

Analysis of the Relationship between the Positional Power Sources Used by School Administrators and the Organizational Silence Behaviors of Teachers

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IJMER

Volume. 6, Issue. 3

September, 2023

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Abstract

This study was conducted to examine the relationship between the positional power sources used by school administrators and the organizational silence behaviors of teachers. In the study, relational survey model, one of the quantitative research methods, was used. The sample group of the study consisted of 519 teachers working in different branches and different school types in Istanbul. "Organizational Power Resources Scale" and "Organizational Silence Scale" developed as data collection tools were used and the data obtained were analyzed through the SPSS 21.0 package program. Reliability analysis, Pearson correlation analysis and regression analysis were used in the analysis of the research data. As a result of the analysis, it was seen that the reliability coefficients of the scales used in the study were high. According to the results obtained; a negative relationship was found between the power of rewarding and legal power and organizational silence. On the other hand, a positive relationship was found between coercive power and organizational silence. As a result of the regression analysis, it was concluded that the power of rewarding, legal power and coercive power were effective on organizational silence.

Keywords: Positional Power, Power of Rewarding, Legal Power, Coercive Power, Organizational Silence.

1. Introduction

The concept of power has been a subject that has attracted the attention of mankind since the past and mankind has always tried to have power. The phenomenon of power is seen as a very important element that rulers should have in many systems, from the management of a nation to the method of an institution or group. It can be said that power is considered as a positive concept in some cases and as a negative concept in others. What is important here is who is qualified for the power at the basis of human relations and in which way they use this power. From the point of view of workplaces or institutions, managers who are generally regarded as having authority legitimize their authority when they use their limited resources for the good of the workplace and its employees. On the contrary, it is also assumed that this concept is not a very good phenomenon if the authorities only show personal desires and interests, approaches that can lead to injustice, hostile environment and harassment (Mimaroğlu & Özgen, 2008).

While power stems from individual characteristics, authority stems from institutional characteristics (Diş, 2015). Authority is given by someone and taken back when necessary. Power, on the other hand, is a skill (Kızanıklı et al., 2016). Power should be utilised appropriately and effectively when necessary. It should be used as much as necessary for the functioning of the institution or organisation, not for personal interests. Otherwise, negativities may arise in the organisation. Today, this situation can also occur among school administrators and teachers. For this reason, power in the context of management is an extremely important concept for the organization.

Management and organisation theorists have started to draw more attention to the importance of power in this regard. Evaluation of power types preferences in terms of education, job satisfaction, age and gender criteria, investigating which types of power sources are active at certain stages and tasks, determining which power sources administrators use and how they use them, determining the reactions of teachers to these determinations, evaluating themselves and teaching staff in terms of the forms of power preferred by the heads of departments and departments during the administration

period, studies aimed at limiting the behaviour of subordinates according to the power styles used in various business sectors can be given as examples of studies conducted in this field. In this web of relations, power constitutes an important aspect of the relations between managers and employees in the field of organisation, principals and other administrators in schools and teachers (Koşar & Çalık, 2011).

One of the most important issues in the researches on power is what the causes of power are. When the literature is analysed, it is seen that power is based on many different sources. In this context, the foundations and references of power have been grouped in different ways in various studies. The most widely accepted of these is the five-point grouping made by French and Raven (1959), which is based on "rewarding, punishing, authority, charisma or knowledge" (Mimaroglu & Özgen, 2008). The power of rewarding is explained as the administrator's ability to influence subordinates through rewards in order to achieve the desired behaviour (Hoy & Miskel, 2012). While implementing this power, the administrator can use both tangible and intangible tools such as raises, additional payments, upgrades, higher level of responsibility, more important jobs, appreciation and honouring (Meydan and Polat 2010). The power to punish is the power to intimidate, punish or threaten the personnel (Perry et al., 1998). It is the opposite of the power of rewarding and is based on punishment. The power to punish reflects the control mechanism used in the event that the personnel defies the directives of the leader (Bakan & Büyükbeşe, 2010). Legal power is the legitimate power that is not related to the personality of the manager and is completely due to his/her position (Perry et al., 1998). Charismatic power is the ability of an individual to influence subordinates with his/her charisma (Kreitner & Kinicki, 1998). Various individual characteristics of the manager, such as the way they speak, the style they use or the way they dress, are related to the charismatic power of the individual (Mohan Bursalı & Bağcı, 2011). Knowledge power, which is based on knowledge and expertise, is the type of power that the individual's own knowledge, abilities and experiences add to it (Kreitner & Kinicki, 1998).

