



THE EFFECT OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE ON ORGANIZATIONAL SILENCE

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Abstract

This study was conducted to determine the effect of teachers' perceptions of organizational justice on organizational silence. A causal-comparative and correlational survey model was used in the research. The sample of the study consisted of 446 teachers working in İstanbul, selected through simple random sampling. The research data were collected using the "Organizational Justice Scale" and the "Organizational Silence Scale". Descriptive statistics, along with independent sample t-tests, correlation, and regression analyses, were employed to examine the collected data. As a result of the study, it was determined that teachers held moderate perceptions regarding organizational justice as well as organizational silence. The study revealed that teachers' perceptions of organizational justice differed according to gender and school type, while their perceptions of organizational silence differed according to subject branch. The findings indicated a significant negative correlation between organizational justice and organizational silence. Moreover, teachers' perceptions of justice within their institutions were found to be significant predictors of how they perceived organizational silence. This study underscores the decisive role of organizational justice in shaping teachers' silence behaviors. Implementing transparent, fair, and participatory practices in educational institutions can foster teachers' sense of value and empowerment, thereby enhancing organizational effectiveness and the overall quality of education. Such practices reduce silence while fostering communication, collaboration, and innovation among teachers.

Keywords: organizational justice, organizational silence, correlational survey model, teachers

Introduction

Educational institutions are not merely structures that transmit knowledge; they are also organizations that play a critical role in individuals' social, cultural, and emotional development. With their distinctive cultural and sociological contexts, educational organizations shape individuals' perceptions, behaviors, beliefs, and relational dynamics. Teachers' perceptions of their work environment within these institutions directly influence both their professional satisfaction and the effectiveness of the teaching- learning process. At the same time, whether organizational processes are perceived as just and how employees respond to these processes are among the key variables determining the success of educational institutions. In this respect, teachers' views on organizational justice and their behavioral tendencies toward organizational silence emerge as influential factors across a broad spectrum, ranging from teaching- learning activities in schools to informal organizational relations. Organizational justice, which is of great importance for ensuring transparency in the school environment, amplifying teachers' voices, and constructing a participatory management approach, refers to teachers' perceptions

regarding whether they are treated fairly in the allocation of resources, decision-making processes, and interpersonal relations (Colquitt et al., 2001). Organizational silence, conversely, refers to situations in which teachers, despite possessing knowledge, opinions, or feelings, deliberately refrain from expressing them (Morrison & Milliken, 2000).

Examining the link between how teachers perceive organizational justice and the tendencies they exhibit toward silence is of critical importance for fostering transparency, trust, and a participatory management approach within the school environment. This significance is further reinforced by the fact that these concepts have become topics of intense discussion in contemporary academic literature. According to the data of the National Thesis Center of the Council of Higher Education (YÖK), a total of 866 graduate theses have been conducted on “organizational justice” and 377 on “organizational silence,” primarily in the field of education but also across various sectors (Council of Higher Education [YÖK] National Thesis Center, 2025). These figures demonstrate the rapidly increasing academic interest in these concepts in Türkiye in recent years. Similarly, in the international literature, databases such as Web of Science and Scopus indicate that the terms “organizational justice” and “organizational silence” are frequently used as keywords, with a notable increase in publications related to these topics in recent years (Bai & Bai, 2025; Golverdi et al., 2024; Ji et al., 2025; Lee & Shin, 2025; Nemati-Vakilabad et al., 2024; Nguyen-Viet & Vo Tri Chau, 2025; Solinas-Saunders et al., 2024; Song et al., 2024). Therefore, it can be argued that both nationally and internationally, the concepts of organizational silence and organizational justice are frequently addressed in research and occupy a central position in current scholarly debates.

Conceptual Framework

Organizational Justice

Justice, as a phenomenon influencing all interpersonal relations, refers to honesty, equality, fairness, impartiality, and righteousness (Black & Porter, 2000). Organizational justice, on the other hand, broadly refers to an individual's perceptions of practices within their organization (Greenberg, 1996) and is grounded in Adams's Equity Theory (Luthans, 1981). Initially, the concept of organizational justice was employed to explain the criteria of rewards and punishments applied in organizational settings. Later, attention shifted to whether these rules were implemented equally among employees, and finally to whether fairness was maintained in interpersonal relations within the organization (Greenberg, 1990). Accordingly, individuals form judgments about whether organizational processes and mechanisms, tasks and rewards, and the behaviors directed toward them are fair, and based on these judgments, they develop attitudes toward the organization and, consequently, toward their work (Karriker & Williams, 2009).

In the school context, organizational justice refers to teachers' perceptions of whether institutional practices are fair. This concept is grounded in employees' evaluations of the extent to which they encounter fairness in the distribution of rewards, decision-making processes, and interpersonal relations. According to Kaneshiro (2008), organizational justice enhances job satisfaction, fosters intergroup cooperation, and contributes to problem-solving. Accordingly, a high level of perceived organizational justice may increase teachers' commitment to the institution and their productivity, while reducing their tendency to leave the profession. Moreover, factors such as the provision of career opportunities, the delineation of authority boundaries, the allocation of job-related resources, and dismissal procedures directly influence teachers' perceptions of organizational justice. While teachers expect equitable access to these resources, it is the responsibility of school administrations to ensure their fair and impartial distribution, thereby fostering a positive perception of justice (Gürboyoğlu, 2009). Indeed, the

establishment of organizational justice is regarded as a critical element for teachers' motivation, job satisfaction, and overall organizational effectiveness (Baldwin, 2006). Conversely, the lack of fair practices may undermine teachers' trust and commitment to the organization, which in the long term can adversely affect institutional productivity.

