



## Examining The Effect of School Principals' Democratic Attitudes On Teachers' Perceptions of Organizational Alineation

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### Abstract

This study examined the effect of school principals' democratic attitudes on teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation. The survey method was used in the research, and the study population consisted of 7455 teachers working in Sakarya province. In comparison, the sample selected based on a simple random sampling technique consisted of 410 teachers. It was found that participant teachers perceived school principals' democratic attitudes as moderate level. Furthermore, teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes and organizational alienation did not differ statistically regarding their gender and professional experience. In contrast, their perceptions differed in terms of school level. At the end of the research, it was reached that teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation correlated statistically positively with school principals' democratic attitudes. School principals' democratic attitudes could explain 9% of the variance in teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation. In light of these findings, school principals should create environments where teachers can express themselves freely and use horizontal and vertical communication channels effectively. Further, teachers should take part in professional team projects with school principals, where they can be involved in decision-making processes to increase their perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes. Based on all findings obtained in the study, school principals should create environments where teachers can express themselves freely and use both horizontal and vertical communication channels effectively. Further, teachers should take part in professional team projects with school principals, where they can be involved in decision-making processes to increase their perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes.

**Keywords:** School Principal, Democratic Attitude, Organizational Alienation, Perception, School

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## Okul Müdürlerinin Demokratik Tutumlarının Öğretmenlerin Örgütsel Yabancılaşma Algıları Üzerindeki Etkisinin İncelenmesi

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### Öz

Okul müdürlerinin demokratik tutumlarının öğretmenlerin örgütsel yabancılaşmalarına etkisini incelemek amacıyla bu araştırma gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmada genel tarama modeli kullanılmış olup araştırmanın evrenini Sakarya ilinde görev yapmakta olan 7455 öğretmen oluştururken örneklemini ise basit seçkisiz örneklem yöntemiyle seçilmiş olan 410 öğretmen oluşturmaktadır. Araştırmaya katılan öğretmenlerin okul müdürlerinin demokratik tutumlarını orta düzey olarak algıladığı, okul müdürlerinin demokratik tutumlarına ilişkin öğretmen algılarının ve örgütsel yabancılaşma algılarının öğretmenlerin cinsiyet ve mesleki kıdem değişkenlerine göre istatistiksel olarak farklılık göstermediği, çalıştıkları okul türüne göre ise algılarının farklılık gösterdiği bulunmuştur. Araştırma sonucunda öğretmenlerin örgütsel yabancılaşma algılarının okul müdürlerince sergilenen demokratik tutumlarıyla istatistiksel olarak pozitif yönde bir ilişki içinde olduğu, okul müdürlerinin demokratik tutumlarının öğretmenlerin örgütsel yabancılaşma algılarının toplam varyansının %9'unu açıkladığı bulgusuna ulaşılmıştır. Tüm bulgular ışığında okul yöneticileri, okullarında tüm süreçlerde öğretmenlerin kendilerini rahat ifade edebilecekleri ortamlar yaratmaya çalışmaları; gerek dikey gerekse yatay iletişim kanallarını etkili kullanmaları; öğretmenlerin okul müdürlerinin demokratik tutumlarına ilişkin algılarının yükselmesi adına karar süreçlerine dâhil olabilecekleri okul yöneticileriyle mesleki takım projelerinde yer almaları sağlamaları önerilebilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Okul Müdürü, Demokratik Tutum, Örgütsel Yabancılaşma, Algı, Okul

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## Introduction

Education has a great role to make democracy a way of life and to be adopted by society. Societies learn, adopt, and apply democracy to their social lives in proportion to the democratic processes that their education systems have. Schools can discharge the role according to the decisions that concern their structure and all stakeholders (Aytac, 2013; Gul and Sarac, 2018; Gunduz and Sarac, 2021). School principals have a key role in that regard because the presence of democratic school principals is important for the school organization's efficiency and continuity (Celik, 2012; Durdagi, 2014). In addition, school principals' democratic attitudes in educational processes affect teachers' democratic attitudes toward students (Guner, 2002; Russel, 1995). Teachers' democratic attitudes will help students to adopt democracy more and reflect it in their behaviors. Therefore, this process that starts with the school principal can potentially affect the educational system and society (Acikalin, 1994; Bursalioglu, 2000).

