



THE EXAMINATION OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE IN TERMS OF DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine teachers' perceptions of organizational justice based on various demographic variables. Organizational justice, a crucial factor in ensuring fair and effective institutional functioning, directly influences teachers' job satisfaction, commitment, and motivation. The research was conducted with 316 volunteer teachers working in public schools in Uşak, Turkey. Data were collected through the Organizational Justice Scale and a Personal Information Form developed by the researchers. The findings revealed that teachers generally perceived a moderate level of organizational justice. Significant differences were found based on gender and professional seniority, with male and more experienced teachers reporting higher perceptions of justice. However, no statistically significant differences were identified based on the number of teachers at the school or the length of service at the current school. These results suggest that teachers' justice perceptions are shaped by both individual and contextual factors. The study highlights the importance of inclusive, transparent, and equitable administrative practices in fostering a just organizational climate in educational settings.

Keywords: school, justice, organizational justice, teachers, demographic variables

1. Introduction

Schools are not only structures where information is transmitted, but also social organizations where various roles and relationships are carried out together. In the functioning of these organizations, the experiences and perceptions of teachers towards

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their institutions hold a significant place. One of these perceptions, organizational justice, concerns the extent to which decisions, practices, and relationships in the school environment are considered fair. Teachers' perceptions of justice draw attention as a factor that may affect their daily professional lives.

The establishment of justice within organizations is considered a crucial factor in terms of employees' motivation, productivity, and levels of organizational commitment. Particularly in structures such as educational institutions, where human interaction is intense, teachers' perceptions of justice in their schools may influence not only their individual attitudes but also the institutional functioning. According to Robbins and Judge (2013), organizational justice is addressed in three fundamental dimensions: distributive, procedural, and interactional justice. Distributive justice focuses on the fair allocation of organizational resources; procedural justice concerns the processes through which this distribution occurs; and interactional justice emphasizes interpersonal attitudes and behaviors during these processes. In this context, how processes are carried out within the organization and how these processes are reflected to employees may be decisive in shaping perceptions of justice (Robbins & Judge, 2013; Uğurlu & Kaplan, 2023).

The establishment of a just structure within an organization can enhance employees' commitment to the organization. The presence of a sense of justice is particularly important for employees' job satisfaction and the strengthening of their sense of belonging to the institution (Selvitopu & Şahin, 2013). While a just organizational environment can reinforce individuals' sense of trust, perceptions of injustice may lead to negative reflections in employees' attitudes and behaviors. This situation should be carefully addressed, as it can result in consequences not only at the individual level but also throughout the organization (Selvitopu & Şahin, 2013; Özgen Öney & Gül, 2025).

Employees' perceptions of the fairness of practices implemented within the organization form the foundation of the concept of organizational justice. According to İşcan and Sayın (2010), this perception can influence individuals' job satisfaction, commitment, and overall well-being. Factors such as the fair distribution of resources, the right to participate in decision-making processes, and respect in interpersonal communication play a role in shaping individuals' perceptions of justice. Therefore, adhering to the principle of justice in organizational practices can yield results beneficial both for employees and the institution (İşcan & Sayın, 2010; Ardahan, 2010).

Employees' perceptions of justice depend not only on concrete practices but also on how these practices are justified. According to Greenberg and Baron (2000), if managers are unable to ensure equality when allocating resources or assigning tasks, they should clearly and understandably explain the rationale behind their choices to employees. Additionally, avoiding discrimination between individuals in equal positions and presenting symbolic values in a balanced manner can facilitate the establishment of organizational justice. Such approaches can contribute to the development of a perception of a fair environment among employees.

It is possible for employees to develop a perception of injustice when comparing themselves to other individuals within the organization. According to Cihangiroğlu and Yılmaz (2010), such perceptions can negatively affect employees' attitudes and behaviors, sometimes leading to direct reactions towards the organization. Behaviors such as tardiness, sabotaging work, or producing faulty outputs may be manifestations of a distortion in the perception of justice. Therefore, a low perceived level of justice can lead to significant problems not only at the individual level but also at the organizational level (Cihangiroğlu & Yılmaz, 2010).

The establishment of organizational justice allows individuals to feel valued, secure, and motivated. According to Dursun and Bilgivar (2024), prioritizing transparency and respect in decision-making processes contributes to the creation of a positive organizational climate. This climate not only prevents conflicts and negativity but can also enhance employee satisfaction and organizational performance. In such an environment, individuals' job satisfaction may increase.

The concept of justice is shaped by how employees perceive organizational processes. In particular, when procedures and communication styles are perceived as fair, they can pave the way for individuals to develop more positive attitudes in their relationships with the organization (Ardahan, 2010). In this context, justice, along with concepts such as job satisfaction and commitment, can be critical determinants of organizational success.

