

# 1 Ghazi Musbey Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as a Bilkadir 2 Leader<sup>1</sup>

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 4 *Bilkadir Leadership, introduced by Murat Gökmen, is a leadership model that*  
 5 *emphasizes the importance of management and pedagogical training in*  
 6 *leaders' policies. The model argues that leaders should not conduct their*  
 7 *communities solely through a chain of command; but rather, they should first*  
 8 *explain these policies to the community as teachers, combining pedagogical*  
 9 *science with their role as teachers of the community and then develop methods*  
 10 *for implementing these policies together with the community. This leadership*  
 11 *model also considers the leader to be the chief educator of the community.*  
 12 *Bilkadir leadership argues that leaders should lead the community in light of*  
 13 *scientific studies, without distancing themselves from them. Bilkadir*  
 14 *leadership suggests that leaders should both offer a vision and contribution*  
 15 *to science through their management practices and, in the same way, prepare*  
 16 *their policies together with the people by benefiting from science. In this*  
 17 *context, the founder of the Turkish Republic, Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk,*  
 18 *who implemented a policy in line with this definition, presents a profile*  
 19 *consistent with Bilkadir leadership in his capacity as chief teacher. This study*  
 20 *thus examines Atatürk's seminal work *Nutuk* (1933) in light of the philosophy*  
 21 *of science and management of Bilkadir Leadership. The study examines*  
 22 *Atatürk's perspective on education and leadership practices with reference to*  
 23 **Nutuk*. The study is conducted through document analysis.*

24  
 25 **Keywords:** *Leadership, Bilkadir Leadership, Gazi Mustafa Kemal Atatürk,*

26  
 27 **Introduction**

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 29  
 30 The journey of Muslims and Turkish people unification which began with  
 31 Osman Gazi, was quite significant for the geography of Anatolia, but this  
 32 geography was also the guarantor of world peace. The fact that this geography,  
 33 the successor to Bayt al-Maqdis, was strong both scientifically and militarily was  
 34 also very important for world peace. The pluralistic state concept inherited by  
 35 the Ottoman Empire from the Anatolian Seljuks was also supported by  
 36 Christians, Jews, and Yazidis in Anatolia, allowing the Ottoman Empire to  
 37 expand its natural borders to a vast geography. This contributed significantly to  
 38 the Ottoman Empire, from its language and culture to its way of life and its  
 39 contributions to science and literature. During this period, Europe also defined  
 40 its new scientific movement of the Renaissance and Reformation as a positivist  
 41 understanding opposed to the church. This allowed Europe to largely escape the  
 42 political and ideological pressure of the church and fully realize a rational,  
 43 positivist science and literature based on benefit, interest, and profit. This  
 44 mindset was pragmatic, accepting the strong as justified and the weak as doomed

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<sup>1</sup>The study is an extended version of the study presented under the entitled Revilling serön meşer Ghazi musbey Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as a bilkadir leader at December 23-29 2025 14th International Conference on Social Sciences Proceedings Books Vol 4, İzmir, Türkiye.

