the instrument had both face and content validity. Later, the questionnaire was piloted among a group of 20 people working at the GSGM headquarters. Before full implementation, minor changes were made in terms of the format and the instructions. Based on the feedback, a parenthetical phrase, 'as a professional level,' was added to the question, 'Have you attended any competitive sports events in the past?' as well as underlining and bolding out the phrase 'competitive sports' in an attempt to further clarify the question.

Women as Managers Scale (WAMS)

The WAMS was used to determine the attitudes of the employees toward female managers (Peters, Terborg, & Taylor, 1974). The WAMS' aim has been to facilitate the exploration of personal and organizational data to gender role stereotypes and attitudes concerning women in management (Mihail, 2006). We used WAMS on the ground that it remains among the best measures that reflect the prevailing attitudes in society toward women's career advancement as well as being the most widely used instrument cross-culturally (Aycan, 2004). The WAMS consists of 20 items, and respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each statement on a 5-point Likert scale. The measure was first translated and validated for Turkish samples by Eker (1989), and adequate internal consistency was found (Cronbach's alpha = .87). Then, the WAMS was also validated for a Turkish sample by Aycan (2004). The Turkish version of the WAMS has two subscales. The first subscale was labeled 'Gender Role Stereotypes,' which includes items related to perceptions of women as capable of handling work and family responsibilities (e.g., 'On average, female managers are less capable of contributing to an organization's overall goals than men'). The second subscale, labeled 'Attitudes toward Women's Career Advancement,' reflected the extent to which society accepts women as key decision-makers in business life (e.g., 'It is acceptable for women to compete with men for top executive positions'). The structure of the WAMS is designed to ask the

respondents to consider hypothetical female managers. High scores indicate positive attitudes toward women in management. The internal consistency estimate for the present sample was .75 (gender role stereotypes) and .89 (attitudes toward women's career advancement).

Procedure

Prior to data collection, permission to conduct the study was sought from and granted by the GSGM and sport federations. After the names and contact list of relevant directors of each department were organized, each director was sent preclusive informing emails. A total of 1495 questionnaires were sent to the all units of the GSGM Headquarters, GSGM Provincial districts, and national sport federations in paper format by post with a reply-paid envelope. Additionally, the directors of each department were sent a letter explaining the purpose of the study, noting that data were collected only for the purpose of scientific study and asking for their support in delivering the questionnaires to employees. The directors of the departments delivered the questionnaires, each in a special envelope, to employees and asked employees to deliver the questionnaires back to them after enclosing the completed questionnaires. The directors then posted the enclosed completed questionnaires to the researchers as a counter-payment. The study was based on voluntarily participation, and all participants were given an informed consent form. The questionnaire was self-administered and was designed to take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Data were collected between 1 May 2010 and 30 June 2010. The study was approved by the Hacettepe University's Research Ethics Committee.

Data analysis

Descriptive statistics and Pearson's chi-square test were used to analyze the first question of the research: What are the views of the employees of Turkish sport organizations about the qualities of a sport manager? The data gathered from the open-ended question (the qualities of a sport manager) were first transferred to a computer, divided by thematic sections by the researchers, and coded accordingly. To maintain the validity of the research data, data were coded by the researchers independently. To compute the inter-coder reliability of the study, the formula (P (agreement percentage) = [N_a (agreement)/N_a (agreement) + N_d (disagreement)] × 100) introduced by Miles and Huberman (1994) was used. Consequently, the researchers attained an agreement rate of and $P = 89\%$.

We used a descriptive analysis and a one-sample t test to test Hypothesis 1; for Hypothesis 2, descriptive statistics and Pearson's chi-square test were used, and multivariate analyses of variance were used to test Hypotheses 3–5. MANOVAs were conducted with gender, marital status, education, the type of sport organization, preference for female or male sport managers, the gender of the current manager, and age as independent variables. The two subscales of WAMS (gender role stereotypes and attitudes toward women's career advancement) served as dependent variables. The education variable was collected in the two groups and recoded as 'university and master/doctorate degrees' and 'high school and lower education.' In addition, the marital status variable was recoded as 'married' and 'unmarried.' Potential Type I error was minimized using a Bonferroni correction, and the alpha was set at $p < .001$ for significance. Furthermore, the sample size is limited for one set of MANOVA, and eight sets of multivariate analyses of variance were conducted for each variable.