In recent years, developments in social, cultural and economic fields have brought some changes in the functioning of schools and made it necessary to re-determine the qualifications of school principals. In this context, school principals, who can motivate all stakeholders in the inner and outer environment of the and enable them to focus on a common goal, are needed in today's world. In this respect, school principals are in a position that can directly affect teachers' behaviors and serve to establish a democratic climate and values in the school (Kilbas, 2013; Sagir, 2013). The success of educational processes and an effective and healthy communication environment can only be achieved based on teachers' reliance and commitment to school organization and respect for their decisions (Balci, 2001; Born, 1998). It is clear that this can be possible with school principals' democratic attitudes in school management. School principals having democratic attitudes value the people with whom they work together to achieve their goals, share the management authority with the subordinates, take their opinions in all educational and administrative processes, and shape leadership behaviors in line with their opinions. Further, they are agreeable, tolerant, and honest, demonstrate proper management, and show effective communication skills (Buyukkaragoz and Kesici, 1996). On the other hand, internal stakeholders may gradually trail, feel powerless, and decrease organizational happiness in the schools managed by school principals without democratic attitudes (Dogan and Aslan, 2021).

In the modern world, institutions are functionally integrated into each other. For this reason, it is inevitable for the employees to be alienated from their profession in bureaucratic organizations that have a formal structure and are based on production. This alienation leads to the inability of the employee to make sense of what she/he does in the organization and loss of working purpose (Froom, 1998). When faced with such a situation, the employee soon loses the meaning of the job that is available to him/her, is unable to see his/her contribution to both the organization and society and gradually turns into an individual who is alienated from the society, the organization and himself/herself (Basaran, 1998; Elma, 2003). Educational institutions are among the institutions that are most affected by alienation. Although the reasons are very diverse, one is that today's schools have become much more complex and multivariate due to various developments and changes occurring around schools' environments (Elma, 2003; Eryilmaz and Burgaz, 2011). From this perspective, alienation in school organizations occurs in the form of teachers finding the job meaningless due to the

school and its environment, feeling inadequate and powerless in the field of teaching, having negative feelings toward the school, and isolating himself/herself from their colleagues and school (Sooko, 2014; Yildiz, Akgun and Yildiz, 2013).

In this research, it was important to examine the effect of school principals' democratic attitudes on teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation. As mentioned earlier, relations were examined multidimensionally based on the teachers as the practitioners of educational activities. These possible psychological and social problems may be caused by school principals' undemocratic behaviors. In literature, although there are studies which reported the effect of school principals' democratic attitudes on school culture (Durdagi, 2014), change (Can, 2004), organizational trust (Gunduz and Sarac, 2021), stability in motivation (Bayar and Yildirim, 2022), organizational commitment (Kamar and Gokbulut, 2023) and democratic value (Karadag, Baloglu and Yalcinkayalar, 2006), finding any study regarding the effect of democratic attitude on organizational alienation shows the originality of the study. In this context, this study is carried out to examine the effect of school principals' democratic attitudes on teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation and try to find answers to the following questions:

- What are the levels of teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes?
- Do teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes differ in their gender, school level where they work and professional experience?
- What are the levels of teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation?
- Do teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation show differences in terms of their gender, school type where they work, and professional experience?
- Is there a statistically meaningful relationship between teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes and organizational alienation?
- Do school principals' democratic attitudes predict teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation?

## **Method**

### **Research Design**

This study is carried out to examine the effect of school principals' democratic attitudes on teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation. Teachers' views are evaluated using independent variables (gender, school type, professional experience). General survey method was used in the study. Survey methods are used to make a general judgment about a population consisting of many elements through data from the whole population or a sample (Karasar, 2006). Before the collection of research data, approval was requested and obtained from Ondokuz Mayıs University Social and Human Sciences Scientific Research Ethics Committee; the approval was dated 29/03/2023 and numbered 2023-170. The research project was initiated after the decision was taken that the research was ethically appropriate.

## Population and Sample

The population of the study consists of 7455 teachers working in Sakarya province and the sample consists of 410 teachers selected by simple random sampling technique. The demographic characteristics of participant teachers are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Distribution of Teachers' Demographic Characteristics*

Characteristics		N	%
Gender	Female	216	52.8
	Male	194	47.2
School Level	Middle School	238	58.0
	High Schol	172	42.0
Professional Experience	1-10 years	119	29.1
	11-19 years	148	36.0
	20 years and above	143	34.9

Table 1 shows 216 of the participant teachers are female (52.8%) and 194 male (47.2%). Two hundred thirty-eight are working at middle school (58.0%), while 172 are at high school (42.0%). One hundred nineteen teachers (29.1%) have 1-10 years of professional experience, while 148 of them (36.0%) have 11-19 years, and 143 of them (41.6%) have 20 years and above.