1 to oppression, built on cost-benefit analysis rather than human values. This  
2 mindset gave rise to the understanding that science belongs to whoever produces  
3 it, or that wealth belongs to whoever is more powerful, and this prepared a  
4 rational ground for the law of the jungle in a civil and civilized guise, which led  
5 peoples to war and to exploit each other's resources. As a result, countries or  
6 nations that produced better technology used it to seize the resources of other  
7 nations or peoples, which provided a legal basis for the colonialist mindset. This  
8 enabled technology-producing countries to invade any country and seize the  
9 resources they deemed necessary for themselves, establishing their dominance  
10 there through weapons and transportation. This attitude threatened the state  
11 structure that held together many societies, particularly the Ottoman Empire and  
12 the Russian Tsardom, and in fact, with the collapse of this structure, they had  
13 made it their motto to gain access to more resources and raw materials. This  
14 attitude gained significant momentum with Mehmed II's conquest of Istanbul,  
15 but these colonial activities never fully achieved their goal due to the Ottoman  
16 obstacle. However, they did achieve some gains, such as the collapse of empires  
17 and the establishment of nation states. This allowed the European-centered  
18 colonial mindset to dominate through civil society organizations, placing these  
19 small nation states under debt and control, establishing a policy-centered  
20 management mindset known as neo-colonialism. The Ottomans, who closely  
21 followed every stage of this situation, made a significant cut in this trend with  
22 Bilkadir II Abdülhamid. Sultan II. Abdülahmid's policy of keeping the empire  
23 alive was an important source of motivation for the states and nations under  
24 colonial rule; it provided significant support, especially among Muslims. After  
25 Sultan II Abdülhamid, imperialist powers were in close contact with Jewish  
26 Zionists and agreed that these policies were possible in a Middle East without  
27 the Ottoman Empire. Recognizing this situation, the Committee of Union and  
28 Progress party soon decided to continue Sultan Abdulhamid II's policies toward  
29 Jewish Zionists, but the country's trajectory was threatened by occupation and  
30 rebellion on multiple fronts. The Empire found itself in the middle of a war in  
31 which it was not actually a party during World War I, and when it was defeated  
32 in this war, the Empire's actual power was greatly weakened. During this period,  
33 the country's existence, unity, and integrity were under threat. With the cession  
34 of Jerusalem to Britain, the empire suffered a major blow and effectively lost the  
35 Sultanate, but there was no longer a Jerusalem that the Sultanate could protect.  
36 Moreover, the Arabs in the holy lands had become divided among themselves  
37 and had placed their trust in alliances outside the Ottoman Empire. Realizing  
38 that the occupation of Hatay was no longer a threat but a path to extinction, Gazi  
39 Mustafa Kemal Atatürk first declared the necessity of rising up as a whole and  
40 resisting the occupation as a unified front through proclamations and  
41 conferences, and then implemented this through the organization of the people  
42 on the ground. Acting on the principle that the sovereignty and future of the  
43 people lie in their own hands and efforts, Atatürk initiated the Kuvay-i Milliye  
44 movement, thereby mobilizing the people for their own independence. As this  
45 situation unfolded across the country, the occupying forces found themselves  
46 vulnerable against these scattered forces, which were not part of the regular

1 army, and suffered significant losses. Atatürk, who awakened the deep insight  
2 of the Anatolian people, gathered the Kuvva-yi Milliye militias under one roof  
3 with the support he expected from the Anatolian people. Subsequently, with  
4 these forces, he achieved important victories at Çanakkale, Sakarya, and the  
5 Great Offensive, and Anatolia exercised its own decision on the soil of the  
6 homeland without mortgaging its own future. This accelerated the establishment  
7 of the fully sovereign Turkish Republic., which was founded by Ghazi Mustafa  
8 Kemal Atatürk and his comrades, replacing the remnants of the Ottoman Empire.  
9 The Anatolian lands, drawing a line consistent with their past, united around  
10 Atatürk and achieved the structural, political, and From language to culture, from  
11 industry to economics, Atatürk accomplished many great things in a short time  
12 across numerous fields. He outlined the structure and perspective of the new state  
13 in his own words in The Speech. Believing that what is written will not be  
14 forgotten, Atatürk explained firsthand how and under what conditions the  
15 Turkish Republic was founded, thereby providing future generations with the  
16 codes for the kind of state they were born into and how to prepare for the future.  
17 These codes are today accepted as an important reference by many people both  
18 within and outside the borders of the Turkish Republic, aiming at the formation  
19 of independent, sovereign, fair, equal, respectful, and strong individuals and,  
20 consequently, society.

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### 23 **Motivation of the Research**

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The research argues that Bilkadir leadership, introduced to the literature by  
Murat Gökmen, bears significant similarities to the leadership identity of Ghazi  
Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who combined the roles of head teacher and leader.  
Motivated by the potential for significant contribution to the literature, this study  
evaluates the themes of leadership and teaching found in Atatürk's own work,  
Nutuk, within the framework of Bilkadir leadership.

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### 33 **Methodology of the Study**

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The research analyzes Atatürk's Nutuk within the framework of Bilkadir  
leadership through document analysis research method.

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### 39 **Aim of the Research**

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This study is based on the assumption that the leadership approach of Ghazi  
Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who combined leadership with the role of Head  
Teacher, is consistent with Bilkadir Leadership. The primary aim of this study is  
to offer a different perspective on leadership literature and Atatürk's leadership  
approach.