Results

An open-ended question asked participants about their views on the qualities of a sport manager. Descriptive statistics was used to analyze the responses to this question, and the data were presented with a total of seven qualities that were ordered into two categories as follows: (1) having experience with sport and (2) being a leader. The sum of the percentages exceeds 100% because several participants listed two or more explanations for their views on the qualities of a sport manager. The percentages of employees giving specific responses to both categories are shown in Table 4.

The ranking and the percentages of *having experience with sport* for each quality are having a sport background as an athlete or a coach (59%), having a management experience in sport clubs/events/organization (42%), and graduation from a sport-related department (13.2%). *Being a leader*, as a quality of a sport manager, referred to treating people fairly (43.6%), having good communication with employees (35.4%), having a good vision (25.7%), and being charismatic (9.5%).

Hypothesis 1 suggested that both female and male employees of Turkish sport organizations would have a general preference for male sport managers over female sport managers. To test Hypothesis 1, we first examined the data by descriptive analysis and found that 64.3% indicated no preference, 27.7% preferred male sport managers and 8.1% preferred female sport managers (see Table 5). Next, based on Stoker et al. (2012)'s study (algorithm), we analyzed the data by coding a preference for male sport managers as −1, a preference for female sport managers as + 1, and no preference as 0. Stoker and colleagues (2012) reported that this algorithm allows us to compute the significance of the difference in the percentages of the preference for male sport managers over female sport managers by testing the mean against 0 with a one-sample t test. In the analysis, a significant negative value represents a preference for male managers, and a positive value represents a preference for female managers (Stoker et al., 2012, p. 36). According to the one-sample t test results, a preference for male sport managers was found both among male (difference = −.21%, $t(470) = -8.04$, $p < .001$) and female respondents (difference = −.17%, $t(236) = -4.67$, $p < .001$). Consequently, it can be said that both female and male employees (difference = −.19%, $t(707) = -9.24$, $p < .001$) of Turkish sport organizations preferred male sport managers to female sport managers. Hypothesis 1 is therefore confirmed.

Table 4.   The frequency and percentage distribution for the views of the employees on the qualities of a sport manager in terms of gender.

The qualities of a sport manager	Female		Male		Total	
	n	%	n	%	N	%
Having experience with sport						
Having a sport background as an athlete or a coach	129	53	305	62	434	59
Having a management experience in sport clubs/events/ organization	88	36	221	45	309	42
Graduation from sport-related department	28	11.5	69	14	97	13.2
Being a leader						
Treating people fairly	154	63.3	167	34	321	43.6
Having a good communication with employees	108	44	152	31	260	35.4
Having a good vision	56	23	133	27	189	25.7
Being charismatic	31	13	39	8	70	9.5

Table 5. The frequency and percentage distribution for the preference of the employees for female or male manager in terms of gender and gender of current manager.

	Preference female manager		Preference male manager		No preference	
	n	%	*n*	%	*N*	%
Female participants	23	9.7	65	27.4	149	62.9
Male participants	34	7.2	131	27.8	306	65
Total	57	8.1	169	27.7	455	64.3
Gender of the current managers						
Female manager	5	6.2	16	19.8	60	74.1
Current male manager	51	8.2	179	28.7	393	63.1
Total	56	8.0	195	27.7	453	64.3

Hypothesis 2 predicted that the employees who currently have a male manager will prefer male managers and the employees who currently have a female manager will prefer female managers. To test Hypothesis 2, a descriptive analysis and Pearson's chi-square test were used. It can be observed in Table 5 that 6.2% of employees who currently have a female manager preferred female sport managers, and 19.8% of them have a preference for male sport managers. In addition, 8.2% of the employees who currently have a male manager preferred female sport managers and 28.7% preferred male sport managers. Unexpectedly, there was no statistically significant difference in the preference for the gender of sport managers regarding the gender of the current manager ($\chi_2^2 = 3.79$, $p = .15$). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is not confirmed.

In the third hypothesis, female employees of Turkish sport organizations were expected that hold fewer gender role stereotypes and positive attitudes than males. This hypothesis was tested by MANOVA, and according to the results, the main effect of gender was significant [Wilks' $\lambda = .81$; $F(2, 733) = 99.49$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .21$]. Follow-up testing indicated that female employees had fewer gender role stereotypes and reported significantly more positive attitudes toward women's career advancement than male employees. The findings supported Hypothesis 3 (see Table 6).