In the literature, several theories have been proposed to explain the concept of organizational justice. Among these, Adams's (1965) Equity Theory and the Relative Deprivation Theory, which addresses the justice expectations of individuals or groups (Folger, 1986), stand out. However, the most widely used approach in the literature is the model that conceptualizes organizational justice in three dimensions: distributive, procedural, and interactional justice (Colquitt et al., 2005; Greenberg & Baron, 2000). *Distributive justice* (1) refers to the perceived fairness of outcomes in terms of contributions, needs, and equity perspectives (Lind & Tyler, 1988). *Procedural justice* (2) can be defined as the fairness of the methods by which decisions are made or the processes through which outcomes are achieved. This dimension emphasizes the justice of the decision-making procedures employed in reaching a particular outcome (Baldwin, 2006). Procedural justice may, in some cases, carry more weight than distributive justice, since individuals may accept even an unfavorable outcome if they believe the decision-making process leading to it has been conducted in accordance with the principles of organizational justice. *Interactional justice* (3) refers to individuals' perceptions of the extent to which they are treated with respect and provided with adequate information during their interactions with supervisors (Bies & Moag, 1986). This dimension not only addresses how organizational practices are implemented but also emphasizes how fairness is perceived in interpersonal relationships with managers (Ölçer & Coşkun, 2024). Although often regarded as a subcomponent of procedural justice, interactional justice offers a distinctive perspective, particularly in public institutions, by highlighting the quality of interpersonal interactions. It consists of two sub-dimensions: informational justice and interpersonal justice (Colquitt et al., 2001). Within this framework, employees expect not only the right to participate in organizational processes but also that their managers demonstrate professional and ethical conduct (Fortin et al., 2020). Consequently, the principles of respect, courtesy, and honesty emerge as the core elements underpinning interactional justice (Bies & Moag, 1986).

Organizational Silence

Organizational silence refers to individuals' deliberate avoidance of expressing their feelings and thoughts due to fears of negative reactions, the belief that change will not occur, or various personal concerns (Kaygın & Atay, 2014). Fear of isolation, distrust of supervisors, and anxiety about conflict or exclusion may contribute to this tendency (Perlow & Williams, 2003). Silence can negatively affect decision-making processes, leading to the neglect of problems, weakened commitment, and the breakdown of communication (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). In educational organizations, teachers' silence hinders their contribution to classroom practices and administrative processes, impedes the adoption of innovative approaches, and adversely affects both student achievement and the sense of trust within the school climate. In line with this, Kahveci and Demirtaş (2013) categorize the reasons for organizational silence under five main dimensions: school environment, emotion, source of silence, administrator, and isolation. They further explain that teachers tend to remain silent because school administrators often provide negative feedback and display an autocratic leadership style; teachers may fear ignorance, inexperience, or negative reactions from colleagues and administrators; they may worry about being excluded from the group; and they may avoid appearing as troublemakers or complainers within the organization. These dimensions collectively illustrate that organizational silence in educational settings is not merely an individual behavioral tendency but rather a multidimensional phenomenon shaped by contextual (school environment),

emotional, relational (administrator and peers), and psychological (isolation and perceived sources of silence) factors. This framework provides a comprehensive lens for understanding how structural and interpersonal dynamics within schools sustain or mitigate teachers' silence.

Organizational silence is classified into three subcategories: acquiescent silence, defensive silence, and prosocial silence (Van Dyne et al., 2003). *Acquiescent silence (1)* refers to an individual's tendency to remain silent out of the belief that expressing opinions will yield no meaningful outcomes or make no difference (Göktaş et al., 2016). This form of silence does not stem from ignorance but is shaped by an individual's conscious choice to withhold their views, often accompanied by passive acceptance of the status quo without questioning it (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). *Defensive silence (2)* is an active form of silence in which individuals deliberately withhold their ideas out of fear of harm, exclusion, or punishment (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Although teachers may possess alternative ideas with the potential to improve existing organizational conditions, they refrain from voicing them to minimize personal risks (Van Dyne et al., 2003). This fear-driven defensive attitude is rooted in the instinct of self-preservation and, over time, may lead to the neglect of problems, knowledge hoarding that hinders organizational development, and the deceleration of organizational learning (Yalçınsoy, 2017). *Prosocial silence (3)*, by contrast, reflects an individual's concern for others rather than fear of personal consequences (Van Dyne et al., 2003). In this type of silence, the preservation of organizational cohesion takes precedence, leading employees to withhold opinions about decisions or practices with which they disagree. Similarly, an individual may remain silent to protect a colleague who fails to fulfill their responsibilities, or to avoid disclosing information that, if revealed, could damage the organization (Çakıcı, 2008). In educational organizations, these types of silence directly shape teachers' attitudes and behaviors. Acquiescent silence fosters uncritical acceptance of existing practices and suppresses innovative ideas; defensive silence prevents teachers from voicing opinions due to fears of sanctions or conflict; and prosocial silence may render problems invisible, whether in the name of professional solidarity or the protection of the school's reputation. Therefore, understanding which type of silence teachers adopt is essential for improving school climate and enhancing educational effectiveness.

Organizational Silence and Organizational Justice

Employees' perceptions of justice within their organizations directly influence their attitudes and behaviors. In organizations where perceptions of justice are high, organizational identity, work quality, performance, and cooperation tend to increase, restructuring processes become smoother, and organizational problems decrease (Polat, 2007). Beliefs that individuals are evaluated fairly, that their opinions are taken into account, and that their contributions are valued strengthen voice behavior and reduce tendencies toward silence. Conversely, in organizations with low perceptions of justice, employees may reduce knowledge sharing, thereby creating a significant barrier to organizational creativity (Cerne et al., 2014). In educational institutions in particular, when teachers encounter unfair practices, they may prefer to remain silent rather than express negative reactions (Andersson, 1996; Ünlü et al., 2015). Such silence can hinder the emergence of innovative ideas, processes, and outcomes at both the individual and organizational levels (Sadeghi & Razavi, 2020).

