INVESTIGATION OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS' ORGANISATIONAL POWER DISTANCE AND MUSHROOM MANAGEMENT PERCEPTIONS ACCORDING TO DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

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Abstract:

The aim of this study is to examine the perceptions of organisational power distance and mushroom management of Physical Education Teachers according to their demographic characteristics. For this purpose, physical education teachers working in public and private schools in the province of Istanbul in the 2023-2024 academic year participated voluntarily. In the study, "personal information form", "Organisational Power Distance Scale" developed by Yorulmaz, Çolak, Altınkurt and Yılmaz (2018) and "Mushroom Management Scale" developed by Birincioğlu and Tekin (2018) were used. SPSS 25 package programme was used to analyse the data obtained. As a result of the normality test of the data obtained in the study, it was determined that the data showed normal distribution. Accordingly, the independent sample T-test and one-way ANOVA analysis were applied to the study. According to the findings of the study, it was determined that the mean organisational power distance scores of male teachers were higher than female

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teachers. As another result, in the inadequate communication subdimension of the mushroom management scale, the mean scores of teachers aged 30 and over were significantly higher than those of teachers aged 22-25. It was determined that teachers working in private schools had a high level of organisational power distance. It is thought that physical education teachers working in public schools can have more participation and voice through teachers' unions and other rights-seeking mechanisms, which leads them to perceive power distance lower.

Keywords: physical education, sport, organisational power distance, mushroom management

1. Introduction

In modern organisations, the impact of management approaches on employees deeply shapes individuals' perceptions and behaviours. In this context, organisational power distance and management styles critically affect how individuals adapt to the work environment and how they take part in business processes. While power distance refers to the degree of acceptance of hierarchical differences between individuals, the metaphor of mushroom management describes a model of management style that is far from transparent and does not inform and supervise employees sufficiently. Since sport sciences students take part in the roles of managers, leaders or employees in their future careers, their perceptions of these concepts are important.

An organisation can be defined as a group of individuals who have come together to achieve certain goals and are formed by their efforts towards common goals in mutual cooperation and coordination (Aytaç, 2004). Organisations arise from the need of individuals to cooperate, and individuals cooperate to achieve goals that exceed their individual powers. The realisation of a goal that requires joint labour makes it compulsory for the power and actions of more than one person to unite and integrate, and it is now understood that there is no social life without cooperation (Ayhan & Gürbüz, 2014). Power distance is defined as the level of acceptance by individuals of the unequal distribution of power in the established institutions of a society (Hofstede, 1980). In another definition, power distance is defined as "*the level at which people believe and accept that power and status are distributed unequally*" (Hofstede, 1991). Power distance plays a critical role, especially in terms of how managers use their authority and how they shape the relationship dynamics between them and employees. In organisations with high power distance, managers have more say than employees do and can act unilaterally in decision-making processes. This may reduce employees' willingness to provide feedback or share ideas, which may lead to problems such as organisational silence (Atmaca, 2021). On the other hand, in organisations with low power distance, managers value the opinions of their employees more and involve them in decision-making processes (Yorulmaz, 2021). This approach both increases employee motivation and enables faster and more effective resolution of internal problems in sport enterprises. As

a result, effective management of power distance in sport organisations plays a critical role in terms of increasing the competitiveness of the business, providing innovation and strengthening employee loyalty.

The mushroom management concept is a management approach inspired by the "mushroom" metaphor, which has recently begun to take place in the literature and is left in the dark and yields efficiency in a short time.

When mushrooms are fertilised and left in a dark environment, the desired yield can be obtained. They are produced in natural or artificial shelters in closed areas where climatic conditions are suitable. The color of mushrooms that grow in light environments can be gray, and the mushrooms that are desired to have white and bright colors should grow in a dark environment. In addition, the fact that these mushrooms do not have a strong root system indicates that their sensitivity is high (Kalfaoğlu, 2021).

Mushroom management is a form of management in which the purpose of the work is not known, management is not questioned, and higher performance is expected from employees with more limited information sharing by expecting them to develop by fulfilling only the requirements of cultivation in a dark and humid environment without light, as is done in the cultivation of mushrooms (Kılıç, 2015).