Hypothesis 4 suggested that employees who preferred female sport managers would hold fewer gender role stereotypes and positive attitudes toward women's career advancement than employees who preferred male managers. As shown in Table 6, results of the MANOVA indicated that the main effect of the preference for the gender of sport managers was significant [Wilks' $\lambda = .95$; $F(4, 1408) = 9.2$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .02$]. The findings supported Hypothesis 4 (see in the second division of Table 6). Post-hoc Tukey's HSD tests showed that employees who preferred female sport managers and who stated no preference had fewer stereotypes about gender roles than employees who preferred male sport managers. In addition, employees who preferred female sport managers and who stated no preference had more positive attitudes toward women's career advancement than those who preferred male sport managers.

Hypothesis 5 stated that there would be differences in gender role stereotypes and the attitudes of employees toward women's career advancement according to marital status, education, the type of organization, the gender of the current manager, and age. According to the MANOVA results, the main effect of marital status was significant [Wilks' $\lambda = .98$; $F(2, 695) = 5.2$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .02$]. Further analysis showed that unmarried employees had more positive attitudes toward women's career advancement

Table 6.   Results of the analysis of variance.

Variables	Subscale of WAMS	Group	Mean	SD	df	Error df	F	p
Gender	Stereotype	Females	3.82	.62	1	734	139.24	.001*
		Males	3.20	.69				
	Attitudes	Females	4.25	.64	1	734	123.48	.001*
		Males	3.59	.80				
Preference	Stereotype	Female	3.59	.71	2	705	8.19	.001*
		Male	3.24	.79				
		No preference	3.47	.69				
	Attitudes	Female	4.25	1.14	2	705	15.86	.001*
		Male	3.59	.84				
		No preference	3.85	.73				
Marital status	Stereotype	Married	3.38	.72	1	696	.597	.440
		Unmarried	3.42	.74				
	Attitudes	Married	3.71	.82	1	696	16.33	.001*
		Unmarried	3.99	.76				
Education	Stereotype	University	3.47	.70	1	733	12.7	.001*
		High school	3.25	.76				
	Attitudes	University	3.89	.73	1	733	17.13	.001*
		High school	3.60	.96				
Organization	Stereotype	Provincial	3.31	.73	2	733	9.99	.001*
		Headquarters	3.50	.67				
		Federation	3.60	.74				
	Attitudes	Provincial	3.70	.87	2	733	7.04	.001*
		Headquarters	3.97	.66				
		Federation	3.87	.81				

Stereotype = gender role stereotypes; attitudes = attitudes toward women's career advancement.
*$p < .001$.

than married employees, but an effect of marital status on gender role stereotypes was not found (see Table 6). Another result showed that there was a main effect of education [Wilks' $\lambda = .97$; $F(2, 732) = 10.64$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .03$] on the gender role stereotypes and attitudes toward women's career advancement variables. Employees who had university and master/doctorate degrees had fewer gender role stereotypes and had higher scores in terms of attitudes toward women's career advancement than employees who had high school education and below. There were significant main effects of the type of organization [Wilks' $\lambda = .96$; $F(4, 1464) = 6.84$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .02$]. According to the Post-hoc Tukey's HSD tests, employees who worked at the GSGM in provincial districts held more stereotypical views about gender roles than employees who worked at sport federations and the GSGM headquarters. In addition, employees of the GSGM in provincial districts reported significantly more negative attitudes toward women's career advancement than employees in the GSGM headquarters but not employees in federations. The findings revealed no significant effect of the gender of the current manager [Wilks' $\lambda = .99$; $F(2, 713) = .10$, $p = .91$] or age differences [Wilks' $\lambda = .98$; $F(6, 1402) = 1.75$, $p = .11$] on gender role stereotypes and attitudes toward women's career advancement subscales. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 can be considered partially confirmed.

Discussion

Qualities of sport manager

The research question of the this study is 'What are the views of the employees of Turkish sport organizations about the qualities of a sport manager?' and findings showed that the dominant desired qualities for a sport manager by the employees of Turkish sport organizations are 'having experience with sport' and 'being a leader.'

The quality of a sport manager associated with 'having experience with sport' includes having a sport background and management experience, and graduation from the sport-related departments. This quality refers to being an insider and being familiar with the rules of the game. Researchers highlight that the intensive commitment to sport is one of the most important qualities of sport managers (Knoppers & Anthonissen, 2008; Pfister & Radtke, 2009). Pfister and Radtke (2009) found that a commitment to sport and one's knowledge as an 'insider' seems to be an important precondition for a leadership position in the German sports system. Another study conducted in Scandinavian countries also shows that sport managers should have the necessary insights into 'the rules of the game' and related sport qualities such as ambition and competitiveness (Ottesen et al., 2010). Considering the low percentage of women in athletics (22%), in coaching (17.8%), and particularly in management in all Turkish sport organizations (5%), we argue that Turkish women lack this experience with sport.