As noted by Pinder and Harlos (2001), organizational silence arises as a significant outcome of justice perceptions and limits employees' sense of freedom of expression. Indeed, employees with high perceptions of injustice tend to display greater silence, whereas those who experience fair practices are more willing to share their thoughts (Whiteside & Barclay, 2013). In the context of educational organizations, the relation between how teachers perceive organizational justice and their tendency to remain silent within the organization is of critical importance for both school climate and student achievement. A fair management approach

encourages teachers to freely share their ideas, thereby fostering innovative practices, while perceptions of injustice increase silence, undermining teachers' participation, motivation, and organizational commitment. This dynamic not only affects teachers' individual performance but also weakens teamwork, collegial solidarity, and the school's collective capacity for development.

Given the close theoretical link between organizational justice and silence highlighted in previous studies, it is essential to examine how this relationship manifests across different professional contexts. While numerous scholars have explored these dynamics among employees in various organizational settings, less is known about how they operate in educational environments, where teachers' voice and participation play a crucial role in shaping institutional effectiveness and innovation. In this regard, a considerable portion of existing studies has focused on employees in various sectors (Abou Hashish et al., 2024; Adamovic, 2023; Cachon-Alonso & Elovainio, 2022; Efthymiopoulos et al., 2024; Ho, 2025; Mubashar et al., 2022; Nemati-Vakilabad et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2024), whereas research conducted in the context of teachers has remained relatively limited. Moreover, considering the centralized structure of the Turkish education system, institutional constraints on teachers' freedom of expression, and the structural differences among school types, examining these two concepts within teacher samples is regarded as significant for both filling a gap in the literature and contributing to the management policies of educational institutions. Although the relationship between organizational justice and silence has been conceptually established in prior research, the contextual meaning and practical implications of this relationship within educational institutions remain underexplored. The novelty of the present study does not stem from re-testing an existing theoretical model but from situating it within the unique socio-administrative structure of the Turkish school system where centralized authority, hierarchical communication, and limited autonomy distinctly shape teachers' behavioral responses. Examining how justice perceptions influence silence in such a context provides fresh empirical evidence on how cultural and institutional forces moderate this relationship, thereby extending the global discourse beyond Western organizational frameworks. The significance of this research lies in its capacity to reveal how justice perceptions within schools can encourage or suppress teachers' willingness to speak up, propose innovations, or resist unjust practices. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for fostering environments that promote transparency, engagement, and psychological safety. These are key components of educational quality and institutional sustainability.

Research Aim and Research Questions

The current study examines how teachers' views regarding organizational justice influence their organizational silence. Accordingly, the research seeks to address the following problems:

- (1) What levels do teachers exhibit in their perceptions of organizational silence and organizational justice?
- (2) Do teachers' perceptions of organizational justice and organizational silence show significant differences based on gender, subject area, and type of school (public vs. private)?
- (3) Do teachers' perceptions of organizational justice serve as a significant predictor of their organizational silence levels?

Research Methodology

Design

This study adopted a quantitative research approach grounded in the positivist paradigm, aiming to examine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of organizational justice and their organizational silence behaviors. A causal-comparative and correlational survey design was employed to achieve this purpose. This design was deemed appropriate, as it enables both the exploration of relationships among variables and the identification of potential differences between groups without manipulating any conditions. This research was carried out during the 2024-2025 academic year and included a total of 446 teachers working in various public and private schools in İstanbul, representing different subject areas and educational levels. This scope provided a diverse sample that reflects the structural and cultural characteristics of the Turkish education system, thereby allowing for broader generalization of the findings. Moreover, İstanbul was deliberately selected as the research setting because it represents Türkiye's largest and most socio-culturally diverse city, where teachers from nearly all regions of the country reside and work. The city's educational environment combines characteristics of both urban and semi-rural schools, reflecting a microcosm of the national education system. Consequently, despite being geographically limited, the heterogeneity of İstanbul's teaching population strengthens the representativeness of the sample and enhances the validity of the results.

Within the study, organizational justice was conceptualized as the independent variable, encompassing distributive, procedural, and interactional dimensions, while organizational silence was treated as the dependent variable, reflecting teachers' withholding of ideas, concerns, or opinions within the school context. The correlational survey component was used to analyze how teachers' organizational justice perceptions are statistically associated with their organizational silence tendencies, whereas the causal-comparative method was applied to determine whether these perceptions differ according to gender, subject area, and school type.

The study was theoretically grounded in Adams' (1965) Equity Theory, which posits that perceptions of justice can shape or relate to individuals' attitudes and behaviors in organizational settings, and Pinder and Harlos' (2001) framework of organizational silence, which explains how perceived injustice may lead to the intentional withholding of ideas or feedback. These theoretical foundations provided the conceptual basis for exploring how justice perceptions function as potential correlates rather than proven predictors of silence behaviors among teachers. However, given the correlational and causal-comparative nature of the design, the study does not allow for definitive causal conclusions; the findings should therefore be interpreted as associations that inform, rather than confirm, cause-effect relationships.

Sample

The study population included teachers employed in K-12 educational institutions located in İstanbul during the 2024-2025 academic year. According to the official 2024 data published by the Directorate of Strategy Development of the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), the target population comprised 169,512 teachers across İstanbul. The study sample was selected using the simple random sampling method and consisted of 383 teachers. The sample size was calculated using the Sample Size Calculation Table, based on a confidence level of .95 and a significance level of $\alpha = .05$ (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 104). To minimize potential difficulties during the implementation phase and to increase the validity of the sample, data were collected from 450 participants. However, four scale forms were identified as outliers and removed during the data analysis stage. Accordingly, information regarding the 446 participants constituting the final sample is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variable	Group	N	%
Gender	Female	340	76.2
	Male	106	23.8
Age	≤30 years	151	33.9
	31-45 years	236	52.9
	≥46 years	59	13.2
Subject Area	Classroom Teacher	157	35.2
	Subject Teacher	289	64.8
Educational Status	Associate	9	2.0
	Bachelor's	291	65.2
	Master's	137	30.7
	Doctorate (PhD)	9	2.0
School Level	Preschool	69	15.5
	Primary School	112	25.1
	Middle School	163	36.5
	High School	102	22.9
Seniority	≤ 5 years	126	28.3
	6-10 years	135	30.3
	11-15 years	74	16.6
	16-20 years	42	9.4
	≥ 21 years	69	15.5
School Type	Public School	282	63.2
	Private School	164	36.8
Total		446	100.0

