



*Araştırma Makalesi • Research Article*

## The Impact of Perceived Organizational Democracy on the Quality of Work Life: An Investigation in the Banking Sector

### *Örgütsel Demokrasi Algısının İş Yaşam Kalitesine Etkisi: Bankacılık Sektöründe Bir İnceleme*

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#### ABSTRACT

This study's purpose is to investigate the effect of perceived organizational democracy of bank employees on work-related life quality. The sample consisted of 397 banking employees. The data were collected by the Organizational Democracy Scale (ODS), and Work-Related Quality of Life Scale (WRQoL). It found that the WRQoL (mean:  $3.33 \pm .79$ ) and ODS scores (mean:  $3.24 \pm .74$ ) of the participants were slightly above the middle level. Regression analysis shows that the subscales of organizational democracy, participation-criticism, transparency, and justice significantly affect the WRQoL (adjusted  $R^2: .67$ ). The results of the study revealed that the organizational democracy perceptions of bank employees significantly affect the Quality of work-life (QWL), and it can be improved by promoting democracy in organizations.

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#### ÖZ

Bu araştırma banka çalışanlarının örgütsel demokrasi algılarının iş yaşam kalitesine etkisini incelemek amacıyla yürütülmüştür. Araştırmanın örneklemini 397 banka çalışanı oluşturmuştur. Veriler, Örgütsel Demokrasi Ölçeği (ODS) ve İş Yaşam Kalitesi Ölçeği (WRQoL) ile toplanmıştır. Katılımcıların WRQoL (ort:  $3.33 \pm .79$ ) ve ODS puanlarının (ort:  $3.24 \pm .74$ ) orta düzeyin biraz üzerinde olduğu belirlenmiştir. Regresyon analizi, örgütsel demokrasi ölçeğinin katılım-eleştiri, şeffaflık ve adalet alt boyutlarının banka çalışanlarının iş yaşam kalitesi puanlarını önemli ölçüde etkilediğini ortaya çıkarmıştır (düzeltilmiş  $R^2: .67$ ). Çalışmanın sonuçları, banka çalışanlarının örgütsel demokrasi algılarının iş yaşam kalitesini önemli ölçüde etkilediğini ve örgütlerde demokrasiyi teşvik ederek iş yaşam kalitesinin iyileştirilebileceğini düşündürmüştür.

## 1. Introduction

Quality of work-life (QWL) can be defined as an employee expressing his/her life well due to factors related to his/her job. QWL is directly related to the quality of life of individuals. Emotional reactions of individuals toward work-life affect other areas of life outside of work. Alternately, the QWL of employees contributes to increased job satisfaction, organizational commitment, productivity, and performance,

thus to the economic effects of an enterprise (Sirgy et al. 2008). Due to all these positive outcomes, QWL has become one of the variables in the field of organizational behavior that has been intensely examined recently. Many companies implement programs to improve the QWL and job satisfaction of employees to increase productivity and job performance (Sirgy et al. 2008). These programs aim to meet the needs and happiness of employees, and factors affecting QWL should be taken into account to successfully develop

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such programs. Many factors are associated with QWL (Yadav and Khanna 2014), and one of the factors affecting it may be organizational democracy. Organizational democracy provides a broad way of thinking about common interests and reducing strife and conflict through a positive socio-moral atmosphere that can contribute to improving the QWL. In the literature, there is no study on organizational democracy. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of organizational democracy on the QWL. The study was conducted to investigate employees' perceptions of organizational democracy and their QWL, the relationship between these perceptions and behaviors, and the demographic characteristics of the employees.

## 2. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses Development

### 2.1. Organizational Democracy

The implementation of democracy, which is a management tool, at the organizational level is called organizational democracy. Democratic practices are not limited to governments, economies, or societies and apply to organizational settings. Democratic management practices play a key role in increasing organizational efficiency. Additionally, organizational democracy is expressed as an obligation to develop innovation and achieve high performance. The term “organizational democracy” was brought into the management literature in 1897 by Sidney and Beatrice Webb (Müller-Jentsch 2008). It has been used as near-synonymous under various names. In the literature, “organizational democracy, industrial democracy, personnel participation, management of participants, participation in the decision process, employee control, self-management, and workplace democracy” are terms reflecting similar purposes and can be used interchangeably (McGregor 2005; Weber et al. 2011; Weber et al. 2012; Geçkil and Tikici 2016; Kerr 2004). Democratic practices in organizations will be a different but applicable way of managing and regulating companies by placing employees at the “center of decision-making” (Kaleem 2019: 22). Harrison and Freeman (2004) define organizational democracy as “any action, structure or process that increases the power of a larger group of people to influence the decisions and activities of an institution.” Cheney (1995), defined democracy as “a system that not only truly reflects individual goals and feeling (work enrichment, right to express and equitable remuneration) but also encompasses institute’s objectives (efficiency and effectiveness).” This system actively fosters the connection between these two sets of concerns by encouraging individual contributions to important organizational choices, and allows for the ongoing modification of an organization's activities and policies by the group. In short, he considered organizational democracy as a process; specifically collective development, a celebration of self-reflection and individual opportunity. Poole (1979) and Poole et al. (2001) defined organizational democracy as “using the power of the workers or their representatives over the decisions in the workplace, the regulation of the organizational structure and the distribution of managerial authority.” Accordingly, employees can discuss, share, and solve their daily work.