In the present study, the other desired quality of a sport manager is 'being a leader.' The qualities associated with being a leader include treating people fairly, good communication skills, good vision, and being charismatic. These findings fit more strongly to characteristics associated with men than those associated with women and reflect stereotypically male qualities of being a successful leader (e.g., Alvesson & Due Billing, 1997; Heilman, 2001). Several studies reveal that leadership was perceived as an important characteristic for management and was also more associated with male roles rather than female roles (e.g., Eagly et al., 1992; Martell et al., 1997; Schein, 2007). Therefore, sport organizations have institutionalized masculinity and reinforce aspects of masculinity as important leadership qualities (Hovden, 2000; Shaw & Hoeber, 2003). The concept of 'leader' can serve as a hindrance to women in sport organizations (Cunningham, 2008). On the basis of role congruity theory, there is inconsistency between gender roles of women and leadership (Eagly & Karau, 2002); consequently, women can be considered less appropriate for leadership since leadership qualities in sport management are directly attributed to men.

Preference for the gender of sport managers

In this study, it was expected that both female and male employees of Turkish sport organizations would prefer male sport managers rather than female sport managers. This first hypothesis was supported. Although the findings indicated that the majority of the employees had no preference (64.3%), more detailed analysis (algorithm) showed that there was a general preference for a male manager. It is argued that no preference for the gender of one's manager is a growing trend through the years (Carroll, 2006; Elsesser & Lever, 2011). For instance, in a 1953 Gallup poll, only 25% of participants had no preference for the gender of their boss, in 1983, 36%, and in 2011, 44% indicated no preference. Stoker and colleagues (2012) also found that the most popular response among 3000 employees was 'no preference' (70%).

Based on role congruity theory, although one indicates no preference for the gender of a manager, men still retain a clear advantage (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Our findings concerning preference for a male manager are also consistent with the findings of several management studies (Elsesser & Lever, 2011; Powell et al., 2002; Stoker et al., 2012). Elsesser and Lever (2011) indicated that although the greatest percentage (54%) of subordinates showed no preference, there was a general preference for male bosses over female bosses. Researchers argued that employees in the male-dominated profession of architecture/engineering preferred male bosses more than those in the female-dominated profession of personal care and social services. Therefore, regarding these arguments, the preference of the participants of the present study for male managers could be attributed to the male-dominated structure of Turkish sport organizations (95% men). In this respect, 'male-dominated network' (Hovden, 2010) may be a factor for the employees' preference for male sport managers and employees' preference for male sport managers may stem from the familiarity with the male culture in Turkish sport organizations. When employees experience a lack of women in upper management, they may form ideas about the implicit values and culture of the organization (Hoobler, Lemmon, & Wayne, 2011).

In the present study, it was also expected the employees would prefer male or female managers according to gender of their current manager, and this second hypothesis was not supported. This finding is not consistent with the literature because, as mentioned previously, researchers argue that employees who currently have a male manager are more likely to prefer male managers, with inconsistent results for women who currently have a female manager (Elsesser & Lever, 2011; Stoker et al., 2012). This finding and its inconsistency with those of previous studies might be attributed to the relatively low number of employees who currently have a female manager in Turkish sport organizations.

Based on role congruity theory, female or male sport managers are evaluated favorably or unfavorably depending on how well they match up with the qualities of sport managers that are considered to be necessary in sport organizations. Thus, employees' views on the qualities of sport managers, such as having experience with sport and being a leader, might have an influence on their preference for the gender of managers. As discussed previously, the lack of sport experience held by Turkish women can be used to justify the preference for men for management positions in Turkish sport organizations. Furthermore, as many researchers have argued, the organizational cultures of sport organizations that define the ideal qualities, skills, and behaviors of an employee in terms of masculinity make it difficult for women to be defined as valuable by employees and managers (Hovden, 2010; Pfister, 2010).