* $p < .05$

As shown in Table 1, the majority of the participants were female teachers (76.2%), whereas male teachers accounted for 23.8% of the sample. More than half of the participants (52.9%) were between 30 and 45 years old, 33.9% were aged 30 or younger, and 13.2% were aged 46 and above. In terms of subject area, 64.8% were subject teachers, whereas 35.2% were classroom teachers. With regard to educational background, the majority held a bachelor's degree (65.2%), followed by master's degree holders (30.7%), associate degree holders (2%), and doctoral degree holders (2%). When the school level of employment was examined, the largest proportion of teachers (36.5%) worked in middle schools, followed by primary schools (25.1%), high schools (22.9%), and preschools (15.5%). In terms of seniority, 30.3% had 6-10 years of service, 28.3% had 5 years or less, 16.6% had 11-15 years, 9.4% had 16-20 years, and 15.5% had 21 years or more of experience. Finally, 63.2% of the teachers were employed in public schools, while 36.8% worked in private schools.

Data Collection

The tool employed for data collection in this research was organized into three distinct sections. The first section included questions regarding the demographic characteristics of the

participants, such as gender, age group, subject area, educational background, school level, professional seniority, and school type. The second section employed the Organizational Justice Scale, while the third section utilized the Organizational Silence Scale. Information regarding the reliability and validity of these scales is provided below.

Organizational Justice Scale

The Organizational Justice Scale, originally created by Niehoff and Moorman (1993) and later adapted into Turkish by Polat (2007), consists of three sub-dimensions: distributive justice (6 items), interactional justice (4 items), and procedural justice (9 items) with a total of 19 items. The scale is structured on a 5-point Likert-type format and includes items such as "I think our school administrators prepare our class schedules fairly" and "I think extracurricular tasks at school are distributed equally among teachers". According to the results of the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) conducted to assess construct validity, all factor loadings were found to be above .40. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated as 0.96 for the overall scale, 0.89 for the distributive justice dimension, 0.95 for the procedural justice dimension, and 0.90 for the interactional justice dimension (Polat, 2007). In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the Organizational Justice Scale was calculated as .97, indicating a highly reliable internal consistency.

Organizational Silence Scale

Kahveci and Demirtaş (2013) designed the Organizational Silence Scale to encompass five separate sub-dimensions: school environment (4 items), source of silence (5 items), emotion (3 items), isolation (3 items), and administrator (3 items), with a total of 18 items. The instrument is structured on a 5-point Likert-type scale and contains sample statements such as "Although teachers are aware of their administrators' shortcomings, they do not express them" and "Teachers receive negative reactions from administrators and colleagues when they express their opinions". The construct validity of the scale was tested by Kahveci and Demirtaş (2013) using both Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). According to the EFA results, it was found that the factor loadings of the items ranged between .483 and .783, with a total variance explained of 57.16%. CFA results showed that the overall model fit indices were at an acceptable level ($\chi^2/df = 3.07$; NFI = .886; GFI = .912; CFI = .920; TLI = .901; AGFI = .879; RMSEA = .070). Cronbach's alpha coefficients revealed strong internal consistency both for the sub-dimensions (Administrator $\alpha = .79$; Emotion $\alpha = .81$; Isolation $\alpha = .83$; School Environment $\alpha = .74$; Source of Silence $\alpha = .80$) and for the overall scale ($\alpha = .89$). In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the Organizational Silence Scale was calculated as .95, indicating a high level of reliability.

Data Analysis

After obtaining the necessary approval from the Ethics Committee of Yıldız Technical University for Social and Human Sciences Research (decision dated 03.03.2025, no. 2025.03), the data collection process was initiated. The questionnaire used in the study was distributed to participants both digitally (via Google Forms) and in printed form. Participation in the research was based on voluntariness, and prior to data collection, the purpose of the study and confidentiality principles were explained. In addition, permission was obtained from the relevant school administrations before administering the survey.

The data were first transferred to Microsoft Office Excel, and the demographic variables were coded. Subsequently, the dataset was uploaded into the SPSS software for analysis.

The analysis process initially began with data from 450 participants who completed the questionnaire. In the preliminary analysis, no missing data were detected; however, four scale forms identified as outliers were excluded from the dataset. Thus, the analyses were conducted with 446 participants. Before proceeding to the main analyses, statistical assumptions were examined. Regarding normality, the mode, median, and arithmetic mean values of the scales were found to be close to one another, and the graphical representations (histogram, normal Q-Q plot, and box plot) indicated a normal distribution. Furthermore, the skewness and kurtosis values of the scales and their subdimensions were examined to evaluate the normality of the data distribution, and the results are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2
Skewness and Kurtosis Values of the Scales

Scales	Skewness	SE	Kurtosis	SE
Distributive Justice	.022	.116	-.998	.231
Procedural Justice	.120	.116	-1.068	.231
Interactional Justice	-.336	.116	-1.036	.231
Organizational Justice Scale	.006	.116	-.954	.231
School Environment	-.092	.116	-.560	.231
Emotion	-.435	.116	-.663	.231
Source of Silence	-.236	.116	-.706	.231
Administrator	-.700	.116	-.534	.231
Isolation	-.451	.116	-.819	.231
Organizational Silence Scale	-.482	.116	-.371	.231

According to the findings presented in Table 2, the kurtosis and skewness statistics of the Organizational Justice and Organizational Silence scales and their sub-dimensions were within the range of +1.5 and -1.5. Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) state that when skewness and kurtosis values fall between +1.5 and -1.5, parametric tests can be applied. In this regard, the Organizational Justice and Organizational Silence scales and their sub-dimensions were found to meet the assumption of normality, indicating that parametric analyses could be conducted. Accordingly, the data of the study were analyzed using descriptive statistics, independent samples t-test, correlation analysis, and regression analysis.