School administrators apply different management power approaches on teachers and other staff in order to ensure organisational order and create a control mechanism (Örücü & Şimşek, 2011). It can be said that these power practices can affect teachers positively or negatively. One of these effects is teachers' organisational silence. Organisational silence is a situation that is directly related to the management style and behaviours of the manager, whether people in the organisation express their ideas and experiences openly or remains silent in the face of current situations or problems (Erol & Köroğlu, 2013). The preference of the members of the organisation to remain silent about the issues concerning themselves or the organisation is referred to as organisational silence (Yalçın, 2017). Henriksen and Dayton (2006) explained it as little or no expression of thoughts and feelings in a cooperative manner in the face of important problems that an organisation may face (Cited in Gencer, 2018). According to Kahveci (2010), the fact that the employees comment on the events in the organisation causes the teachers to remain silent due to the concern that they will be excluded from the environment and the thought of being exposed to the negative behaviours of the administrators. In the climate of organisational silence, there are three factors that have a great impact on the perception of employees. These factors can be listed as the behaviour and attitude shown by the top management, the behaviour and attitude shown by the department or unit manager, and finally the communication system and opportunities flowing within the organisation (Alparslan, 2010, cited in Nartgün & Kartal, 2013). Because the general climate of organisations does not make individuals free, pressures by superiors and conservative behaviours cause employees to stay away from organisational events (Fettahlioğlu & Tatlı, 2015). In this context, it is understood that managers' attitudes and behaviours such as the use of power and authority will have an impact on teachers' silence. This study focuses on these two concepts and examines the positional power sources shown by school administrators and teachers' organisational silence behaviours.

In the literature, there are studies on the power resources used by administrators and teachers' organisational silence. For example, Hasegawa and Gudykunst (1998) conducted a comparative study on how American and Japanese students use silence in their individual relationships. Çakıcı (2008) conducted a study on the reasons for silence in organisations, perceived consequences and issues of silence. Wang, Hsu-Hung, Chou-Yu, and Bor-Shiuan (2011) conducted research on the relationship

between group-oriented transformational leadership and collaborative prosocial voice and silence. Gültürk (2012) investigated the level of utilisation of power resources by primary school administrators. Nartgün and Kartal (2013) examined the thoughts of teachers about organisational cynicism and organisational silence and whether these thoughts differ according to the variables of seniority, gender and working time in the institution. Deviren (2019) examined the relationship between the organisational power resources used by primary school principals and teachers' organisational silence and motivation levels. However, there are almost no studies examining the relationship between the positional power resources shown by administrators and teachers' organisational silence levels. In this respect, there is a need to examine the relationship between these two variables in this study. Therefore, in this study, it was aimed to examine the relationship between the positional power resources shown by school administrators working in public schools affiliated to the Ministry of National Education and teachers' organisational silence behaviours. In line with this general purpose, answers to the following questions were sought:

What are the perceptions of teachers about the positional power resources used by school administrators and teachers' organisational silence levels?

Is there a relationship between the positional power sources used by school administrators and teachers' organisational silence?

Do the positional power sources that the school administrators use have an effect on teachers' organisational silence?

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

In this research, relational survey model, one of the general survey models, was used. General survey models are studies conducted on the whole universe or a sample to be taken from it in order to make a general judgement about a universe consisting of a large number of elements. The relational survey model, which is a type of survey model, is a study in which the existence and/or degree of covariance between two or more variables is determined (Karasar, 2016). In this study, the positional power sources (rewarding, legal and coercive power) used by school administrators were considered as "independent variable" and teachers' organisational silence levels were considered as "dependent variable". In this context, it was attempted to determine the relationship between these two variables according to teachers' perceptions.

2.2. Research Sample

The population of this research consists of 27.288 teachers working in public schools in Sultanbeyli (3834 people), Pendik (7644), Maltepe (4682 people), Kartal (3657 people), Sancaktepe (4564 people) and Tuzla (2907 people) districts of Istanbul province. The sample of the research consists of 519 teachers working in different branches and in different schools in these districts. While determining the sample of the research, convenience sampling method was used due to reasons such as financial constraints and time problems. Convenience sampling is a method in which each unit constituting the universe has the same probability of being included in the sample (Ural & Kılıç, 2013). Information about the demographic characteristics of the sample group is as follows:

Of the teachers participating in the study, 55.1% were female and 44.9% were male, 64.9% were married and 35.1% were single. 25.0% were in the age group of 30 and below, 55.5% were in the 31-40 age range, and 19.5% were in the 41 and above age group. Those with 11 years or more of total work experience constitute a very high proportion with 50.5%. Those with 1-5 years of total experience constitute 17.3% of the participants, while 32.2% have 6-10 years of total experience. In addition, in terms of working time in the current school, the Table 1. Teachers' perceptions about the positional power sources used by school administrators and teachers' organisational silence levels