Educational institutions are among the structures where the effects of organizational justice can be most clearly observed. According to Arı *et al.* (2023), teachers express that justice plays a vital role in educational institutions. This role manifests itself in collaboration processes and interpersonal relationships. Teachers' perceptions of justice can influence not only their individual attitudes but also the quality of educational processes. Therefore, the impact of justice on the functioning of educational institutions should not be overlooked (Arı *et al.*, 2023; Aydoğdu, 2025).

The perception of unjust practices in educational environments can lead teachers to develop negative attitudes. This situation may result in the deterioration of the school climate and a decline in the quality of education (Demir & İnan, 2025). Furthermore, teachers' participation in decision-making processes, access to resources, and their assessments of equal opportunities can directly affect the success of educational processes. How teachers working in educational institutions perceive such processes may be decisive in whether the organizational functioning can be maintained effectively (Arı *et al.*, 2023).

Organizational justice also encompasses employees' assessments of the fairness of decisions made regarding issues such as salary, rewards, penalties, and promotions. Such evaluations form the foundation of individuals' perceptions of justice. This perception can be reflected not only in employees' attitudes but also in their behaviors. Therefore, adopting a just management approach may be crucial for the sustainability of organizations (Cihangiroğlu & Yılmaz, 2010; İçerli, 2010).

In conclusion, the concept of justice emerges as a critical factor in the success of educational institutions, employee satisfaction, and institutional development. In particular, teachers' perceptions of organizational justice can affect the effectiveness of both pedagogical and managerial processes in the school environment. Therefore, determining the level of organizational justice in schools and examining it in relation to various variables can yield meaningful results (Greenberg & Baron, 2000; Özgen Öney & Gül, 2025; Dursun & Bilgivar, 2024).

The perceptions of teachers working in educational institutions regarding the schools they work in are among the key determinants that shape their professional experiences and attitudes toward their schools. The concept of organizational justice, which is embedded within these perceptions, stands out as a fundamental concept that reflects how teachers view institutional practices and managerial processes. A school environment where justice is perceived can directly or indirectly influence teachers' attitudes and behaviors. However, individuals' perceptions of justice can vary depending on various personal and environmental factors. Therefore, examining teachers' perceptions of organizational justice in terms of demographic variables has been considered an approach that can provide significant contributions to the field. In this context, the main objective of the study is to determine the level of organizational justice in schools from the perspective of teachers and to examine it based on various variables.

In line with this aim, the following sub-problems were addressed:

- 1) What is the level of teachers' perceptions of organizational justice in their schools?
- 2) Do teachers' perceptions of organizational justice in their schools vary according to gender, number of teachers, seniority, and years of service in the school?

2. Methods

2.1 Research Model

This study is a quantitative research aimed at examining teachers' perceptions of organizational justice and is designed using a descriptive and relational survey model. The descriptive survey model aims to present the current situation as it is (Karasar, 2022), while the relational survey model allows for the analysis of differences and relationships between variables (Büyüköztürk *et al.*, 2020). In the study, in addition to determining the level of teachers' perceptions of organizational justice, it was also investigated whether these perceptions differ according to demographic and organizational variables such as gender, number of teachers, seniority, and years of service at the school. In this context, the study adopted a cross-sectional approach as the data were collected and analyzed within a specific time frame (Creswell, 2014).

2.2 Population/Sample

According to Table 1, the study sample consisted of 316 volunteer teachers working in public primary, secondary, and high schools in Uşak and its districts. Of these participants, 62 % (n = 196) were female and 38 % (n = 120) were male; 23.4 % (n = 46)

were employed at schools with 1–20 teachers, whereas 76.6 % (n = 242) worked at schools with 21 or more teachers. In terms of professional seniority, 58.2 % (n = 184) had between 1 and 20 years of experience, and 41.8 % (n = 132) had 21 or more years. Regarding length of service at their current school, 26.6 % (n = 84) had served for 1–3 years, 22.8 % (n = 72) for 4–6 years, 14.9 % (n = 47) for 7–9 years, and 35.8 % (n = 113) for 10 years or longer.

Table 1: Demographic Information of the Participants

Variables	Group	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	196	62.0
	Male	120	38.0
Number of Teachers	1-20	74	23.4
	21 or More	242	76.6
Seniority	1-20 Years	184	13.6
	21 Years or More	132	41.8
Years of Service at School	1-3	84	26.6
	4-6	72	22.8
	7-9	47	14.9
	10+	113	35.8
Total		316	100

2.3 Data Collection Instrument

For data collection, the researchers employed a researcher-designed Personal Information Form and the Organizational Justice Scale. The Personal Information Form solicited participants' gender, educational background, number of teachers at their school, total professional seniority, school level (primary, middle, or high), and length of service at their current school. The Organizational Justice Scale was developed by Hoy and Tarter (2004) and adapted into Turkish by Taşdan and Yılmaz (2008). The scale is unidimensional and comprises 10 items. Responses are provided on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly disagree") to 5 ("Strongly agree"). Confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated acceptable fit for the study sample ($\chi^2/df < 5$; RMSEA < 0.08; SRMR < 0.08; CFI > 0.90; TLI > 0.90; IFI > 0.90) (Karagöz, 2016).