Research Results

Within the scope of the research questions, the levels of teachers' organizational justice and organizational silence were first examined. The descriptive findings regarding the scores obtained were presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Descriptive Results of the Scales

Scales	N	Min	Max	$\bar{X}$	SD
Distributive Justice	446	1.00	5.00	2.99	1.14
Procedural Justice	446	1.00	5.00	2.92	1.18
Interactional Justice	446	1.00	5.00	3.35	1.23
Organizational Justice Scale	446	1.00	5.00	3.03	1.11
School Environment	446	1.00	5.00	3.14	.97
Emotion	446	1.00	5.00	3.48	1.14
Source of Silence	446	1.00	5.00	3.13	1.08
Administrator	446	1.00	5.00	3.64	1.22
Isolation	446	1.00	5.00	3.43	1.21
Organizational Silence Scale	446	1.00	5.00	3.33	.97

As shown in Table 3, the overall average score obtained by the Organizational Justice Scale was calculated as 3.03 ± 1.11 . Among its sub-dimensions, the highest mean was observed in interactional justice (3.35 ± 1.23), while the lowest mean was found in procedural justice (2.92 ± 1.18). The overall mean score of the Organizational Silence Scale was determined as 3.33 ± 0.97 . Among its sub-dimensions, the highest mean belonged to the administrator dimension (3.64 ± 1.22), whereas the lowest mean was found in the school environment dimension (3.14 ± 0.97). These results suggest that teachers exhibited moderate perceptions of both organizational silence and organizational justice.

To examine whether variations existed in teachers' perceptions of organizational silence and organizational justice according to gender, an independent samples t-test, one of the parametric tests, was conducted. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Teachers' Perceptions of Organizational Justice and Silence by Gender

Scales	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t	df	p
Distributive Justice	Female	340	2.89	1.12	-3.387	444	.001*
	Male	106	3.31	1.15			
Procedural Justice	Female	340	2.86	1.18	-1.561	444	.119
	Male	106	3.07	1.16			
Interactional Justice	Female	340	3.26	1.23	-2.691	444	.007*
	Male	106	3.62	1.18			
Organizational Justice Scale	Female	340	2.95	1.10	-2.519	444	.012*
	Male	106	3.26	1.09			
School Environment	Female	340	3.12	.98	-.570	444	.569
	Male	106	3.18	.94			
Emotion	Female	340	3.47	1.16	-.479	444	.632
	Male	106	3.53	1.07			
Source of Silence	Female	340	3.15	1.09	.693	444	.489
	Male	106	3.07	1.02			
Administrator	Female	340	3.62	1.24	-.298	444	.766
	Male	106	3.66	1.11			
Isolation	Female	340	3.41	1.23	-.640	444	.523
	Male	106	3.50	1.14			
Organizational Silence Scale	Female	340	3.32	.99	-.202	444	.840
	Male	106	3.34	.91			

* $p < .05$

According to the findings presented in Table 4, a statistically significant difference was found in the distributive justice sub-dimension of organizational justice between female teachers ($M = 2.89$) and male teachers ($M = 3.31$) [$t_{(444)} = -3.387, p < .05$], with male participants scoring higher on average. Similarly, in the interactional justice sub-dimension, a significant difference was identified between females ($M = 3.26$) and males ($M = 3.62$) [$t_{(444)} = -2.691, p < .05$], again in favor of male participants. At the overall level of the Organizational Justice Scale, a significant difference was also observed between females ($M = 2.95$) and males ($M = 3.26$) [$t_{(444)} = -2.519, p < .05$], with male teachers reporting higher means. For the other scales and sub-dimensions, no statistically significant differences were found among the groups.

To examine potential differences in teachers' perceptions of organizational silence and organizational justice according to the subject area variable, an independent samples t-test, one of the parametric tests, was conducted. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 5.

Table 5
Teachers' Perceptions of Organizational Justice and Silence by Subject Area

Scales	Subject Area	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t	df	p
Distributive Justice	Classroom Teacher	157	3.12	1.09	1.788	444	.074
	Subject Teacher	289	2.92	1.16			
Procedural Justice	Classroom Teacher	157	2.94	1.11	.318	444	.750
	Subject Teacher	289	2.90	1.21			
Interactional Justice	Classroom Teacher	157	3.28	1.20	-.857	444	.392
	Subject Teacher	289	3.38	1.24			
Organizational Justice Scale	Classroom Teacher	157	3.07	1.06	.542	444	.588
	Subject Teacher	289	3.01	1.13			
School Environment	Classroom Teacher	157	3.00	.97	-2.038	444	.042*
	Subject Teacher	289	3.20	.96			
Emotion	Classroom Teacher	157	3.28	1.14	-2.847	444	.005*
	Subject Teacher	289	3.60	1.13			
Source of Silence	Classroom Teacher	157	3.04	1.11	-1.279	444	.202
	Subject Teacher	289	3.18	1.06			
Administrator	Classroom Teacher	157	3.55	1.29	-1.081	444	.280
	Subject Teacher	289	3.68	1.17			
Isolation	Classroom Teacher	157	3.22	1.27	-2.739	444	.006*
	Subject Teacher	289	3.55	1.16			
Organizational Silence Scale	Classroom Teacher	157	3.19	1.02	-2.204	444	.028*
	Subject Teacher	289	3.40	.94			

* $p < .05$

As presented in Table 5, the analysis revealed a statistically significant difference in the school environment sub-dimension of organizational silence between classroom teachers ($M = 3.00$) and subject teachers ($M = 3.20$) [$t_{(444)} = -2.038, p < .05$]; in the emotion sub-dimension between classroom teachers ($M = 3.28$) and subject teachers ($M = 3.60$) [$t_{(444)} = -2.847, p < .05$] and in the isolation sub-dimension between classroom teachers ($M = 3.22$) and subject teachers ($M = 3.55$) [$t_{(444)} = -2.739, p < .05$], all in favor of subject teachers. Similarly, for the overall Organizational Silence Scale, a statistically significant difference was found between classroom teachers ($M = 3.19$) and subject teachers ($M = 3.40$) [$t_{(444)} = -2.204, p < .05$], indicating that subject teachers experienced higher levels of organizational silence compared to classroom teachers. Conversely, no statistically significant differences were found among the groups in the Organizational Justice Scale and its subdimensions.