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1

2 **Bilkadir Leadership**

3

4 Bilkadir argues that leadership, as a teacher, must first explain to society the  
5 issues and situations that are important and essential for society, inform society  
6 in this direction, and thereby enable the leader to develop alongside society in  
7 this process, as in transforming and distributed leadership (M. Gökmen, 2025ü).  
8 Bilkadir considers utilizing educational pedagogy as an important policy for the  
9 change and transformation of society, and expects the leader to contribute to this  
10 pedagogy through their implementation. In this leadership model, where the  
11 principles, methods, and techniques of educational pedagogy are expected to  
12 make a significant contribution to the leader and the policies during the  
13 leadership period, it is anticipated that the leader will publish the results of the  
14 policies they wish to implement in a way that contributes to the educational  
15 science literature, thereby fulfilling both scientific activities and management  
16 duties. In this way, Bilkadir leadership argues that it will provide cultural,  
17 artistic, scientific, and managerial benefits, as it will enable the leader to become  
18 personally acquainted with educational literature, positively influence the  
19 community's approach to reading, learning, and science, and, most importantly,  
20 ensure the development of science together with the community. defines the  
21 leader as the person who manages this process, combining the roles of teacher  
22 and student of the community. Thus, it presents an important policy for  
23 leadership, the teacher and then the leader. However, Atatürk, who incorporated  
24 the changes and transformations he made into the literature, is consistent with  
25 the leader's contribution to the scientific research literature through scientific  
26 work. While implementing change and transformation, he addressed the masses  
27 with respect, kindness, and a gentle tone, showed respect and courtesy to those  
28 close to him, and demonstrated loyalty to them, which also led to Atatürk being  
29 defined as a Bilkadir leader. Consequently, Atatürk's management philosophy,  
30 attitude, and character are also consistent with Bilkadir leadership. Therefore,  
31 Atatürk, who meticulously built this state and had a direct impact on every stage  
32 of its construction, became both its teacher and its leader. Atatürk's approach,  
33 which combined leadership with teaching, is consistent with Bilkadir  
34 Leadership. A Bilkadir leader is expected to be polite, courteous, and respectful  
35 in both their attitude and behavior. In this way, a Bilkadir leader closely follows  
36 the culture, language, literature, and science inherited from the past and designs  
37 policies to develop them. They are expected to explain this to the public,  
38 especially their immediate circle, like an educator, approaching them in a polite  
39 and courteous tone. As the name suggests, a Bilkadir leader is expected to be  
40 respectful and courteous to everyone they communicate with. A Bilkadir leader  
41 is also expected to be loyal and committed to her/his community.

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44

1                   **Similarities Between Bilkadir Leaderhip and Atatürk's Reforms**

2

3                   Atatürk carried out none of his policies or practices without establishing a  
 4                   theoretical basis (Atatürk, 1935, 2011, 2020). Atatürk's perspective is an  
 5                   important and successful policy that has been implemented by many leaders  
 6                   from the Turkish-Islamic tradition, from Süleyman Shah to Vasir Bilkadir  
 7                   Abdülhamid II. It should be emphasized here that it is not possible to evaluate  
 8                   all of Atatürk's reforms in this study from the perspective of charismatic  
 9                   leadership. Therefore, the study has evaluated seven of Atatürk's reforms from  
 10                  the perspective of bikadir leadership.

11

12                   *The Kuva-yi Milliye Movement*

13

14                   The most obvious example of Atatürk's practice of explaining the rationale,  
 15                   logic, and implementation of this policy to the groups that would be affected by  
 16                   this change and transformation before the change and transformation took place  
 17                  is the formation of the Kuva-yi Milliye movement. However, first and foremost,  
 18                  informing the people in all corners of the country, namely Balikesir-Havza,  
 19                  Manisa, Sivas, Samsun, and Erzurum, and motivating them in this regard, and  
 20                  then physically coordinating these militia forces in the field and bringing them  
 21                  together under one roof is consistent with the principle of application of  
 22                  leadership as both a teacher and a leader. From this perspective, Atatürk presents  
 23                  a profile consistent with charismatic leadership.

24

25                   *The Foundation of the Republic*

26

27                   The transition from the sultanate and caliphate to the republican regime was  
 28                   heralded by the National Forces, which began with the slogan that the people  
 29                   could achieve their own independence. This process, which was an important  
 30                   preparation for the republican regime in which the people themselves decided  
 31                   their own future, laid the foundations for Atatürk's role as a teacher in involving  
 32                   the people in governance. In this process of transition from the monarchy to the  
 33                   republican regime, Atatürk, who served as an educator and leader, presented a  
 34                  profile consistent with his leadership.

35

36                   *Alphabet Reform*

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38                   The information that Atatürk carried out this revolution in a very short  
 39                   period of time is not correct. However, Atatürk first began by explaining to the  
 40                   public that it was now possible and necessary to switch to the Latin alphabet,  
 41                   focusing on policies in this direction after the First Constitutional Era and during  
 42                   the Second Constitutional Era. The transition to the Latin alphabet was made  
 43                   because, given the country's low literacy rate, an alphabet that was easier to learn  
 44                   was considered a prerequisite for establishing closer relations with the world.  
 45                   Atatürk's policy, which involved teaching these letters in schools and closely  
 46                   monitoring the process, was consistent with his leadership.