## Data Collection Tools

*Democratic Attitude Scale:* This scale, developed by Bakır (2007), aims to measure the school principals' democratic attitudes levels. The scale has one dimension and consists of 33 items. The scale is a 5-point Likert-type ranging between 1 as the most negative response and five as the most positive. The reliability coefficient of the scale was .98; however, the reliability analysis was repeated in the context of this study and found as .96.

*Work Alienation Scale:* The scale developed by Elma (2003) aims to measure teachers' organizational alienation level. The scale has four dimensions: powerlessness, meaningfulness, isolation, and school alienation, respectively, and consists of 38 items. The scale is a 5-point Likert-type ranging between 1 as the most negative response and five as the most positive. The reliability coefficient of the scale was .82; however, the reliability analysis was repeated in the context of this study and found as .81. The reliability coefficient of the scale is .82. However, the reliability analysis was repeated within the scope of this study and it was found to be .83 for the powerlessness dimension, .81 for the meaningfulness dimension, .82 for the isolation dimension, .82 for the school alienation dimension and .81 for the whole scale.

## Data Analysis

Since 9 of the 419 data collection tools collected from the research sample were

considered to be incomplete and/or inaccurate, 410 data were taken into consideration. After this stage, the kurtosis and skewness values of the expressions belonging to the scales were examined for normality condition and it was determined that these values were within the limits and it was decided that the normal distribution condition was met (Tabachnick and Fidel, 2003). In the study, t-test and one-way analysis of variance were conducted according to the number of groups appropriate to the demographic characteristics of school principals' democratic attitudes and teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation. Pearson correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between the variables. In addition, simple regression analysis was used to determine the percentage of teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes explaining their perceptions of organizational alienation. In order to apply regression analysis with the least squares method, some assumptions must be met. These assumptions are that the variables are normally distributed, the independent variables are independent of each other, the errors are normally distributed with zero mean and constant variance, and the error terms is the absence of autocorrelation. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that the data met the assumptions.

## Findings

This study examined the effect of school principals' democratic attitudes on teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation regarding some demographic variables (gender, professional experience, and school level).

### Findings Related to Teachers' Perceptions Toward School Principals' Democratic Attitudes

Teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Teachers' Perception Levels Towards School Principals' Democratic Attitudes

	N	$\bar{X}$	SD
Democratic Attitude Scale	410	2.83	.55

Table 2 shows teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes are  $\bar{X} = 2.83$ . This level shows that teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes are at a medium level.

### Findings related to Teachers' Perceptions toward School Principals' Democratic Attitudes in terms of Gender Variable

Teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes regarding gender variables are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Teachers' Perception Levels Towards School Principals' Democratic Attitudes Based on Gender Variable

	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t	df	p
Democratic Attitude Scale	Female	216	2.80	.52	-.050	408	.90
	Male	194	2.81	.53			

According to Table 3, teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes did not differ statistically in terms of gender [ $t_{(408)} = -.050$ ;  $p > .05$ ].

### Findings related to Teachers' Perceptions toward School Principals' Democratic Attitudes in terms of School level Variable

Findings related to teachers' perceptions levels towards school principals' democratic attitudes in terms of school level variables are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Teachers' Perception Levels Towards School Principals' Democratic Attitudes Based on School level Variable

Dimension	School Level	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t	df	p
Democratic Attitude Scale	Middle School	238	2.71	.50	-2.42	408	.03*
	High School	172	2.84	.51			

\* $p < .05$

The homogeneity of the variance test was conducted to determine teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes regarding school level. The variance was found to be homogeneous, so a t-test was used. According to Table 4, teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes differed significantly in terms of school level [ $t_{(408)} = -2.42$ ;  $p < .05$ ]. Based on this, high school teachers' perceptions are higher than middle school teachers.

