Organisational silence and person-organisation fit: A study on classroom teachers [a]

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Abstract

Examining the relationship between classroom teachers' organisational silence and person-organisation fit levels is the main purpose of this study. In addition, organisational silence and person-organisation fit levels of classroom teachers were determined and examined whether they differ according to seniority and gender. The sample consisted of 330 classroom teachers working in state primary schools in Bağcılar district of Istanbul in the 2018-2019 academic year. Demographic Information Form, Organisational Silence Scale and Person-Organisation Fit Scale were used in the study. The results indicate that the organisational silence levels of classroom teachers were low and person–organisation fit levels were high, and there was no significant difference between organisational silence and person–organisation fit levels among classroom teachers according to gender. When seniority was examined, the findings indicated that there was no significant difference between person and organisation fit, but there was a significant difference between organisational silence levels of classroom teachers with 6-10 years, 16-20 years, 11-15 years and 16-20 years of seniority. On the other hand, a low negative correlation was found between person–organisation fit and organisational silence.

Keywords: Classroom teachers, organisational silence, person-organisation fit.

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1. Introduction

School is a social system and teacher is the one of the key components of this system (Bursalioglu, 2015). At schools, teachers react as a result of their psychological needs, and they are constructors of meaning too (Aydin, 2014). In addition, the relationships, school climate and the fit level between teacher and school are important for a teacher's success. In order to achieve a high level of success, it is important to explain problems clearly and to not receive negative feedback from managers (Ozdemir & Ugur, 2013), but organisational silence may cause the exhibition of negative attitudes. The fact that the organisational silence atmosphere is kept at a minimum level ensures that teachers do not refrain from producing ideas and are able to express their feelings and thoughts easily and increases their efficiency to improve their schools. On the other hand, person–organisation fit is another issue that may affect the teacher's success. In order to achieve the goals, person–organisation fit must be achieved. When the fit cannot be achieved, there could be some problems, such as being unhappy or leaving the work (Alparslan, Cicek & Soydemir, 2015). A high level of person–organisation has positive effects, such as less alienation, low identity problems, lack of feelings, helplessness and poorness, and the willingness to be active rather than being passive (Akbas, 2011).

At this point, it would be useful to explain the concepts of organisational silence and person–organisation fit. Firstly, organisational silence is a tendency to refrain from talking to individuals concerned with work-related issues, although they have the capacity to correct or regulate problems and have important behavioural, cognitive and emotional evaluations (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Organisational silence is a problem in which individuals deliberately do not talk about their opinions about various events, problems or issues in the organisation in order not to be considered as problematic, or to avoid possible reactions, or in line with their belief that their opinions and views will not result in change (Taskiran, 2011). In short, organisational silence is a collective phenomenon that retains information, opinions or concerns about various problems (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Secondly, person–organisation fit is the suitability of a person's expectations, desires, personal values or aims to the organisation's values, purposes and system (Kristof, 1996) or the compliance of organisational norms and values with the values of the individuals (Chatman, 1991). In other words, person–organisation fit indicates the harmony between the individual's purposes, values, personality and attitudes and the culture, values, purposes and norms in the organisation (Andrews, Baker & Hunt, 2011). It is clear that while explaining person–organisation fit researchers mention the classification of values, personalities and needs (Van Vianen, 2001).

The literature about organisational silence and person–organisation fit was examined and it was seen that organisational silence and person–organisation fit have been investigated within many different subjects. For example, organisational silence has been examined with various relational variables, such as executive attitudes (Vakola & Bouradas, 2005), mobbing (Gul & Ozcan, 2011), leadership styles (Erol & Koroglu, 2013), organisational climate (Wang & Hsieh, 2013), professional self-efficacy (Kahya, 2015), organisational culture (Yalcinsoy, Isildak & Bilen, 2017), job satisfaction (Demirtas & Nacar, 2018), organisational trust (Saeed & Karim, 2016; Timuroglu & Aliogullari, 2019), organisational citizenship (Tamjis & Raju, 2019) and organisational communication (Kilic & Saygili, 2019). In addition, the idea that organisational silence is the successor of organisational cynicism is put forward by the researchers. According to Dagyar and Kasalak (2018), high levels of organisational cynicism of the teachers and instructors in Turkey increase their organisational silence to an acceptable level. Dogan Kilic (2013) found that teachers working in the second level of schools (middle school) experience more organisational cynicism than the teachers working in the first level (primary school). Person–organisation fit is also investigated with various relational variables, such as individual–job fit, organisational attractiveness, intention to accept work and job offer decision (Carless, 2005), job