To examine potential differences in teachers' perceptions of organizational silence and organizational justice according to the school type variable, an independent samples t-test, one of the parametric tests, was conducted. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Teachers' Perceptions of Organizational Justice and Silence by School Type

Scales	School Type	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t	df	p
Distributive Justice	Public School	282	3.09	1.14	2.445	444	.015*
	Private School	164	2.82	1.13			
Procedural Justice	Public School	282	3.03	1.17	2.870	444	.004*
	Private School	164	2.71	1.15			
Interactional Justice	Public School	282	3.43	1.19	1.905	444	.057
	Private School	164	3.20	1.27			
Organizational Justice Scale	Public School	282	3.13	1.10	2.692	444	.007*
	Private School	164	2.84	1.09			
School Environment	Public School	282	3.11	.92	-.586	444	.558
	Private School	164	3.17	1.06			
Emotion	Public School	282	3.49	1.09	.118	444	.906
	Private School	164	3.47	1.22			
Source of Silence	Public School	282	3.11	1.04	-.662	444	.508
	Private School	164	3.18	1.13			
Administrator	Public School	282	3.67	1.18	.898	444	.370
	Private School	164	3.57	1.27			
Isolation	Public School	282	3.40	1.20	-.751	444	.453
	Private School	164	3.49	1.23			
Organizational Silence Scale	Public School	282	3.31	.92	-.270	444	.787
	Private School	164	3.34	1.06			

* $p < .05$

As presented in Table 6, the results indicated a statistically significant difference in the distributive justice sub-dimension of organizational justice between public school teachers ($M = 3.09$) and private school teachers ($M = 2.82$) [$t_{(444)} = 2.445$, $p < .05$], in favor of public-school teachers. Similarly, in the procedural justice sub-dimension, a significant difference was observed between public school teachers ($M = 3.03$) and private school teachers ($M = 2.71$) [$t_{(444)} = 2.870$, $p < .05$], again in favor of public-school teachers. At the overall level of the Organizational Justice Scale, a statistically significant difference was identified between public school teachers ($M = 3.13$) and private school teachers ($M = 2.84$) [$t_{(444)} = 2.692$, $p < .05$], indicating that teachers working in public schools had higher perceptions of organizational justice compared to those in private schools. On the other hand, no significant differences were observed between the groups in the Organizational Silence Scale and its sub-dimensions.

To examine the connection between teachers' perceptions of organizational justice and their levels of organizational silence, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted. The findings obtained are presented in Table 7.

Table 7
Correlation Results Between Organizational Justice and Silence

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Distributive Justice	1	.819**	.753**	.916**	-.185**	-.214**	-.250**	-.124**	-.255**	-.239**
2 Procedural Justice		1	.847**	.970**	-.266**	-.257**	-.251**	-.183**	-.283**	-.284**
3 Interactional Justice			1	.907**	-.144**	-.149**	-.179**	-.085**	-.173**	-.170**
4 Organizational Justice Scale				1	-.228**	-.234**	-.250**	-.152**	-.266**	-.261**
5 School Environment					1	.719**	.662**	.622**	.660**	.834**
6 Emotion						1	.719**	.660**	.705**	.861**
7 Source of Silence							1	.773**	.749**	.913**
8 Administrator								1	.758**	.871**
9 Isolation									1	.881**
10 Organizational Silence Scale										1

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

According to Table 7, a significant, low-level, and negative relationship was found between teachers' perceptions of organizational justice and organizational silence ($r = -0.261$, $p < .01$). Among the sub-dimensions of the two scales, the highest correlation was identified between the procedural justice sub-dimension and the isolation sub-dimension, which was significant and negative ($r = -0.283$, $p < .01$).

To determine whether teachers' perceptions of organizational justice served as a significant predictor of their perceptions of organizational silence, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. The findings obtained are presented in Table 8.

Table 8
Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Organizational Silence from Organizational Justice

Variable	B	Beta	t	p	VIF	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F
Constant	3.893		29.253	<.001					
Distributive Justice	-.056	-.066	-.819	.413	3.159	.315 ^a	.099	.093	.0001 ^b
Procedural Justice	-.373	-.452	-4.545	<.001*	4.847				
Interactional Justice	.207	.262	3.027	.003*	3.672				

* $p < .05$

According to Table 8, it was observed that teachers' views regarding organizational justice had a significant effect on how they perceived organizational silence [$R = .315$; $R^2 = .099$; Adjusted $R^2 = .093$; $F_{(3, 442)} = 16.246$; $p < .01$]. In the regression analysis, the sub-dimensions of organizational justice were entered as independent variables, while the overall perception of organizational silence was treated as the dependent variable. The results indicated

that variations in teachers' perceptions of organizational justice explained 9.9% of the variance in organizational silence ($R^2 = .099$). In other words, changes in teachers' perceptions of the sub-dimensions of organizational justice had a measurable impact on their silence behaviors. However, 81.1% of the variance in organizational silence was associated with other factors. Examining the t-values, teachers' perceptions in the procedural justice sub-dimension significantly and negatively predicted their perceptions of organizational silence [$t = -4.545$; $p < .01$], indicating that a 100-unit increase in procedural justice reduced organizational silence behavior by 37.3%. Conversely, teachers' perceptions in the interactional justice sub-dimension significantly and positively predicted organizational silence [$t = 3.027$; $p = .003$; $p < .01$], suggesting that a 100-unit increase in interactional justice increased organizational silence behavior by 20.7%.