Just as mushrooms are not interfered with after the necessary physical and environmental conditions are provided, the manager expects only performance and results from the employees after informing them as much as they need. The manager thinks that employees will be happier and more productive when they are uninformed. In addition, the sensitivity of the root system of mushrooms is similar to the fact that employees feel that they are temporary in the organisation, and in this context, their level of identification with and commitment to the organisation is low (Kılıç & Olgun, 2017).

The strong personal characteristics of athletes (high ego, desire for individual success) may create resistance against mushroom management practices. Therefore, for mushroom management to be successful, a management approach that is appropriate for athletes' personal characteristics should be developed. For example, athletes who focus on individual achievement should be given more responsibility and encouraged to take on leadership roles. In this way, athletes can feel important and improve their performance despite information limitations.

The interdisciplinary structure of sport sciences generally draws attention, and it is an educational field that supports both the physical and mental development of individuals. However, within this education process, teachers' perceptions of organisational structure and management styles provide important clues about their future professional lives. In particular, how teachers with different demographic characteristics perceive these concepts provides an idea of how they can be leaders or employees in the future.

In this study, physical education teachers' perceptions of organisational power distance and mushroom management are examined in terms of demographic characteristics such as gender, age and school type. In this context, whether teachers' perceptions of these two basic concepts differ according to demographic factors and the

potential consequences of these perceptions will be explored. The aim of this study is to increase physical education teachers' awareness of organisational structure and management approaches and to enable the training of more conscious leaders and employees in the future.

2. Material and Methods

In this section, information about the research model, study group, data collection tools, data analysis and research ethics is presented.

2.1 Research Model
A general survey model, a quantitative research method, was used in this study. In the general survey model, in a population consisting of more than one element, a survey is conducted on the whole population or a group of samples or samples to be taken from it to make a general judgement about the population (Karasar, 2011). The study was conducted in accordance with the "Directive on Scientific Research and Publication Ethics of Higher Education Institutions".

2.2 Universe and Sample
The population of the study consists of physical education teachers working in public and private schools in Istanbul from 2023 to 2024. Since the population consists of large masses in the research area, sampling was chosen. Accordingly, teachers selected via the convenience sampling method were included in the study. The sample size of the study was calculated using the relevant formula at the 95% confidence level, and 625 PE teachers were included.

2.3 Data Collection Tools
The questionnaire method was used as a data collection tool in this research. The questionnaire used in the research consists of three parts. In the first part, there are questions to determine demographic information, and in the second part, the organisational "power distance scale" developed by Yorulmaz *et al.* (2018) was used. The scale consists of four dimensions: acceptance of power, instrumental use of power, legitimisation of power and acquiescence to power. The Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was calculated as 0.79 for power acceptance, 0.77 for instrumental use of power, 0.74 for legitimising power and 0.80 for acquiescence to power (Yorulmaz *et al.*, 2018). In the third part of the study, the "Mushroom Management Scale" developed by Birincioğlu and Tekin (2018), consisting of 19 items and four subdimensions (adequate information sharing, concern about loss of power, inadequate communication, lack of participatory management), was used. As the scores related to the scale increase, the perception of mushroom management increases. The overall reliability (α) coefficient for the scale was 0.90: 0.89 for the subdimension of inadequate information sharing and 0.87 for the subdimension of concern about loss of power, 0.81

for the subdimension of inadequate communication, and 0.83 for the subdimension of lack of professional management (Birincioğlu & Tekin, 2018).

2.4 Analysing the Data

The data obtained were analysed via the SPSS 25.00 statistical package program. In this study, demographic factors were subjected to frequency analysis. First, to determine which tests will be applied to the data obtained, the normality of the distribution of the variables was examined via the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test. Independent group t-tests and one-way variance analysis were used to analyse the results.

3. Findings

Within the scope of the findings, first, the demographic distribution of the teachers participating in the study was examined, and then the demographic characteristics of the participants' perceptions of organisational power distance and mushroom management were analysed.