satisfaction and organisational commitment (Ng & Sarris, 2009; Yucel & Cetinkaya, 2016), job stress and productivity (Ulutas, 2011), organisational culture (Wei, 2013), work–family conflict (Scott, Zagenczyk, Ingram & Shoss, 2014), organisational innovation (Esitti & Erdem, 2017), emotional labour (Tanriverdi & Guliyeva, 2018) and work passion and job performance (Indriasari & Setyorini, 2018). The investigation of both organisational silence and person–organisation fit with many different subjects reveals that both have an effect on many factors and are affected by various others. When considered together with these multiple factors, it is possible that organisational silence and person–organisation fit may affect the schools in various ways and cause various issues which create the starting point of the problems discussed in the study.

Considering the above-mentioned explanations, this study aims to find out the relationship between organisational silence and person–organisation fit of classroom teachers. In accordance with this main purpose, this study aims to clarify the organisational silence and person–organisation fit of classroom teachers and whether their person–organisation fit and organisational silence thoughts separate significantly when examined with demographic variables (gender and seniority). This study also examines if there is a significant relationship between organisational silence and person–organisation fit levels of classroom teachers.

2. Methods

2.1 Research model

The correlational research design was used to find out the relationship between organisational silence and person–organisation fit of classroom teachers. The correlational research design not only indicates the degree of relationship but also explains to what degree the variables are correlated (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). So, it is appropriate to use the correlational research design for this study.

2.2 Population and sample of research

The study population consisted of 1512 classroom teachers working in state primary schools in Bağcılar district of Istanbul. 420 scale forms were distributed to classroom teachers working in 14 randomly selected primary schools among 36 primary schools in Bağcılar district of Istanbul, and 348 forms were turned back and 18 forms were removed from the study as they were filled out inaccurately and incorrectly. So, the analyses were run on the data obtained from 330 classroom teachers. 207 (62.7%) out of 330 classroom teachers participating in the study were female and 123 (37.3%) of them were male. Besides, 39 (11.8%) of them had been working as classroom teachers between 1 and 5 years, 92 (27.9%) between 6 and 10 years, 104 (31.5%) between 11 and 15 years and 44 (13.3%) between 16 and 20 years.

2.3 Data collection tools

'Organisational Silence Scale' developed by Dasci and Cemaloglu (2016) was used to determine the organisational silence levels of the classroom teachers in the sample of this study. Initially, this scale consisted of 5 sub-dimensions and 36 items, but in this study, it was used with 4 sub-dimensions and 30 items, like the study of Yenel (2016). The scale is a 5-point Likert style. The sub-dimensions of the scale are ''individual, administrative, organisational culture and colleagues''. The reliability coefficient of the scale (Cronbach's alpha [α]) is 0.95. In this study, Cronbach's α value of the scale was determined as 0.91. The Person–Organisation Fit Scale, which is used to determine person–organisation fit of the participants in this study, was designed by O'Reilly, Caldwell and Chatman (1991) with 54 items to measure the organisational and individual fit values. Cable and Judge (1997) simplified the scale, and Unal and Turgut (2013) adapted it to Turkish and the scale was reduced to 39 items. The scale was then

designed as a 6-point Likert type. The number of sub-dimensions in the scale is three: humanity, responsibility and innovation, and assertiveness. The sub-dimensions consist of 28 items. The other 11 items are used to measure the person–organisation fit in general. Unal and Turgut (2013) used Cronbach's α coefficient to find the reliability value of the person–organisation fit scale and reported it as 0.97; in this study, the Cronbach's α value of the person–organisation fit scale was also found to be 0.97. The data collected for this study were coded and analysed in SPSS 22.

3. Findings

The findings of the study are presented in the following sections.