Discussion

This study examined the effect of teachers' perceptions of organizational justice on their organizational silence. Findings revealed that teachers perceived organizational justice at a moderate level. This suggests that participants' perceptions of justice were neither distinctly positive nor negative but rather tended to remain at a middle level. At the sub-dimension level, the highest mean was found for interactional justice, whereas the lowest average value was recorded for procedural justice. The higher scores in the interactional justice dimension indicate that employees perceived relatively greater fairness in their relationships with administrators and other individuals, suggesting that interpersonal relations within the organization were comparatively strong. In contrast, the lowest mean observed in the procedural justice dimension shows that participants evaluated decision-making processes and their implementation as less fair, pointing to potential issues with the transparency or functioning of procedures. When the literature is examined, different results can be observed. For example, Güneş (2019) reported that interactional justice was perceived as the strongest dimension. Ünlü et al. (2015) found that procedural and interactional justice were perceived at higher levels, whereas distributive justice was perceived at a lower level. Similarly, while some studies reported overall organizational justice perceptions at a moderate level (Akman, 2018; Coşkun & İsmailoğlu, 2020; Girgin & Vatansever Bayraktar, 2017; Ünlü et al., 2015), others indicated higher levels of organizational justice (Altinkurt & Yılmaz, 2010; Balcı, 2024; Kıranlı Güngör & Potuk, 2018; Polat, 2007; Tan, 2017; Uğurlu, 2009). These differences may be attributed to variables such as the type of school in which teachers work, the prevailing management approach, institutional culture, and individual expectations. Particularly, the lower perception observed in the procedural justice dimension highlights the need for decision-making processes to be conducted with a more inclusive, transparent, and participatory approach.

In this study, teachers' perceptions of organizational silence were found to be at a moderate level. This indicates that participants' perceptions regarding whether to express or withhold their opinions within the organization were neither distinctly positive nor negative. When the sub-dimensions were examined, the highest mean was observed in the administrator dimension, while the lowest mean was in the school environment dimension. The higher score in the administrator dimension suggests that administrators' attitudes may have a significant impact on organizational silence and may contribute to its increase (Detert & Burris, 2007). This finding highlights the perception of administrators as a critical factor shaping employees' preference for silence. On the other hand, the school environment dimension, which had the lowest mean, indicates that the physical, social, and cultural environment of the school was comparatively less influential on organizational silence. However, the fact that this dimension was still at a moderate level points to the presence of opportunities for improvement in relation to the school environment. The findings in the literature also support these results. The majority

of studies show that teachers perceive organizational silence at a moderate level (Özdemir, 2015; Öztürk, 2014; Sevgin, 2015; Ünlü et al., 2015). However, Kahveci (2010) reported that the participants exhibited a high level of perceived organizational silence, reporting that teachers could not comfortably express their feelings and thoughts and therefore preferred to remain silent. These results underscore the critical role of administrators in reducing organizational silence. A management approach that evolves toward being participatory, supportive, and transparent may help teachers feel more comfortable in expressing themselves.

The study's results showed that male teachers reported higher perceptions of justice compared to female teachers in the overall score of organizational justice as well as in the distributive and interactional justice sub-dimensions. This indicates that male teachers perceived a fairer environment in terms of resource distribution and interpersonal relations. Particularly in the context of interactional justice, it can be suggested that male teachers felt they were treated more equally in their communication with administrators (Colquitt et al., 2001; Greenberg, 1990). However, the study found no significant gender differences in organizational silence. This result suggests that silence behaviour is shaped not by gender, but rather by structural factors such as organizational environment, school culture, and management style (Donaghey et al., 2011). Indeed, many studies in the literature similarly report that gender does not have a determining effect on organizational silence (Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Canbaz & Çoruk, 2024; Helvacı & Çetin, 2012; Önder, 2017; Tan, 2006; Taşkıran, 2010; Ünlü et al., 2015). Therefore, this finding implies that both genders tend to develop similar silence strategies in the face of organizational challenges, or that silence behaviour largely depends on the structural and cultural dynamics of the organization. From this perspective, strategies aimed at reducing organizational silence should not focus solely on individual characteristics but should primarily target school culture and management approaches.

The study found that the subject area variable had an effect on organizational silence but did not generate a significant difference in perceptions of organizational justice. As revealed by the findings, subject teachers exhibited higher levels of organizational silence than classroom teachers, both overall and specifically in the school environment, emotion, and isolation sub-dimensions. This suggests that subject teachers may be less involved in organizational decision-making processes or may feel insufficiently represented within the institution. Indeed, it is well established that silence behaviours become more pronounced in contexts where organizational participation and sense of belonging are weak (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). In particular, the significant difference observed in the emotion sub-dimension may indicate that subject teachers experience stronger internal pressures regarding the expression of their opinions and adopt silence as a coping mechanism (Brinsfield, 2013; Milliken et al., 2003). Similarly, the higher likelihood of subject teachers experiencing loneliness and withdrawal in the school environment and relational context supports these findings (Vakola & Bouradas, 2005). Therefore, interventions aimed at reducing silence should specifically focus on strengthening subject teachers' institutional participation and sense of belonging. Such practices may encourage teachers to express themselves more openly and thereby contribute significantly to reducing organizational silence. On the other hand, the study's findings regarding organizational justice revealed no significant differences between subject and classroom teachers. In distributive, procedural, and interactional justice alike, teachers' perceptions remained at similar levels. This result is consistent with the study of Canbaz and Çoruk (2024), which also reported no significant difference in organizational justice levels based on subject area. In this regard, initiatives to strengthen perceptions of justice in schools should not be designed as subject-specific but rather as school-wide practices.