“Democratization or Democracy” in the workplace is a concept used to denote almost everything from non-

authoritative management style to worker-led or participating firms (Cheney 1995; Freeman and Harrison 2004; Kerr 2004; Weber et al. 2009; Weber et al. 2011; Yazdani 2010; Geçkil and Tikici, 2016). The term “democratic organization” can be used for the structure that emerges as a result of the establishment of the principles of democracy in an organization. Democratic organization is not a standard model. As in political democracies, there may be democratic structures in place with the principles of democracy at different levels. Politically, the minimum condition for saying that a government is democratic is the election of managers by making free elections on time. The minimum condition for democratic organizations is the existence of employees' practices to participate in the management. Beyond this, the recognition of the culture of criticism and the right at the organizational level, the establishment of a transparent, fair, and egalitarian structure, and the establishment of accountability, as a rule, represent an advanced democratic organization. For democratic principles to be embedded in an organization and to ensure their permanence, administrative power must be shared.

In addition to its social, managerial, cultural, and environmental impacts on an organization (Weber et al. 2012), the researchers found that organizational democracy is an important determinant of various organizational outcomes expected, including increased satisfaction level shareholder engagement, increased innovation, and improved organizational performance (Harrison and Freeman 2004; Han and Garg 2018). The literature acknowledges that the existence of democratic practices in organizations supports employees' skills and knowledge levels. Democratic practices eliminate unprofessional behavior and increase work efficiency (Yazdani 2010). Moreover, it also helps to improve employee morale (Sagie and Koslowsky 2000), provides better control over organizational structure and processes (Foley and Polanyi 2006), and helps create new organizational structures and practices (Harrison and Freeman 2004; Yazdani 2010). Anti-bureaucracy (pro-democracy) has been proven to create positive workplace behavior in reducing conflicts and illegal strikes by allowing employees to express themselves and interact with their colleagues (Carney and Getz 2013). Organizational democracy provides a broad way of thinking about common interests by reducing conflicts and disagreements through the positive socio-moral atmosphere it creates. Thanks to all these positive effects, it can contribute to QWL.

### 2.2. The Quality of Work Life

The wide scope surrounding QWL makes it difficult for researchers to make a common definition (Akar and Üstüner 2017: 163), and, as such, different definitions emerge in the literature. However, those interested in the issue of QWL admit that it is generally concerned with employees' well-being (Danna and Griffin, 1999). Knox and Irving (1997) suggested that factors in QWL may affect the job performance of healthcare workers. It has been suggested that the nature of the job, organizational change, and pressure at work lead to high levels of health problems (Cox and Griffiths 1995). The quality of business life is the degree of excellence brought by work and working conditions that are beneficial to general satisfaction and productivity, first at the

individual level and then at the organizational level (Batra 2016:212).

QWL, in the broadest sense, is an individual's evaluation of his/her life as good, depending on what the job offers him/her while evaluating the job. This assessment includes both the work environment and the individual's living space depending on the job. A "good" evaluation indicates that QWL is high. Studies in the literature show positive behavioral changes that occur due to the increase in QWL; increasing it decreases the level of absenteeism due to illness of employees (Tasho et al. 2005) and increases the level of organizational commitment (Erdem 2010; Hong et al. 2010; Karaköse and Bozgeyikli 2012; Singh and Singh 2015; Easton and Van Laar 2018). Judge et al. (2001) found a significant relationship between QWL and productivity. Similarly, Pot and Koningsveld (2009) found a significant positive correlation between QWL and performance in the analysis of the findings from the Finnish workplace development program. Bank employees think that QWL will increase productivity (Batra 2016:221).