2.4 Data Analysis

Prior to analyzing the data, skewness and kurtosis tests were conducted to assess the normality of the distributions. In the literature, skewness and kurtosis coefficients between –2 and +2 are indicative of a normal distribution (Karagöz, 2016). The results showed that the Organizational Justice Scale's skewness and kurtosis values fell within these thresholds, confirming normality. Teachers' perceptions of organizational justice were then described using arithmetic means and standard deviations. To examine whether these perceptions differed significantly by gender, number of teachers at the school, and overall seniority, independent-samples t-tests were performed. Differences across categories of length of service at the current school were tested using one-way ANOVA. In dimensions where ANOVA revealed significant effects—and homogeneity

of variances was confirmed – a Tukey's HSD post hoc test was applied to identify which groups differed. A significance level of $\alpha = .05$ was used for all analyses.

3. Findings

To determine teachers' perceptions of their schools' organizational justice, arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated. The descriptive statistics for teachers' views on their schools' organizational justice levels are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' Perceptions of Organizational Justice Levels

Variable	Mean (\bar{X})	Perception Level	Standar Daviation (SD)
Organizational Justice	3.73	Moderate	.75

As shown in Table 2, the descriptive statistics for teachers' perceptions of organizational justice yielded a mean of 3.73 (SD =.75), indicating a moderate level of perceived organizational justice.

Table 3: t-Test Results for Comparing Teachers' Organizational Justice Perceptions by Gender

Variable	Gender	n	Mean(\bar{X})	SD	t	df	p
Organizational Justice	Female	196	3.65	.77	12.347	314	.020
	Male	120	3.85	.69			

As shown in Table 3, an independent-samples t-test revealed a statistically significant difference in organizational justice perceptions between female (\bar{X} = 3.65, SD = 0.77) and male teachers (\bar{X} = 3.85, SD = 0.69), $t(314) = 12.347$, $p = .020$. Male teachers reported significantly higher perceptions of organizational justice than female teachers.

Table 4: Independent-Samples t-Test Results for Teachers' Organizational Justice Perceptions by School Faculty Size

Variable	Teacher Number Group	n	Mean(\bar{X})	SD	t	df	p
Organizational Justice	1-20 Teacher	74	3.60	.77	-1.716	314	.087
	21+ Teacher	242	3.77	.74			

As shown in Table 4, teachers at schools with 21 or more faculty members (\bar{X} = 3.77, SD = 0.74) reported slightly higher perceptions of organizational justice than those at schools with 1–20 teachers (\bar{X} = 3.60, SD = 0.77). However, this difference did not reach statistical significance, $t(314) = -1.716$, $p = .087$.

Table 5: Independent-Samples t-Test Results for Comparing Teachers' Organizational Justice Perceptions by Seniority

Variable	Seniority Group	n	Mean(\bar{X})	SD	t	df	p
Organizational Justice	1-20 Years	184	3.63	.77	-2.826	314	.005
	21 Years +	132	3.77	.69			

As shown in Table 5, teachers with 21 or more years of professional experience (\bar{X} = 3.77, SD = 0.69) reported significantly higher perceptions of organizational justice than those with 1–20 years of experience (\bar{X} = 3.63, SD = 0.77), $t(314) = -2.826$, $p = .005$.

Table 6: ANOVA Results for Teachers' Organizational Justice Perceptions by Length of Service at Their Current School

Variance	Length of Service	n	Mean(\bar{X})	SD	df	F	p	Significant Difference
Organizational Justice	1-3 Yıl	84	3.59	.86	3:312	2.153	0.93	-
	4-6 Yıl	72	3.66	.69				
	7-9 Yıl	47	3.87	.64				
	10 Yıl +	113	3.81	.74				

As shown in Table 6, the ANOVA results indicate that there was no statistically significant difference in teachers' perceptions of organizational justice based on length of service at their current school, $F(3, 312) = 2.153$, $p = .093$.