The distributions of the data obtained from the demographic variables of the teachers participating in the study in terms of gender, age and department of education are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic findings related to the teachers who participated in the study

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Woman	238	37,9
Male	387	62,1
Age		
22-25	158	25,4
26-29	211	33,7
30 and above	256	25,4
Section		
Public	355	27,8
Special	270	18,3
Total	625	100

In terms of demographic characteristics, 238 of the teachers who participated in the study were female, and 387 were male. While 158 of the teachers who completed the questionnaire were in the 22–25 years age range, 211 of them were in the 26–29 years age range. A total of 256 teachers were in the age range of 30 years and above. Considering the type of school where the teachers work, 355 physical education teachers work in public schools, whereas 270 teachers work in private schools.

Table 2: The t test results according to the gender
variable of the teachers participating in the study

		Gender	n	X̄	Ss	t	p
Organisational Power Distance Scale	Accepting Power	Woman	238	3,43	,446	-2,245	**,003***
		Male	387	2,51	,489		
	Instrumental Use of Power	Woman	238	3,15	,983	-,572	,568
		Male	387	3,61	1,017		
	Legitimising Power	Woman	238	3,56	,874	-,216	,829
		Male	387	3,31	,814		
	Power Acquiescence	Woman	238	2,71	1,072	-,065	,948
		Male	387	2,94	1,066		

*: p<0,05

When Table 2 was examined, no statistically significant difference was found between the mean scores of the participants' instrumental use of power, legitimisation of power and acquiescence to power subdimensions and the gender variable (p>0.05). There was a statistically significant difference in the subdimension of accepting power according to sex. Notably, the mean scores of the male teachers were higher than those of the female students.

Table 3: One-way analysis of variance results according
to the gender variable of the teachers participating in the study

		Gender	n	X̄	Ss	t	p
Mushroom Management Scale	Inadequate Information Sharing	Woman	238	3,08	,416	2,664	**,008***
		Male	387	3,92	,438		
	Concern about Loss of Power	Woman	238	3,25	,588	,187	,305
		Male	387	3,08	,505		
	Inadequate Communication	Woman	238	2,12	,711	2,592	**,001***
		Male	387	3,67	,654		
	Lack of Participatory Management	Woman	238	3,30	,572	,866	,387
		Male	387	3,53	,547		

*: p<0,05

When Table 3 was analysed, no statistically significant difference was found between the mean scores of the subdimensions of teachers' concern about loss of power and lack of participatory management and the gender variable (p>0.05). There was a statistically significant difference in the subdimensions of inadequate information sharing and inadequate communication according to gender.

Table 4: One-way analysis of variance results according
to the age of the teachers participating in the study

		Age	n	X̄	Ss	t	p
Organisational Power Distance Scale	Accepting Power	22-25[1]	158	2,62	,571	,424	,655
		26-29[2]	211	2,65	,577		
		30 and above[3]	256	2,71	,644		
	Instrumental Use of Power	22-25[1]	158	3,38	,963	2,744	,065
		26-29[2]	211	3,35	1,06		
		30 and above[3]	256	3,85	,936		
	Legitimising Power	22-25[1]	158	2,26	,947	,173	,841
		26-29[2]	211	2,29	,939		
		30 and above[3]	256	2,32	1,06		
	Power Acquiescence	22-25[1]	158	2,30	,994	2,069	,127
		26-29[2]	211	2,29	,944		
		30 and above[3]	256	2,12	,886		

*: p<0,05

When Table 4 is examined, no statistical difference was found in the scores of the subdimensions of the organisational power distance scale according to the age variable of the teachers participating in the study (p>0.05).