Scales	N		SS
Positional Power Sources	519	4,03	,518
The Power of Rewarding		3,96	
Legal Power	519	4,26	,530
Coercive Power	519	3,83	,725

Organisational Silence 519 2,18 ,901

In Table 1, the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the perceptions of school administrators' use of positional power resources, perceptions of rewarding power, legal power, and coercive power and teachers' perceptions of organisational silence levels are given. Accordingly, in general, the perception levels of teachers towards the use of positional power resources by school administrators ($X=4,03$; $SD=,518$), perceptions of rewarding power ($X=3,96$; $SD=,675$), legal power ($X= 4,26$; $SD=,530$), coercive power ($X= 3,83$; $SD=,725$) were found to be at a good level while their organisational silence levels ($X=2,18$; $SD=,901$) were found to be at a low level.

The results obtained from the correlation analyses conducted to determine the level of relationship between the positional power sources used by school administrators and teachers' organisational silence levels are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Correlation analysis results to determine the relationship between the positional power sources used by school administrators and teachers' organisational silence levels

	Organisational Silence	The Power of Rewarding	Legal Power	Coercive Power
Organisational Silence	1	-,619**	-,345**	,285**
The Power of Rewarding		1	,419**	-,275**
Legal Power			1	,867
Coercive Power				1

** Significant at .05 level (2-tail).

As seen in Table 2, according to the correlation analysis results, it was found that there was a negative and moderate level relationship between teachers' organisational silence levels and the dimension of managers' use of the power of rewarding ($R=-0,619$; $p=0,000$). In addition, it was found that there was a negative and low level relationship between teachers' organisational silence levels and the dimension of managers' use of legal power ($R=-0,345$; $p=0,000$). However, a positive and low level relationship was found between teachers' organisational silence levels and the dimension of administrators' use of coercive power ($R=0,285$; $p=0,000$).

The results of the regression analysis conducted to determine the effect of positional power resources used by school administrators on teachers' organisational silence levels are given in Table 3. Table 3. Regression analysis results to determine the effect of positional power sources used by school administrators on teachers' silence

Model brief

Model	R	R ²	Modified R ²	Standard Error of Predictions
1	,347a	,120	,115	,84811

a. Predictors: (Fixed), the power of rewarding, legal power, coercive power

As seen in Table 3, the results of the regression analysis conducted to determine the effect of the power of rewarding, legal power and coercive power sub-dimensions used by the administrators on teachers' organisational silence levels are presented. According to these results, $R^2 = 0.12$ (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.11.5$). In other words, the independent variables of the power of rewarding, legal power and coercive power explain 11.5% of the variance of the dependent variable of organisational silence. In other words, it is seen that 11.5% of the change in organisational silence is caused by the effect of the power of rewarding, legal power and coercive power variables.

Table 4. Regression model coefficient analysis results

Model	Non-standardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p
(Fixed)	4,004	,309	12,944	12,944	,000
The Power of Rewarding	-,273	,069	-,209	-3,940	,000

Legal Power	-,363	,092	-,216	-3,946	,000
Coercive Power	,210	,057	,169	3,689	,000

a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Silence

As seen in Table 4, according to the regression analysis results, the effect of all three independent variables on the dependent variable is statistically significant. Firstly, there is a significant relationship between the power of rewarding and organisational silence ($p=0,000$) and the standardised β value was found as $-0,209$. Accordingly, it can be said that a one-unit increase in the power of rewarding will cause a $-0,209$ unit decrease in teachers' silence. In other words, school administrators' adoption of the power of rewarding approach as a positional power source will lead to a decrease in teachers' organisational silence behaviour. Secondly, there is a significant relationship between legal power and organisational silence ($p=0,000$) and the standardised β value was found as $-0,216$. Accordingly, it can be said that a one unit increase in the use of legal power will lead to a $-0,216$ unit decrease in the level of organisational silence. In other words, school administrators' adoption of legal power approach as a positional power source will lead to a decrease in organisational silence behaviour among teachers. Thirdly, there is a statistically significant relationship between coercive power and organisational silence ($p=0,000$) and the standardised β value was found as $0,169$. Accordingly, it can be said that a one-unit increase in coercive power will lead to a $0,169$ -unit increase in teachers' level of silence. In other words, school administrators' use of coercive power as a positional power source will lead to an increase in teachers' organisational silence behaviour. Thus, teachers may tend to avoid expressing opinions about the problems and developments in their schools.