### Findings related to Teachers' Perceptions toward School Principals' Democratic Attitudes in terms of Professional Experience Variable

Teachers' perceptions levels towards school principals' democratic attitudes in terms of professional experience variable are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Teachers' Perception Levels Towards School Principals' Democratic Attitudes Based on Professional Experience Variable

Dimension	Professional Experience (Year)	Descriptive Statistics					ANOVA Results			
		N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Se	SV	SS	df	F	p
Democratic Attitude Scale	1-10	119	2.77	.54	.08	Between Groups	.530	2	1.17	.34
	11-19	148	2.81	.44	.04					
	20 and above	143	2.72	.54	.04	Within Groups	72.077	407		
	Total	410	2.74	.50	.03	Total	72.407	409		

The homogeneity of the variance test was conducted to determine teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes regarding professional experience. The variance was found to be homogenous, so one-way ANOVA was used. According to table 5, teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes did not differ statistically in terms of school level [ $F_{(2,407)} = 1.17; p > .05$ ].

### Findings Related to Teachers' Perceptions of Organizational Alienation

Findings related to teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Teachers' Perception Levels for Organizational Alienation

Dimension	N	$\bar{X}$	SD
Powerlessness	410	1.13	.79
Meaningfulness	410	2.00	.12
Isolation	410	2.22	.94
School Alienation	410	2.65	.93
Whole Scale	410	2.61	.80

According to Table 2, teachers' perception levels towards school principals' democratic attitudes are  $\bar{X} = 1.13$  for the powerlessness dimension,  $\bar{X} = 2.00$  for meaningfulness,  $\bar{X} = 2.22$  for isolation, and  $\bar{X} = 2.65$  for school alienation. Further, the mean for the whole scale is  $\bar{X} = 2.61$ . It was found that teachers' perceptions of the whole scale and school alienation dimension were at medium level, while their perceptions of all other sub-dimensions were at low level.

### Findings related to Teachers' Perceptions of Organizational Alienation in terms of Gender Variable

Teachers' perception levels for organizational alienation in terms of gender variable are shown in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Teachers' Perception Levels for Organizational Alienation in terms of Gender Variable

Dimension	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	t	df	p
Powerlessness	Female	216	1.79	.75	-1.458	408	.152
	Male	194	1.94	.79			
Meaningfulness	Female	216	1.73	.80	-1.254	408	.253
	Male	194	2.15	.83			
Isolation	Female	216	2.22	.82	-.179	408	.860
	Male	194	2.21	.79			

School Alienation	Female	216	2.20	.85	-.139	40 8	.891
	Male	194	2.16	.89			
The Whole Scale	Female	216	1.97	.80	-.977	40 8	.299
	Male	194	2.14	.79			

The homogeneity of the variance test was conducted to determine teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation regarding gender. The variance was found to be homogeneous, so a t-test was used. According to Table 7, teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation did not differ statistically in both all dimensions and the whole scale in terms of gender [ $t_{(408)} = -.977$ ;  $p > .05$ ].

### Findings related to Teachers' Perceptions of Organizational Alienation in terms of School Level Variable

Teachers' perception levels for organizational alienation in terms of school level variable are shown in Table 8.

**Table 8.** Teachers' Perception Levels for Organizational Alienation in terms of School Level Variable

Dimension	School Level	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	T	df	p
Powerlessness	Middle school	238	1.80	.76	-2.81	408	.00*
	High School	172	2.12	.81			
Meaningfulness	Middle school	238	1.93	.88	-1.41	408	.19
	High School	172	2.15	.90			
Isolation	Middle school	238	2.13	1.00	-.50	408	.72
	High School	172	2.20	.88			
School Alienation	Middle school	238	2.11	.92	-2.64	408	.02*
	High School	172	2.31	.92			
The Whole Scale	Middle school	238	1.88	.79	-2.19	408	.03*
	High School	172	2.13	.80			

\* $p < .05$

The homogeneity of the variance test was conducted to determine teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation regarding school level. The variance was found to be homogeneous, so a t-test was used. Table 8 shows that teachers' perceptions of

organizational alienation differed significantly in powerlessness [ $t_{(408)} = -2.81; p < .05$ ], school alienation [ $t_{(408)} = -2.64; p < .05$ ] dimensions, and the whole scale in terms of school level. [ $t_{(408)} = -2.19; p < .05$ ]. According to this, high school teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation are higher than middle school teachers in the powerlessness dimension and the whole scale.