Table 5: One-way analysis of variance ANOVA test results according
to the age variable of the teachers participating in the study

		Yaş	n	X̄	Ss	f	p	tukey
Mushroom Management Scale	Inadequate Information Sharing	22-25[1]	158	2,71	,931	2,105	,135	
		26-29[2]	211	2,53	,886			
		30 ve üstü[3]	256	2,38	,784			
	Concern About Loss of Power	22-25[1]	158	2,30	,914	2,069	,127	
		26-29[2]	211	2,19	,924			
		30 ve üstü[3]	256	2,12	,786			
	Inadequate Communication	22-25[1]	158	3,82	,477	2,992	,030*	3>1
		26-29[2]	211	2,93	,446			
		30 ve üstü[3]	256	2,24	,683			
	Lack of Participatory Management	22-25[1]	158	2,60	,583	,592	,190	
		26-29[2]	211	2,66	,551			
		30 ve üstü[3]	256	2,64	,604			

*: p<0,05

When Table 5 was analysed, no statistically significant difference was found between the mean scores of the subdimensions of inadequate information sharing, concern about loss of power and lack of participatory management and the gender variable (p>0.05). There was a statistically significant difference in the subdimension of inadequate communication according to the age variable.

For the inadequate communication subdimension of the mushroom management scale, the mean scores of teachers aged 30 years and over were significantly higher than

those of teachers aged 22-25 years. We can say that older teachers have a mushroom management perception.

Table 6: One-way analysis of variance results according
to the type of teacher participating in the study

		School type	n	X̄	Ss	t	p
Organisational Power Distance Scale	Accepting Power	Public	355	2,48	,807	1,832	,037
		Special	270	2,39	,925		
	Instrumental Use of Power	Public	355	2,22	,925	1,939	,122
		Special	270	2,21	,883		
	Legitimising Power	Public	355	2,87	,977	2,398	,000*
		Special	270	3,73	,924		
	Power Acquiescence	Public	355	2,40	,868	2,832	**,004***
		Special	270	3,26	,943		

*: p<0,05

When Table 6 was analysed, no statistically significant difference was found between the mean scores of the participants' instrumental use of power and acceptance of power subdimensions and school types (p>0.05). There was a statistically significant difference in the subdimensions of legitimising power and consenting to power according to school type.

Table 7: One-way analysis of variance results according
to the type of teacher participating in the study

		School type	n	X̄	Ss	t	p
Mushroom Management Scale	Inadequate Information Sharing	Public	355	2,83	,747	,295	,829
		Special	270	2,54	,871		
	Concern about Loss of Power	Public	355	2,43	,836	,943	419
		Special	270	2,32	,872		
	Inadequate Communication	Public	355	2,54	,918	1,076	,358
		Special	270	2,11	,938		
	Lack of Participatory Management	Public	355	3,37	,999	,020	996
		Special	270	3,41	1,01		

*: p<0,05

When Table 7 was analysed, no significant difference was found in the subdimensions of the Mushroom management scale according to the type of teacher participating in the study (p>0.05).

4. Results and Discussion

Many studies have focused on the organisational power distance and mushroom management perceptions of physical education teachers.

According to the findings obtained, there was no significant difference in favour of male teachers in the scores of the subdimension of acceptance of power from the

subdimensions of organisational power distance according to the gender variable of the teachers participating in the study (p> .05). Zıblım (2020) and Yıldırım and Deniz (2014) reported that perceived organisational power distance did not significantly differ with respect to gender. Özkan (2014) and Uslu (2013) revealed that men's perceptions of power distance are greater than those of women; however, according to Deniz's (2013) study, the power distance perceived by teachers at school does not significantly differ according to gender. Çavdar (2021) found that gender was not an effective variable in teachers' perceptions of organisational power distance in his study titled Investigation of teachers' perceptions of organisational power distance. These studies partially overlap with our research.

According to the results of the research, teachers' perceptions of organisational power distance did not differ statistically with respect to the age variable. Ersoy (2019) and Akyol (2009) reached the same conclusion. The differences according to the age variable are thought to be due to different factors, not the age of the teacher's status and position in school.

Teachers' perceptions of power distance significantly differ at the level of legitimising power and acquiescing to power according to the school type variable. Accordingly, teachers working in private schools show a greater level of power acceptance behaviour than those working in public schools. According to Çiçek Sağlam and Göl Dede's (2020) study, teachers working in private schools exhibit a high level of power acceptance behaviour. This study coincides with our research.