3.1 Organisational silence levels of classroom teachers

Table 1. Organisational silence scale level of evaluation intervals

Level interval	Scale equivalent	Commentary
1.00 – 1.80	Totally disagree.	None
1.81 – 2.60	Disagree.	Little/Low
2.61 – 3.40	Agree to some extent.	Medium
3.41 – 4.20	Agree.	Much/High
4.21 – 5.00	Totally agree.	Full

Table 2. n, $\bar{X}$ and SD values of the organisational silence scale

	n	$\bar{X}$	SD
Individual	330	2.44	0.63
Administrational	330	2.43	0.67
Organisational culture	330	2.27	0.82
Colleagues	330	2.37	0.66
Organisational silence in general	330	2.37	0.57

The results of the Organisational Silence Scale are given in Table 2. The 'Individual' sub-dimension has the highest mean among the sub-dimensions of the Organisational Silence Scale ($\bar{x}$ = 2.44) and 'Organisational Culture' sub-dimension has the lowest mean among the sub-dimensions ($\bar{x}$ = 2.27) on the scale. The mean of the Organisational Silence Scale is $\bar{x}$ = 2.37. The mean value of the 'Administrational' sub-dimension is $\bar{x}$ = 2.43 and the mean value of the 'Colleagues' sub-dimension is $\bar{x}$ = 2.37 (Table 2). According to the level of evaluation intervals in Table 1, the organisational silence level of the classroom teachers was low for the overall Organisational Silence Scale and for all sub-dimensions.

3.2 Person-organisation fit levels of classroom teachers

Table 3. Person-organisation fit scale level evaluation intervals

Level interval	Scale equivalent	Commentary
0.00 – 0.83	None	None
0.84 – 1.67	Little	Too low
1.68 – 2.50	Some	Low
2.51 – 3.33	Quite	Medium
3.34 – 4.17	Much	High
4.18 - 5.00	Very much	Too high

Table 4. n, $\bar{X}$ and SD values of person-organisation fit scale

	n	$\bar{X}$	SD
Humanity	330	3.42	1.00
Responsibility and innovativeness	330	3.60	0.98
Assertiveness	330	3.49	1.11
Person-organisation fit in general	330	3.55	0.89

According to Table 4, the 'Responsibility and Innovation' sub-dimension is the dimension with the highest mean among the sub-dimensions ($\bar{x}$ = 3.60). The sub-dimension with the lowest mean is 'Humanity' ($\bar{x}$ = 3.42). The mean of the 'Assertiveness' sub-dimension is $\bar{x}$ = 3.49 and the overall mean of the scale is $\bar{x}$ = 3.55. It can be said that the person–organisation fit of classroom teachers is high according to the level of evaluation intervals in Table 3.

3.3 Organisational silence and person-organisation fit levels of classroom teachers based on gender

For examining person–organisation fit and organisational silence levels of classroom teachers based on the gender variable, t-test was used and no significant difference was found between the organisational silence and person–organisation fit levels of female and male classroom teachers (Tables 5 and 6).

Table 5. Independent group *t*-test results of organisational silence scale based on gender

Gender	n	$\bar{X}$	SD	t	p
Female	207	2.36	0.56	-0.243	0.808
Male	123	2.38	0.59		

Table 6. Independent group *t*-test results of person-organisation fit scale based on gender

Gender	n	$\bar{X}$	SD	t	p
Female	207	3.55	0.85	0.085	0.932
Male	123	3.54	0.96		

3.4 Organisational silence and Person-organisation fit levels of classroom teachers based on seniority

Descriptive statistics regarding the level of person-organisation fit of classroom teachers' seniority are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. n, $\bar{X}$ and SD values of person-organisation fit scale based on seniority

Seniority	n	$\bar{X}$	SD
1-5 years	39	3.60	0.77
6-10 years	92	3.68	0.98
11-15 years	104	3.51	0.90
16-20 years	44	3.34	0.78
21 years and more	51	3.53	0.91

The mean of person–organisation fit of classroom teachers with 1–5 years is $\bar{x}$ = 3.60, 6–10 years is $\bar{x}$ = 3.68, 11–15 years is $\bar{x}$ = 3.51, 16–20 years is $\bar{x}$ = 3.34 and 21 and more years is $\bar{x}$ = 3.53. The highest person–organisation fit belonged to the classroom teachers in the seniority group of 6–10 years and the lowest belonged to 16–20 years (Table 7).

When the results of analysis of variance (ANOVA) [F (5-324) = 1.177, p > 0.05] regarding Person–organisation fit scale based on seniority were examined, it was found that Person–organisation fit of classroom teachers did not differ according to seniority (Table 8).