1    *Women's right to vote and be elected*

2  
3    At a time when there were prisons for people in Europe and many parts of the  
4    world, and women were considered commodities or objects, it was important to  
5    grant women the right to representation, which was an important right in the  
6    Turkish-Islamic tradition. However, for this to happen, the people first had to be  
7    informed in this direction and become actual advocates of this right. Granting  
8    women the right to vote and be elected is also an example of wise leadership.

9  
10   *April 23 Children's Day*

11  
12   By presenting the opening of the Grand National Assembly to the young  
13   ladies and gentlemen of future generations in the Republic of Turkey, which has  
14   a democratic structure since its establishment, Atatürk both demonstrated  
15   foresight and laid the foundations for democracy and the people's understanding  
16   of sovereign governance. This was established theoretically, legally, and  
17   formally, and he himself was elected as leader to implement it. This is consistent  
18   with his leadership.

19  
20   *Education and Teaching Act, Establishment of Schools and Universities*

21  
22   Recognizing the importance of education and teaching for the continuity of  
23   a society, Atatürk attached great importance to the unification of education, the  
24   diversity of schools, and the establishment of universities, both to spread the  
25   Latin alphabet throughout society and to create an enlightened and  
26   knowledgeable society in this direction. In this regard, as the de facto leader of  
27   the country, Atatürk successfully implemented the education and teaching law,  
28   taking an active role in its preparation, communication to the public, and  
29   application. Visiting schools and observing teaching activities, Atatürk also sent  
30   a significant number of scientists abroad to integrate universities with  
31   international scientific circles, and most of these individuals established  
32   important chairs at universities. After establishing the foundations and  
33   framework of education, its implementation in the field is also consistent with  
34   his leadership.

35  
36   *Establishment of the Turkish Historical Society and the Turkish Language  
37   Society*

38  
39   In addition to educational activities, Atatürk established these institutions to  
40   ensure the continuity of culture and the development of language. He supported  
41   these institutions in carrying out both scientific and cultural activities in  
42   collaboration with schools and universities. To this end, Atatürk first created the  
43   legal basis and framework, then ensured the training of researchers and, through  
44   numerous conferences and symposiums, ensured that Turkish history and culture  
45   were both explained and a vision for the future was outlined. In this respect,  
46   Atatürk's policy is also consistent with his leadership.

1   **Conclusion**

2           As a revolutionary and transformative leader, Atatürk's policies, particularly his  
 3 establishment of the Turkish Republic, are consistent with and aligned with Bilkadir  
 4 leadership. Therefore, the policies that Atatürk actually initiated and implemented  
 5 are provided as examples in this study. Atatürk's policies, ranging from agriculture  
 6 to industry, social life to structural life, are compatible with Bilkadir leadership.  
 7 Since it is not possible to mention all of them in this study, other applications are  
 8 included here. Firstly, Atatürk, defined as a head teacher, laid the foundations for  
 9 change and transformation, explained this to the public or the affected masses in  
 10 practice, held seminars, conferences, and meetings on this subject, and participated  
 11 in public discussions. This is consistent with transformational leadership in terms of  
 12 the leader explaining the planned change to the public. Subsequently, gaining the  
 13 support of the people when implementing these policies and academically  
 14 documenting this change and transformation is also consistent with charismatic  
 15 leadership. The *Nutuk*, which is used as research material, is a concrete example of  
 16 this effort. However, Atatürk, who incorporated the changes and transformations he  
 17 made into the literature, is consistent with the leader's contribution to the scientific  
 18 research literature through scientific work. While implementing change and  
 19 transformation, he addressed the masses with respect, kindness, and a gentle tone,  
 20 showed respect and courtesy to those close to him, and demonstrated loyalty to  
 21 them, which also led to Atatürk being defined as a Bilkadir leader. Consequently,  
 22 Atatürk's management philosophy, attitude, and character are also consistent with  
 23 Bilkadir leadership. Therefore, Atatürk, who meticulously built this state and had a  
 24 direct impact on every stage of its construction, became both its teacher and its  
 25 leader. Atatürk's approach, which combined leadership with teaching, is consistent  
 26 with Bilkadir Leadership for by carving an ideal community.

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