The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant difference in the dimensions of inadequate information sharing and inadequate communication, which are subdimensions of the mushroom management scale. In a study conducted by Osmanoğlu and Üzüm (2020) in sports organisations, a statistically significant difference was found in favour of female participants in the subdimensions of lack of participatory management from the subdimensions of gender and mushroom management. In Demir's (2022) study, it was concluded that there was a significant difference in the mushroom management perceptions of the participants according to their gender and that the mushroom management perceptions of male employees were greater than those of female employees. These results coincide with our research. In the study conducted by Dinç and Avanoğlu (2021), no significant difference was found between the gender variable and the mushroom management subdimensions. In Erkutlu's (2023) study, it was concluded that perceptions of mushroom management do not significantly differ according to gender.

According to the findings, there was a statistically significant difference in the subdimension of inadequate communication according to age. This difference was found to be between teachers aged 30 and over and teachers aged 22--25 in the subdimension of inadequate communication. These findings indicate that older teachers have perceptions of mushroom management.

In the study of Alakaşlı *et al.* (2022), while there was no difference in the subdimensions of inadequate information sharing, inadequate communication and lack

of participatory management according to the "age" variable, there was a difference in the subdimension of concern about loss of power in favour of teachers aged 41 and over. Dinç and Avanoğlu (2021) reported that there was no significant difference between the subdimensions of mushroom management according to age. When Gündüz's (2023) study was examined, it was found that the mushroom management perceptions of participants aged 40 and over were greater than those of participants aged 20--29 years. When Demir's (2022) study was examined, it was found that the perception of mushroom management differed significantly according to the age of the participants; it was determined that the perception of mushroom management by the number of individuals aged 45 years and over was high. The results indicate that mushroom management perceptions increase with increasing age.

There was no significant difference between mushroom management and school-type variables. Kılıç and Poyraz (2021) reported that the perceptions of mushroom management among employees working in public and private institutions are not different in the context of the literature and that the perceptions of mushroom management among employees working in public institutions are greater than those among employees working in private institutions.

The reasons why older physical education teachers have higher levels of mushroom management may be related to the past management approaches they have been exposed to during their professional lives. The fact that they worked with more hierarchical and closed management models at the beginning of their careers may lead them to be more familiar with and tolerant of such a management model. Moreover, their tendency to resist change may make adapting to modern and more transparent management styles difficult. These teachers may accept a more limited and hierarchical attitude of managers in sharing information as a natural process. Accepting power distance and normalising limited access to information may be another reason for this situation. A lower predisposition to technology and new communication tools may reinforce the tendency to expect more information from managers. The combination of these factors may cause older teachers to have higher levels of mushroom management. The findings of the study revealed that physical education teachers' perceptions of organisational power distance and mushroom management differed according to demographic characteristics. The fact that male teachers have greater perceptions of organisational power distance than female teachers may result from different management expectations and perceptions based on gender roles. In addition, the higher scores of older teachers in the dimension of inadequate communication can be explained by the fact that this age group is more prone to traditional management styles and more exposed to communication deficiencies. The greater power distance perception of teachers working in private schools may be because a more centralised and authoritarian management approach is dominant in these institutions. On the other hand, teachers working in public schools have a lower perception of power distance because they have more say through trade unions and mechanisms for claiming rights.

5. Recommendations

To reduce the differences in teachers' perceptions of organisational power distance, awareness programmes focused on gender equality should be organised. Teachers should be encouraged to participate more in management processes.

To improve older teachers' perceptions of cork management and poor communication, more transparent and inclusive communication strategies should be adopted, and more information should flow to these teachers while benefiting from their experience. The high-power distance perception of teachers working in private schools shows that administrators in these schools should adopt a more participatory and democratic management approach. An open communication and cooperation environment should be created between the administration and teachers.

The fact that teachers in public schools participate more strongly shows that the organisational structure is more democratic. To maintain and expand this positive structure, other educational institutions should involve teachers in management processes through trade unions and rights-seeking mechanisms.

Conflict of Interest Statement
There are no conflicts of interest for the contributing author.

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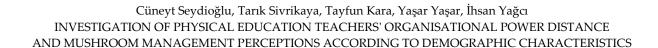ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3607-8585

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