Table 8. ANOVA results of person-organisation fit scale based on seniority

	Sum of squares	Df	Mean of squares	F	p	η²
Between groups	3.793	4	0.948	1.177	0.321	0.014
Within groups	261.867	325	0.806			
Total	265.661	329				

In Table 9, the mean of organisational silence of classroom teachers with 16–20 years of seniority is the highest ($\bar{x}$ = 2.61) and mean of organisational silence of classroom teachers with 1–5 years and 6–10 years of seniority is the lowest ($\bar{x}$ = 2.31).

Table 9. n, $\bar{X}$ and SD values of organisational silence scale based on seniority

Seniority	n	$\bar{X}$	SD
1-5 years	39	2.31	0.54
6-10 years	92	2.31	0.57
11-15 years	104	2.32	0.55
16-20 years	44	2.61	0.54
21 years and more	51	2.41	0.63

A statistically significant difference was observed between at least two seniority groups [F (5-324) = 2.497, p < 0.05]. The effect size (η^2 = 0.029) shows that this difference is low (Table 10).

Table 10. ANOVA results of organisational silence based on seniority

	Sum of squares	Df	Mean of squares	F	p	η²
Between groups	3.246	4	0.811	2.497	0.043	0.029
Within groups	104.614	325	0.25			
Total	108.857	329				

The results of Tukey's HSD test run to examine the differences between the groups are pointed out in Table 11.

Table 11. Tukey's HSD results of organisational silence based on seniority

Dependent variable	Seniority (I) (years)	Seniority (J) (years)	Mean difference (I-J)	p*
Organisational silence	1-5	6-10	-0.00040	1.00
	1-5	11-15	-0.00652	1.00
	1-5	16-20	-0.29408	0.133
	1-5	21 and more	-0.09819	0.928
	6-10	11-15	-0.00612	1.00
	6-10	16-20	-0.29368	0.042
	6-10	21 and more	-0.09779	0.863
	11-15	16-20	-0.28756	0.042
	11-15	21 and more	-0.09167	0.881
	16-20	21 and more	0.19589	0.454

In Table 11, a significant difference was found between the organisational silence levels of classroom teachers with 6–10 years of seniority and 16–20 years of seniority ($p < 0.05$). According to this, the organisational silence levels of teachers with 16–20 years of seniority were significantly higher than the 6–10 years of seniority group (I–J = −0.29368; $p < 0.05$). The findings indicated that there was a significant difference between organisational silence levels of teachers with 11–15 years of seniority and 16–20 years of seniority ($p < 0.05$). Also, organisational silence levels of teachers with 16–20 years of seniority were significantly higher than the levels of teachers with 11–15 years of seniority (I–J = − 0.28756; $p < 0.05$).

3.5 Relationship between organisational silence and person-organisation fit levels of classroom teachers

Pearson's correlation analysis was used to examine whether there was a significant relation between organisational silence and person-organisation fit levels of classroom teachers (Table 12).

Table 12. Pearson's analysis results of organisational silence and person-organisation fit scales

	n	p	r
Organisational silence	330	.00	-.257
Person-organisation fit	330		

With Pearson's correlation analysis (Table 12), a negative and low-level relationship between organisational silence and person–organisation fit was found (r = −0.257, p < 0.01). One of the variables increases while the other decreases. So, it can be interpreted as 'when organisational silence increases person–organisation fit decreases or when organisational silence decreases, person–organisation fit increases.'

4. Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

Determining the relationship between classroom teachers' organisational silence and person–organisation fit levels is the main purpose of this study. There are three limitations in this research. Firstly, the study is limited to Bagcilar district of Istanbul. Secondly, the findings are limited to the views of the classroom teachers working in the state primary schools in Bagcilar district of Istanbul in 2018–2019 school year. Thirdly, the data are limited to 'Organisational Silence Scale' and 'Person–Organisational Fit Scale'.

According to the findings, the organisational silence levels of classroom teachers were low. In the literature, Yenel (2016), Ozdemir and Orhan (2018) and Deviren (2019), among the researchers examining the organisational silence levels of classroom teachers, stated that classroom teachers had low organisational silence levels, which is consistent with this study. However, Sahin and Yalcin (2017) and Goven and Senturk (2019) found that their organisational silence level was medium and Uzman (2019) found it to be high. In other studies, conducted with teachers working in different educational levels, it was found that organisational silence was low (Demirtas & Kucuk, 2019; Demirtas & Nacar, 2018; Kalay, Ograk, Bal & Nisanci, 2014; Kiranli Gungor & Potuk, 2018; Yildirim & Carikci, 2017). Fatima, Salah-Ud-Din, Khan, Hassan & Hoti (2015), researchers working on organisational silence in various sectors, stated that employees had a high level of organisational silence; Turgut and Akbolat (2017) and Sun and Xia (2018) indicated a medium level of organisational silence.