**Findings related to Teachers' Perceptions of Organizational Alienation in terms of Professional Experience Variable**

Findings of teachers' perceptions levels for organizational alienation in terms of professional experience variable are shown in Table 9.

**Table 9.** Teachers' Perceptions of Organizational Alienation in terms of Professional Experience Variable

Dimension	Professional experience (year)	Descriptive Statistics					ANOVA Results				
		N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Se	SV	SS	df	F	p	
Powerlessness	1-10	119	1.89	0.74	0.11	Between groups	.211	2	.159	.888	
	11-19	148	1.19	0.86	0.09						
	20 and above	143	1.90	0.76	0.06	Within groups	192.11	407			
	Total	410	1.21	0.80	0.07	Total	192.33				
Meaningfulness	1-10	119	2.11	0.82	0.12	Between groups	.086	2	.062	.953	
	11-19	148	1.88	0.96	0.11						
	20 and above	143	2.10	0.88	0.06	Within groups	244.04	407			
	Total	410	2.11	0.89	0.07	Total	244.12				
Isolation	1-10	119	2.20	0.69	0.10	Between groups	.020	2	.22	.913	
	11-19	148	2.21	1.01	0.10						
	20 and above	143	2.19	0.89	0.11	Within groups	272.90	407			
	Total	410	2.18	0.91	0.06	Total	272.92				
School Alienation	1-10	119	2.32	0.89	0.13	Between groups	.961	2	.562	.529	
	11-19	148	2.29	1.01	0.11						
	20 and above	143	2.31	0.88	0.10	Within groups	263.29	407			
	Total	410	2.30	0.92	0.11	Total	264.26				
The Whole Scale	1-10	119	2.10	0.72	0.12	Between groups	.091	2	.069	.948	
	11-19	148	2.11	0.88	0.09						

20 and above	143	2.10	0.81	0.06	Within groups	197.09	407
Total	410	2.11	0.85	0.07	Total	197.19	

The homogeneity of the variance test was conducted to determine teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation in terms of professional experience. The variance was found to be homogeneous, so one-way ANOVA was used. As shown in Table 9, teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation did not differ statistically in both all dimensions and the whole scale in terms of professional experience [ $F_{(2;407)} = .069$ ;  $p > .05$ ].

### Findings on Correlation Analysis

The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes and organizational alienation. The findings are shown in Table 10.

**Table 10.** Correlation coefficients

		1	2	3	4	5	6
1- Democratic attitude	<i>r</i>	1					
2- Powerlessness	<i>r</i>	-.820**	1				
3- Meaningfulness	<i>r</i>	-.569**	.560**	1			
4- Isolation	<i>r</i>	-.491**	.427**	.390**	1		
5- School alienation	<i>r</i>	-.652**	.536**	.571**	.760**	1	
6- Organizational Alienation Scale	<i>r</i>	-.619**	.431**	.352**	.733**	.651**	1

\*\*  $p < .01$

Table 10 shows that there is a moderate negative relationship between teachers' perceptions of principals' democratic attitudes and organizational alienation ( $r = -.619$ ;  $p < .01$ ).

### Findings on Regression Analysis

Regression analyses were used to determine whether school principals' democratic attitudes predict teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation. Obtained findings are presented in Table 11.

**Table 11.** Regression Analysis Results

Variable	B	ShB	$\beta$	t	p
Constant	2.411	.069	-	32.422	.000
Perception of Organizational Alienation	.183	.042	.411	5.658	.000

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R = .399	R <sup>2</sup> = .091
F= 31.781	p = .00

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Table 11 shows a moderate positive relationship between school principals' democratic attitudes and teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation ( $r=.399$ ). Further, findings indicate that school principals' democratic attitudes can explain the 9% variance in teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation.

### Conclusion, Discussion and Suggestions

This study examines the effect of school principals' democratic attitudes on teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation. The first finding was that teachers perceived school principals' democratic attitudes as moderate. This finding is in line with Bayır's study (2016). In literature, there are evaluations that school principals' democratic attitudes should be high today, and studies reported that school principals' democratic attitudes levels are high (Ozbek, 2016; Terzi and Kurt, 2005). Schools are undoubtedly the organizations where democracy is taught and established (Zencirci, 2013). As a result, it is expected and desired that all stakeholders in educational organizations have a highly democratic attitude.