Attitudes toward female managers

In the present study, it was also expected that female employees of Turkish sport organizations will hold fewer gender role stereotypes and positive attitudes toward women's career advancement than males, and this third hypothesis was confirmed. In our study, compared with female employees, male employees reported significantly less positive attitudes toward women's career advancement. Similarly, Koca and colleagues (2011) in their study conducted in 2006, which investigated the place of gender role orientations in attitudes toward women's work roles and female managers of workers in GSGM in Ankara, Turkey, indicated that male employees held more traditional/rigid gender role stereotypes regarding women's competencies to successfully carry out both

managerial and family responsibilities. Therefore, it can be said that society accepts men as key decision-makers in business life over women (Aycan, 2004). Also our findings are consistent with those of other studies despite the fact that participants had different ages and different backgrounds in sport organizations (Adeyemi-Bello & Tomkiewicz, 1996; Heilman et al., 1989; Mihail, 2006; Koca et al., 2011) and were from different areas of Turkey (Aycan, 2004).

Aycan and colleagues (2012) indicated that there is a positive correlation between attitudes and preferences to work with female managers. This is similar to the research findings of this study that employees who preferred male managers hold more negative attitudes toward female managers than employees who preferred female managers or had no preference. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis was confirmed. As Eagly and Chaiken (1993, p. 1) indicated, attitude is a 'psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of 'favor or disfavor.' Based on this approach, employees have a general tendency to prefer male managers rather than female in the workplace because of less favorable attitudes (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Elsesser & Lever, 2011).

The last hypothesis of this study also confirmed that there were differences in gender role stereotypes and the attitudes of the employees toward women's career advancement according to marital status, education, and the type of organization but not according to the gender of the current manager or the age of the participant. The findings showed that the attitudes of unmarried employees were more positive than those of married employees. A possible explanation for our results could be the effect of cultural features of marriage that might have reinforced the gender role models assigning 'men to the public life of work' and 'women to the private life of housework and motherhood.' We also found that highly educated participants had fewer gender role stereotypes and more positive attitudes toward women's career advancement. It is seen that as the number of years of education increases, people build more positive attitudes toward women in the workforce (Ginige, Amaratunga, & Haigh, 2007; Pereira, 1978; Vuković et al., 2006), and the effect of education is one but not the only consequence of being exposed to gender equality (Vuković et al., 2006).

Regarding the type of organization, the scores of employees working in sports federations and the GSGM headquarters on gender role stereotypes were lower than those of the employees from GSGM provincial districts. In addition, employees from GSGM provincial districts reported significantly more negative attitudes toward women's career advancement than those of the GSGM headquarters but not those of sport federations. This difference might be explained by the location of the GSGM headquarters in Ankara, the capital city of Turkey. These more favorable responses might be a reflection of the location. This finding was expected because although 12.2% of all employees working for the GSGM in Turkey are women, this gender ratio decreases from its headquarters to the provincial districts.

Finally, the findings revealed no significant differences in the gender role stereotypes and attitudes toward women's career advancement with regard to age. This can be derived from the younger age range of the respondents. The related literature showed that younger respondents had more positive attitudes toward female managers compared with older respondents (Eker, 1989; Moore, 2002). However, this influence was not significant for men (Lortie-Lussier & Rinfret, 2002; Moore, 2002). Additionally, the findings revealed that there was no difference in the gender role stereotypes and attitudes toward

women's career advancement between the employees who currently have female managers and those who currently have male managers.

Conclusion

This study focused on examining the views of employees who work in Turkish sport organizations on the qualities of sport managers, their preference for female or male sport managers, and their attitudes toward female managers. The results of this study show that *having experience with sport* and *being a leader* were the desired qualities of a sport manager, the employees had a general preference for male sport managers, and also female employees hold fewer gender role stereotypes and positive attitudes than males. These results indicate that the employees' perceptions about female managers in sport organizations where gender inequality is an institutionalized practice involve gendered meanings.

Taken together, the findings from this study may help to explain why women have a lower representation in sport management positions in Turkish sport organizations. Based on role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002), we argued that the incongruity between (sport) manager roles and feminine roles (in Turkish society) might lead to a greater preference for male sport managers and particularly to male employees' negative attitudes toward female managers, and these negative attitudes limit the access of women to managerial positions in Turkish sport organizations. As mentioned previously, stereotypical female gender roles have been associated with motherly and family roles in Turkish society (Kabasakal et al., 2004). This incongruity can create problems for females considered for managerial positions because the qualities considered necessary to be a sport manager are more frequently associated with having experience with sport and being a leader. Additionally, based on several studies (Elsesser & Lever, 2011; Stoker et al., 2012), it can be argued that gender stereotypes regarding managerial roles and the preference for male managers were particularly strong in contexts where men were the prototypical leaders but not in contexts with a history of female leadership. This is significantly true for the sport context and particularly for Turkish sport organizations where there is no history of female leadership.