3. Conclusion and Discussion

The results of the study showed that, according to the perceptions of teachers, the level of school administrators' use of positional power resources is at a good level, while teachers' organisational silence is at a low level. In the study conducted by Girgin (2019), it was found that teachers' organisational silence levels were at a medium level. In the study conducted by Yorulmaz (2014), it was found that school administrators preferred legal power at a high level according to teachers. As a result of the correlation analyses conducted in the study, it was concluded that there is a negative and moderate level relationship between teachers' organisational silence levels and the dimension of the use of the power of rewarding by administrators from positional power sources. In addition, it was concluded that there is a negative and low level relationship between teachers' organisational silence levels and the dimension of managers' use of legal power. However, it was concluded that there was a positive and low level relationship between teachers' organisational silence levels and the dimension of managers' use of coercive power. In the literature, similar to this result, it is seen that there are significant relationships between the power sources used by school administrators and organisational silence according to teachers' opinions (Apak, 2016; Deviren, 2019; Girgin, 2019; Karaman, 2015). For example, in Deviren's (2019) study, it was determined that there was a negative and low level relationship between the power of rewarding and personality, which are the organisational power sources used by primary school principals, and teachers' organisational silence levels. It was determined that there was a positive and low level relationship between coercive and legal power, which are among the organisational power sources used by primary school principals, and teachers' organisational silence levels. In the study conducted by Girgin (2019), a statistically significant and very weak negative relationship was found between the use of perceived managerial power resources and organisational silence levels of teachers.

As a result of the regression analyses conducted in the study, it was concluded that the power of rewarding, legal and coercive power had a significant effect on organisational silence. Accordingly, it is understood that administrators' adoption and application of "power of rewarding" as a positional power source will reduce the level of teachers' organisational silence behaviour. In other words, if school administrators appreciate teachers when necessary, if they show fair and objective attitudes in rewarding teachers, and if they reward their achievements fairly, teachers' level of exhibiting organisational silence behaviours will decrease. However, the long-term and continuous use of this power may have a negative effect on the emotional bonds and sense of satisfaction among employees

(Bakan & Büyükbeşe, 2010: 76). Therefore, it can be said that teachers can actively participate in the solution of the problems related to the school and contribute to the improvement of the educational performance and effectiveness of the school in general by expressing their own opinions easily. According to another result, it is understood that administrators' adoption and implementation of "legal power" approach will decrease the level of teachers' organisational silence behaviour. In other words, if school administrator's exhibit behaviours in accordance with the laws, comply with the official procedures by using their authority when necessary, and make everyone feel that they have official responsibilities in the execution and evaluation of all official affairs in the school, the level of teachers' exhibiting organisational silence behaviours will decrease. As a result, teachers will actively participate in the problems and issues related to the school and will express their own opinions against different situations. Therefore, it can be said that the educational performance and effectiveness of the school in general can increase. According to Altinkurt and Yılmaz (2012: 388), "exaggerated use of legal power may lead to authoritarianism in the leader and job dissatisfaction and conflicts in employees". Finally, as a result of the administrators' adoption and application of the "coercive power" approach, the level of teachers' organisational silence behaviours will increase. In other words, if school administrators constantly warn teachers in a coercive way or address those in a language that hurts them for different reasons while teachers are performing their duties, then the level of teachers' exhibiting organisational silence behaviours will increase. Because the uncontrolled use of such a power will deviate from the purpose of the organisation and create difficulties in the formation of a product or service with the targeted quality (Diş, 2015: 16). Therefore, it can be said that teachers will avoid actively participating in the problems and issues related to the school and will not want to express their opinions against different situations.

Doğan's (2022) study on the effect of power sources used by school administrators on organisational outcomes showed that legal power, the power of rewarding, charismatic power and expertise power used by school administrators had a positive and weak relationship with teachers' organisational citizenship behaviours and organisational trust, and a negative and weak relationship with organisational cynicism and organisational silence behaviours. On the other hand, coercive power used by school administrators has a very weak positive relationship with organisational citizenship, organisational trust and organisational silence, and a negative and very weak relationship with organisational cynicism. In Deviren's (2019) study, it was found that the organisational power sources used by primary school principals predicted all sub-dimensions of organisational silence at a significant but low level. In the study conducted by Girgin (2019), it was determined that the predictive powers of teachers' perceived level of managers' use of power resources on teachers' organisational silence levels was 1.4%.

As seen in the results of the research, it is understood that the power resources used by school administrators affect teachers' attitudes, behaviours and reactions, and thus organisational efficiency and performance, as stated by Doğan (2022). In this context, the following can be suggested: The organisational silence levels of teachers can be reduced by using other power dimensions that motivate employees and bind them to the organisation instead of using the coercive power dimension when school administrators use positional power resources. In-depth qualitative research can be conducted on the relationships between the power resources used by administrators and other variables. By informing teachers and administrators about power resources and organisational silence, it can be ensured that administrators use these powers and teachers use organisational silence more effectively and efficiently.

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