4. Results and Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that teachers' perceptions of organizational justice are at a high level. This result is consistent with the findings of researchers such as Demir and İnan (2025), Güneş and Özen (2025), Polat and Celep (2008), Ünal (2003), Atalay (2005), and Özer *et al.* (2025). Moreover, studies by Çekiç (2018), Demirdağ (2017), and Toytok and Açıkgöz (2013) also show that teachers encounter fair practices in their schools. However, in some investigations—for example, those by Demircan (2003) and Yurdakoş (2018)—perceptions of justice were found to be at a moderate level; this suggests that organizational justice perceptions may be influenced by contextual factors. A high level of perceived justice indicates that administrative decisions in schools are made in a transparent, balanced, and participatory manner, and that teachers trust this process. It can be argued that such perceptions have a positive effect on teachers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and motivation, thereby contributing to the quality of the educational environment. From a scholarly perspective, these findings support the continued applicability of organizational justice theory within the context of educational institutions and reinforce the consistency of empirical evidence in this domain.

The findings of this study reveal that teachers' perceptions of organizational justice differ significantly by gender, with male teachers reporting higher levels of perceived justice than their female counterparts. This result parallels the studies of Güneş and Özen (2025), Şamdan and Başkan (2019), and Özer *et al.* (2025), and may suggest that male teachers adopt a more positive stance toward school practices or that female teachers evaluate justice mechanisms more critically. However, research by Öney and Gül (2025), DüNDAR and Tabancalı (2012), Lambert *et al.* (2007), and Baş and Şentürk (2011) indicates that gender does not exert an influence on organizational justice perceptions. These conflicting findings may stem from factors such as organizational context, cultural framework, sample characteristics, or the specific dimensions of justice that are emphasized. From an organizational perspective, lower perceived justice among female teachers could adversely affect variables such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance; thus, school administrators are encouraged to pursue decision-making processes that are more inclusive, fair, and transparent. Scientifically, this finding contributes to opening new avenues of research into how organizational justice perceptions intersect with gender roles.

In this study, it was determined that teachers' perceptions of organizational justice did not differ significantly according to the number of teachers at their schools. This finding is consistent with some studies (Yılmaz, 2010; Uğurlu, 2009), while it contradicts others. For example, Polat (2007) and Polat and Celep (2008) reported that perceptions of justice decrease as the number of teachers increases, whereas Alkış and Güngörmez (2015) found higher perceptions in schools with 10–20 teachers. These discrepancies suggest that organizational justice is shaped not only by quantitative factors but also by contextual elements such as school climate, administrative practices, and interpersonal relationships. In this regard, a large teaching staff may not directly undermine perceptions of justice; however, indirect effects—such as weakened communication or reduced access to administration—may negatively influence these perceptions. Therefore, school leaders should prioritize transparent, participatory, and consistent practices that support a sense of justice, irrespective of staff size. From a scholarly perspective, these results demonstrate that organizational justice is a multidimensional, context-sensitive phenomenon that cannot be explained by a single variable, and they underscore the need for more holistic models in future research.

The findings of this study indicate that teachers' perceptions of organizational justice vary significantly by professional seniority, with those holding 21 years or more of service reporting higher levels of perceived justice. This pattern may be explained by veteran teachers' greater adaptation to organizational processes, their more positive evaluations of administrative practices, and the organizational commitment that develops over time. Similar seniority-based differences have been reported in the literature (Polat and Celep, 2008; Cömert *et al.*, 2008), whereas other studies (Baş and Şentürk, 2011; Özer *et al.*, 2025) found no significant effect of seniority, and Yılmaz and Taşdan (2009) even suggested that less experienced teachers possess more favorable perceptions. These discrepancies may be attributable to contextual variables such as

sample composition, school type, regional differences, and organizational culture. From an organizational perspective, this result implies that school administrators should prioritize practices that support justice perceptions, especially for teachers with lower seniority. Scientifically, it demonstrates that organizational justice perceptions are not static but are shaped and reinforced through experience; therefore, future research should incorporate variables such as school climate, leadership attitudes, and professional satisfaction alongside seniority.

The findings of this study indicate that teachers' perceptions of organizational justice did not differ significantly according to their length of service at the school. This result aligns with the findings of Şamdan and Başkan (2019), suggesting that tenure does not exert a determinant effect on organizational justice perceptions. However, the literature also includes studies reporting a decrease in perceived justice as tenure increases (Polat, 2007; Polat & Celep, 2008; Güneş & Özen, 2025). In particular, teachers with 0–5 years of service exhibit higher justice perceptions compared to their more experienced counterparts (Balci, 2024; Tan, 2017; Girgin & Bayraktar, 2017). This pattern suggests that novice teachers possess more optimistic perceptions, whereas over time, they may develop a more critical view of institutional functioning. At the organizational level, the absence of significant variation in justice perceptions by tenure may indicate a degree of consistency in school administration practices. Nevertheless, the declines observed in earlier research underscore the necessity for school leaders to develop transparent and inclusive policies that support justice perceptions, taking into account the experiences of veteran teachers. From a scholarly perspective, these findings highlight that organizational justice should be considered not only in relation to demographic variables such as tenure but also within a broader context of structural and contextual factors.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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