The study revealed that teachers working in public schools reported higher perceptions of justice within their organizations. This can be explained by the fact that public school teachers are employed under state security and are subject to more explicit and standardized

procedures. In contrast, in private schools, teachers' working conditions vary depending on school management policies, and the uncertainty associated with contractual employment may negatively affect their perceptions of justice (Ateş, 2013; Bakırhan, 2015). With respect to organizational silence, no significant difference was found according to school type. This finding suggests that teachers' tendencies to voice or withhold their opinions are less associated with school type and more related to internal dynamics such as leadership style, communication environment, and organizational culture (Donaghey et al., 2011; Morrison & Milliken, 2000). The literature, however, presents mixed results on this matter. For example, Gökyıldırım Durmuş (2019) reported no significant difference in teachers' organizational silence levels by school type. On the other hand, Ateş (2013) and Bakırhan (2015) found that teachers in private schools demonstrated a higher tendency toward silence compared to their counterparts in public schools. These differences suggest that organizational silence cannot be explained solely by school type but is more strongly influenced by contextual and organizational factors. Therefore, interventions aimed at reducing organizational silence should focus not on school type but on strengthening internal communication channels, promoting participatory leadership practices, and developing an inclusive school culture.

The findings of the study indicated a negative and low-level relationship between organizational justice and organizational silence and further revealed that organizational justice significantly predicted organizational silence. This result is consistent with previous studies in the literature, demonstrating that perceptions of organizational justice play a determining role in silence behaviours (Alhas, 2024; Andersson, 1996; Kutanis & Çetinel, 2009; Mirmohamdi & Marefat, 2014; Önder, 2017; She et al., 2023; Taşkiran, 2010; Zahed, 2015). In particular, an increase in teachers' perceptions of organizational justice was associated with a decrease in their silence tendencies and greater participation in organizational processes. In this respect, organizational justice appears not only as a factor that reduces silence behaviors but also as a construct linked to other positive outcomes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Kutaladze & Tsulaila, 2022). When the sub-dimensions were examined, interactional justice was found to have an increasing effect on silence, while procedural justice exerted a decreasing effect. The implementation of fair procedures reduces employees' feelings of exclusion and isolation, thereby strengthening their sense of belonging to the organization; this explains the negative relationship observed between procedural justice and the isolation dimension of silence. Indeed, Harlos and Pinder (1999) similarly emphasized that justice exerts a strong influence on employees' interpersonal relations with their supervisors. However, the effect of interactional justice on organizational silence points to a more complex dynamic. The findings suggest that interactional justice may in some cases trigger a tendency that could be described as "compliance-based silence." Employees, due to the emotional bonds developed through positive interpersonal experiences, may prefer to remain silent rather than express their opinions. This indicates that while interactional justice encourages participation in organizational processes, it may also strengthen silence behaviors through emotional attachment. Supporting this finding, Önder (2017) highlighted the link between interactional justice and emotional silence. In conclusion, it can be argued that different dimensions of organizational justice produce effects in different directions on silence behaviors. While procedural justice fosters participation by reducing feelings of isolation through fair processes, interactional justice, although supportive of participation through positive relationships, may also lead employees to choose silence due to emotional attachment.

Conclusions and Implications

The findings of this study demonstrate that teachers' perceptions of organizational justice are closely related to their silence behaviors: as perceptions of justice increase, tendencies

toward silence decrease, while willingness to participate in organizational processes rises. Interactional justice emerged as the most strongly perceived dimension, whereas procedural justice was perceived at the lowest level, indicating potential shortcomings in terms of transparency and inclusiveness in decision-making processes. Furthermore, the attitudes of administrators were identified as a critical determinant of silence behaviors, directly influencing teachers' willingness to express their views. The study also revealed differences based on demographic and institutional variables such as gender, subject area, and school type, thereby drawing attention to the multidimensional nature of the link between justice and silence in the educational context. However, it is important to note that the current study employed a correlational and causal-comparative design; therefore, while the analyses revealed significant associations between justice perceptions and silence behaviors, these results should not be interpreted as definitive causal relationships. Rather, they indicate patterns of association that provide valuable groundwork for future causal investigations.

Considering these findings, several practical implications can be proposed. First, school administrators should prioritize justice, transparency, and inclusiveness in their leadership practices. By ensuring teachers' active participation in decision-making processes, silence behaviors can be reduced, and a culture of open communication can be fostered. Regular feedback mechanisms may also support this process by providing environments in which teachers can freely express their opinions. From a policy-making perspective, organizational justice should not only be addressed through legal regulations but also embedded as an integral part of school culture. Through ethical leadership practices and transparent procedures, teachers' trust in their institutions can be strengthened, thereby reducing silence behaviors. In addition, since subject teachers exhibited higher tendencies toward silence, their representation should be increased and their involvement in school management further encouraged. Moreover, school leaders are encouraged to translate these principles into daily administrative routines by organizing regular staff meetings focused on open dialogue, creating anonymous reporting or suggestion systems, and recognizing teachers who actively share constructive feedback. Providing leadership training that emphasizes fairness, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution skills can also help administrators identify and address sources of perceived injustice more effectively. Finally, establishing a systematic follow-up process to evaluate the impact of these actions would ensure the sustainability of a just and communicative school environment.

For future research, more comprehensive models can be developed by considering mediating variables (e.g., leadership style, psychological safety, job satisfaction) and moderating variables (e.g., school type, seniority, age) in the relationship between organizational justice and silence. Furthermore, mixed-methods studies that integrate both quantitative and qualitative approaches may provide deeper insights into teachers' experiences of silence. Comparative research between public and private schools as well as across different cultural contexts could also test the generalizability of the findings. In particular, longitudinal or experimental designs are recommended to examine potential causal pathways and to validate the directionality of the observed relationships.

In conclusion, this study underscores the decisive role of organizational justice in shaping teachers' silence behaviors. While the results highlight meaningful associations rather than proven causal effects, implementing transparent, fair, and participatory practices in educational institutions can foster teachers' sense of value and empowerment, thereby enhancing organizational effectiveness and the overall quality of education. More comprehensive research on mediating mechanisms, contextual factors, and cultural dynamics will provide valuable contributions to the development of more just and inclusive educational environments.

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Ethics Statements

This research was approved by Yıldız Technical University Ethics Committee for Social and Human Sciences Research, Decision No. 2025.03, Decision Date 03.03.2025

Declaration of Interest

The authors declare that there are no competing interests upon the publication of this research.

Data Availability

Data are available upon reasonable requests.

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