The second finding was that there is no statistical difference in their gender in teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes. This finding is consistent with Bakır's studies (2007, 2016). However, other studies state that male teachers' perceptions had higher than females (Akyel, 2015; Gulmek, 2012; Ozbek, 2015; Ozdemir, 2012). This result can be explained with that male teachers have a closer relationship with school principals. The existence of democracy depends on the presence of people who believe in democratic values and fair practices and can only be achieved without discriminating against gender, ethnicity, language, or religion (Demir, 2010).

The third finding reported that teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes differed significantly regarding school level. According to this, it was found that high school teachers' perceptions were higher than middle school teachers. Besides, Gunduz and Sarac (2021) reported similar findings. The reason may be that high school teachers must work more closely and cooperatively with school principals than middle school teachers.

The fourth finding was that teachers' perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes differed significantly regarding professional experience. This finding is consistent with Bakır's (2007), Gulmek's (2012), and Gunduz and Sarac's studies (2021); however, there are also other studies reporting different findings (Akyel, 2015; Ozbek, 2015; Ozdemir, 2012).

The fifth finding reported that teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation were moderate. This finding is in line with Abaslı's study (2018); however, it was found in other studies that teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation level are low (Calisir, 2006; Eryilmaz, 2010; Kinik, 2010; Kovanci, 2020). Nevertheless, the lack of a common purpose and the limited and inadequate professional support can increase the teachers' alienation (Thomson, 1994).

The sixth finding was that teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation did not differ statistically regarding their gender. Other researchers reported similar findings (Demirel Yazici, 2019; Guloren, 2011; Unsal, 2018). However, unlike these, other studies report teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation in support of female teachers (Aslan, 2008; Minibas, 1993) or male teachers (Akpolat, 2014; Cevik, 2009; Kartal, 2019). Therefore, when interpreting obtained findings, it can be said that gender is ineffective for their perceptions of organizational alienation.

The seventh finding found that teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation differed significantly regarding school level. According to this, high school teachers' perceptions showed meaningful differences in the scale and the dimensions of powerlessness and school alienation. The fact that teachers cannot give enough support to their students may cause their alienation. Other studies supported this finding (Eryilmaz, 2010; Kahveci, 2015; Kazoglu, 2014; Kinik, 2010; Temel, 2010); however, studies are reporting that teachers' perceptions did not differ in terms of the school level (Guloren, 2011; Kihri, 2013; Unsal, 2018). The reason the perception is higher in high school teachers may stem from their students' age group. In high schools, anxiety about the future is high and adolescent psychology is experienced intensely by the students. In this regard, Zielinski and Hoy (1983) stated that the alienation of subject teachers is higher than that of classroom teachers due to the instructional difficulty.

The eighth finding reported that teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation showed statistically no difference in professional experience. Some researchers found similar results (Emir, 2012; Eryilmaz, 2010; Sirin, 2009; Unsal, 2018), while some reported that teachers with more teaching years experienced more organizational alienation than those with fewer teaching years (Erdem, 2014; Guloren, 2011; Kahveci, 2015) or teachers with less teaching years experienced more organizational alienation than those with more teaching years (Celep, 2008; Erdem, 2014; Kesik and Cömert, 2014). In light of the obtained findings, professional experience is not an effective factor in teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation.

The study also found a statistically positive relationship between school principals' democratic attitudes and teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation. School principals' democratic attitudes could explain 9% of the variance in teachers' perceptions of organizational alienation. In literature, researchers reported the relationship between organizational alienation and various variables (Akpolat and Ebru, 2015; Dogan and Aslan, 2021; Kahveci and Demirtas, 2014; Koz and Secilmis, 2021; Kurtulmus and Karabiyik, 2016; Zengin and Kaygın, 2016). Although it was not found any study focused on the relationship between organizational alienation and school principals' democratic attitudes; however, it may be hypothesized that democratic attitudes and organizational alienation have a negative relationship considering the positive nature of school principals' democratic attitudes and the negative nature of organizational alienation. Accordingly, teachers are expected to experience negative emotions and alienation and be unhappy in educational organizations where a democratic climate is not dominant.

Based on all findings obtained in the study, school principals should create environments where teachers can express themselves freely and use both horizontal and vertical communication channels effectively. Further, teachers should take part in professional

team projects with school principals, where they can be involved in decision-making processes to increase their perceptions of school principals' democratic attitudes.

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