Conversely, it is possible to talk about organizational and behavioral variables that affect QWL. Many factors such as employee satisfaction, employee performance, working life policies, organizational commitment, and burnout are examined among the factors that can be related to QWL (Yadav and Khanna 2014). Employees' perception of organizational democracy can be considered as one of the variables due to its positive outcomes. Weber et al. (2008) emphasize that democratic values in organizations foster socially responsible and democratic readiness of employees. Democratic practices provide efficiency in decision-making with practices of participation in management, and they can transform an organization into a transparent, equal, and fair organization, increasing the level of satisfaction (Geçkil et al. 2017:662) and producing positive behavioral results such as organizational commitment and devotion. Organizational democracy can be an important factor affecting QWL because of these outputs. Gupta (2016) found in a study of bank employees that one of the eight factors affecting QWL is employee democracy. However, there is no study examining the effect of organizational democracy on QWL. This issue we have dealt with constitutes the original aspect of the study. Examining the impact of the perception of organizational democracy on QWL can guide business managers and employees in improving it.

Hypotheses based on these purposes are provided. While creating the hypotheses, study features were considered together with demographic features.

H<sub>1</sub>: The perception of organizational democracy positively affects QWL.

In studies on work life quality, it is seen that demographic variables affect the perception of work life quality (Çelebi and Uysal 2019; Ayesha et al. 2012). Therefore, the following hypothesis has been established in order to examine the relationship between demographic variables and work life quality.

H<sub>2</sub>: QWL is affected by the demographic characteristics of the employees.

In studies on organizational democracy, it is seen that demographic variables affect the perception of

organizational democracy (Tokay and Eyüboğlu 2018; Geçkil and Tikici 2016; Geçkil et al. 2016). In this direction, the following hypothesis has been created in order to examine the relationship between demographic variables and organizational democracy.

H<sub>3</sub>: Organizational democracy perception is affected by the demographic characteristics of the employees.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Type of Study

This study, which examines the effect of organizational democracy on the QWL among bank employees, is planned as descriptive and analytic.

#### 3.2. The Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consists of state, private, and Islamic bank employees in Konya province. The Banks Association of Turkey, according to data dated December 31, 2019, had 2,879 employees in state and private banks in Konya (TBB 2019). In Islamic banks, there were 586 employees in Konya. In total, there were 3465 bank employees in Konya. The sample size was calculated using the formula  $[n = Nt^2\sigma^2 / d^2 (N-1) + t^2\sigma^2]$  for which the population size is known (Sümbüloğlu and Sümbüloğlu 2007). In the formula,  $t = 1.96$  95% confidence interval,  $\sigma = 70$  is the standard deviation of the previous study (Çelebi and Uysal 2019), and  $d = 8$  means the  $\pm$  deviation value from the mean. Accordingly, the sample size was calculated to be at least 375. However, considering the possible data loss, a questionnaire was distributed to 420 bank employees who met the inclusion criteria. There were 402 questionnaires returned, 5 of them were filled incompletely. As a result, 397 bank employees were included in the sample. In the selection of individuals to be included in the sample, the criterion of "having been working at the bank for at least 1 year" was taken into account.

Data collection tools: Data were collected by a questionnaire containing socio-demographic characteristics of the participants, the Organizational Democracy Scale (ODS), and the Work-Related Quality of Life (WRQoL) Scale. The questionnaire form developed by the researchers consists of eight questions: age, gender, marital status, education level, job/status, time worked, bank type, and income level of the participants.

#### 3.3. Organizational Democracy Scale

The ODS was developed by Geçkil and Tikici (2015) to measure employees' perceptions of organizational democracy toward their organizations. The scale consists of 28 items and 5 sub-dimensions. Sub-dimensions consist of Participation-criticism (8 items), Transparency (6 items), Justice (5 items), Equality (6 items), and Accountability (3 items). The ODS is a five-point Likert type and the responses to the items are scored as 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (undecided), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree). There are two reverse expressions in the scale (items 21 and 23) and the scores given to them when calculating the scale score are reversed as 5 = 1, 4 = 2, 3 = 3, 2 = 4, and 1 = 5. The highest score that can be obtained from the scale is 140, and the