There was no significant difference between male and female classroom teachers' organisational silence opinions. In Mocosoglu and Kaya's (2018) and Ozdemir, Orhan and Ozkayran's (2018) studies, no significant difference was found between classroom teachers' organisational silence levels according to gender. Saridede (2019), in his study conducted in an educational institution, found that teachers' organisational silence did not change according to gender and Morrison, Wheeler-Smith and Kamdar (2011) obtained a similar result for employees. Demirtas and Nacar (2018), on the other hand, stated

that there was a significant difference between the levels of female and male teachers in terms of organisational silence and the level of organisational silence of female teachers is significantly higher than male teachers.

When the organisational silence levels are analysed according to seniority, there is a significant difference between the 11–15 years of seniority group and the 16 years seniority group and seniority groups of 6–10 years and 16–20 years. It was found that the organisational silence levels of the classroom teachers in the seniority group of 16–20 years were significantly higher than those in the seniority group of 6–10 and 11–15 years. In their study, Sahin and Yalcin (2017) found that classroom teachers who have more seniority in the profession showed less organisational silence behavior than the other groups. In this study, it was observed that the organisational silence level of classroom teachers with seniority of 1–5 years and 6–10 years were lower than the other seniority groups, diversely.

In this study, the level of person–organisation fit of classroom teachers was high in all sub-dimensions and in the overall scale according to the levels of 'person–organisation fit scale'. Demirkasimoglu (2012) and Yilmaz (2018) found a high level of person–organisation fit of classroom teachers, which is consistent with this study.

With independent groups' t-test, there was no significant difference between male and female classroom teachers' person–organisation fit levels. Demirkasimoglu (2012) and Dogan Kılıç, Serin and Sarıboğa (2019) concluded that teachers' level of person–organisation fit does not indicate a significant difference according to gender in their studies, which is parallel to this study.

In the studies conducted by Tasdan (2010), Cetinkaya (2016) and Dogan Kilic, Serin and Sariboga (2019), it was determined that the levels of person–organisation fit did not change significantly according to seniority, which is consisted with the results of this study, while Demirkasimoglu (2012) indicated that teachers with 1–5 years of seniority exhibited lower levels of fit than teachers working for 11–15 years and 21 years and more, and also teachers with 6–10 years of seniority showed lower levels of fit than teachers working for 21 years and more. Erkutlu, Elden and Ozdemir (2018) found that academicians who have more than 10 years of seniority have higher person–organisation fit than other seniority groups in their research.

In this study, it was determined that there was a negative relationship between organisational silence and person–organisation fit levels of classroom teachers. In Koksal, Kara and Meydan's study (2018) with 278 participants in an educational institution, it was concluded that the increase in the level of person–organisation fit reduced organisational silence and similar to this study, a negative correlation was determined between organisational silence and person–organisation fit.

With all these research results, the suggestions are listed as follows. First, it is about universities. In universities, studies can be conducted to raise the person–organisation fit of teachers by identifying the factors that affect their fit negatively, and also studies may be carried out to eliminate these factors. Second, it is about orientation activities. Orientation activities can be organised to increase the person–organisation fit levels of the teachers who have recently joined to school. Third, it is about management styles. In order to minimise organisational silence levels of classroom teachers, participatory management approach can be adopted in schools. Teachers can play an active and crucial role, especially in the decision-making process. Fourth, it is about new lessons. In universities, new lessons, seminars or courses can be added to the curriculum of the department of educational sciences for improving prospective teachers to adapt to their job and teaching profession at the maximum level. Seminars can be organised for school administrators, teachers and other employees to provide information about the various problems that organisational silence can cause in schools. Fifth and last, it is about future researches. This study conducted with classroom teachers working in state schools can also be carried out in private schools. In addition, organisational silence and person–organisation fit

levels of private school teachers and teachers working in state schools can be compared. This study conducted in primary schools can be conducted in different education levels, such as secondary school, high school or university. In addition to quantitative research, qualitative research can also be used to investigate this issue.

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