This study will contribute to the empirical knowledge on sport management as well as general management literature on the under-representation of women in management positions. The study showed that sport management is a powerful fortress of existing/resisting masculine culture of sport although the number of women in sports is rising. Further research considering different sociocultural context of countries is required to broaden the understanding of gender inequalities in sport organizations. Specifically, there are few studies exploring gender inequalities in sport management in non-Western countries. Therefore this study contributes to the sport management literature by providing information on gender inequalities from the context of a non-Western country. Based on the theoretical framework of this study, we think that insiders' perception of male and female managers is most likely to influence the preferences for the gender of manager and overall position of women in leadership roles.

In this sense, this study provides an insight into employees' perceptions of gender inequality and attitudes toward female managers within Turkish sport organizations. Moreover, this study contributes to sport management by capturing the changing attitudes toward female managers according to the location of sport organizations in addition to gender, marital status, and education of employees. Additionally, this study contributes to

the management literature by demonstrating a relationship between preference and attitudes in favor of men within sport organizations. Lastly, this study contributes to role congruity theory to understand the reasons of female under-representation in management by addressing how the masculine culture of sport organizations and the gender roles that are attributed to men and women can influence one's views on the qualities of a sport manager, their preference for the gender of managers, and their attitudes toward female managers.

Limitations and recommendations

It is important to note that the present study has some limitations. First, all data were collected using self-reported questionnaires. This raises the possibility that responses reflect a common method bias. Second, the questionnaire designed for this study did not provide detailed information of the employees such as 'length of previous experience with female manager' or 'the reasons on the preference for the gender of manager.' Third, all respondents are employees of Turkish sport organizations, so it is not clear the extent to which the results could be generalized to other sectors in Turkey or in other countries.

For further research we recommend 'Attitudes toward Women Managers' measure (ATWoM; Aycan et al., 2012), developed in Turkey, could be used to evaluate the effects of culture-specific factors. Regarding the methodology, we consider and suggest that qualitative studies can be employed to build deep understanding of the under-representation of women in management positions in Turkish sport organizations. Hereby masculine and unobtrusive discriminative patterns embedded in sport organizations would be acknowledged and discussed.

It has been acknowledged that traditional patriarchal practices are slow to change (Bramham, 1991); therefore, especially national and international policies are crucial to challenge the dominant ideology, cultures, and power relationships and to shift the perceptions of male dominance within the Turkish sport organizations. Due to the lack of gender equality awareness in sport governing bodies in Turkey, there are no gender policies and relevant action plans in sport organizations (Koca & Hacisoftaoglu, 2011). Therefore, it seems crucial to develop special action plans to increase women's involvement in sport. Over the past 20 years, numerous international declarations and policies have been developed to contribute to gender equality in sport through influencing sport organizations by providing guidance for policy and practice. For example, the Brighton Declaration signed by 250 signatories enlarged and coordinated the global debate on women and sport. This was the first declaration to provide a worldwide ethical frame of reference and paradigm shift in social change for the construct of women in sport and women and sport (Kluka, 2008). The Declaration aims 'to develop a sporting culture that enables and values the full involvement of women in every aspect of sport' (International Working Group on Women and Sport [IWG], 1994). Turkish sport-governing bodies should adopt the declaration and collaborate with Turkish government, international sport governing bodies, and other key stakeholders to improve gender equality in sport. Additionally, as the study found that the employees of the GSGM in provincial districts have more negative attitudes toward female managers than the employees in the headquarters, the policy-makers while developing and adopting gender equality policies should consider regional differences. Besides, women sport advocacy organizations such as the Turkish Association of Sport and Physical Activity for Women (http://www.kasfad.org) should develop a number of strategies which can be used to

communicate with the government, such as lobbying, to follow and influence government action to promote gender equality in sport.

Regarding the under-representation of women, at first we propose that a gender quota at the different levels of sport (athletics, coaching, and management) should be applied in order to dislocate the structure of the sport organizations. In doing so, numbers of women can be increased at all levels of sport and the numeric increases are more likely to affect the attitudes toward and preferences for female managers by its members. As the IWG (1994) noted, although women's participation in sport had increased both at a grassroots level and in relation to opportunities to compete at an elite level, female representation in sport leadership remained a serious challenge, and without female leaders, decision-makers, and role models within sport, equal opportunities for women and girls will not be achieved.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Funding

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