lowest score is 28. Higher scores mean higher perceptions of organizational democracy by employees. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used in the Lisrel program to test the construct validity of the Organizational Democracy Scale. As a result of CFA, the RMSEA value of the scale was found to be 0.073, Chi-square 1066.44, degree of freedom (df) 340. The chi/df was calculated as 3.136. Having the RMSEA value of the scale  $\leq .08$  and the chi-square/df value between 3-5 indicate a good fit (Çokluk, Şekerciođlu, and Büyüköztürk, 2013: 271). Comparative Fit Index (CFI) .903 of the Organizational Democracy scale. The fact that these values are close to 1 indicates that the fit is good (Çokluk, Şekerciođlu, Büyüköztürk, 2013: 270). It has been observed that the organizational democracy scale fit indices indicate good fit. Goodness of Fit Index (GFI). 820, Normed Fit Index (NFI) .864 were found and these values are acceptable (Hooper vd., 2008: 55). Geçkil and Tikici (2015) found the Chronbach Alpha value of the total scale to be .95. In this study, the Chronbach Alpha value was .96. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the scale sub-dimensions was found to be .939 for Participation-criticism, .892 for Transparency, .871 for Justice, .605 for Equality, and .807 for Accountability. Cronbach's alpha is defined as very reliable if  $0.60 < R_2 < 0.80$ , and highly reliable if  $0.80 < R_2 < 1.00$  (Yıldız and Uzunsakal, 2018: 19).

### 3.4. Work-Related Quality of Life Scale

The WRQoL scale was developed by Van Laar, Edwards, and Easton (2007). The scale was adapted to Turkish by Akar and Üstüner (2017) and consists of 23 items and 6 dimensions: Job and career satisfaction (6 items), General well-being (6 items), Job control (3 items), Working conditions (3 items), Work-life (2 items), and Family-work life balance (3 items). It is a 5-point Likert type and is scored as 1 (disagree), 2 (slightly agree), 3 (moderately agree), 4 (mostly agree), and 5 (completely agree). Items 7, 9, and 19 in the scale are in reverse with reversed scores. Higher scores obtained mean higher quality of life of employees. Akar and Üstüner (2017) reported the Chronbach Alpha value of the scale as .93 for its total. In this study, the Chronbach Alpha value was .94. Permission was obtained from the authors to use their scale.

### 3.5. Data Collection

Researchers went to banks, explained the study, and gave questionnaires to employees who met the inclusion criteria. They asked that questionnaires be completed conveniently by participants and were collected later within a day or two. Voluntary participation in the study was taken as a basis. The data were collected between May 3, 2019, and January 28, 2019. Since the data were collected in 2019, the ethics committee permission was not obtained.

### 3.6. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed on the computer using SPSS 21. Skewness and Kurtosis values were checked to determine whether the data were suitable for normal distribution. It was observed that the Skewness values (between .882 and -.344), and the Kurtosis values ranged from .445 to 1.035. According to Tabachnick and Fidel, values varying between -1.5 and +1.5 are accepted to be normal distribution (Tabachnick and Fidel, 2013). It was also observed that

histogram graphics were distributed normally. Mean and standard deviation analyzes were used to calculate the scale scores. It was found that the data were distributed normally. Scale scores were compared using an independent t-test in two groups and One Way Anova analysis in three or more groups. Correlations between scales were tested using Pearson's correlation analysis. Multiple linear regression (Enter Model) analysis was performed to examine the effect of ODS subscales on the QWL. In the regression model, WRQoL scale scores were considered as dependent variables. ODS sub-dimension scores were added to the model as independent variables.

## 4. Results

It is shown that the results obtained in this study which investigate the effect of the perceived organizational democracy on bank employees' quality of work-life in this section.

In Table 1, 36.3% of participants are aged 32–37 years, 56.9% are male, 61.7% are married, 77.6% graduated with a bachelor's degree, 52.6% work in public banks, 42.8% worked in the enterprise within the first 5 years, 30.2% have a monthly income between 2001 and 3000 TL, and 25.7% work as “authorized” in the bank.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Characteristics of Bank Employees (n = 397)

Descriptive Characteristics	n	%	
Age	20–25	89	22.4
	26–31	93	23.4
	32–37	144	36.3
	38–43	47	11.8
	44–49	17	4.3
	50 and above	7	1.8
Gender	Male	226	56.9
	Female	171	43.1
Marital status	Married	245	61.7
	Single	152	38.3
Education status	High school	15	3.8
	Associate degree	15	3.8
	Bachelor's degree	308	77.6
	Postgraduate	59	14.9
Bank Type	Public	209	52.6
	Private	72	18.1
	Islamic	116	29.2
Working Time in Business	0–5 years	170	42.8
	6–11 years	154	38.8
	12–17 years	54	13.6
	18–23 years	13	3.3
	24 and above	6	1.5
Income	2001–3000 TL	120	30.2
	3001–4000 TL	97	24.4
	4001–5000 TL	90	22.7
	5001–6000 TL	38	9.6
	6001 and above	52	13.1
	Job Position	Manager	15
Director		75	18.9
Director Asst.		27	6.8
Authorized		102	25.7
Authorized Assistant		58	14.6
Booking Clerk		54	13.6
Other*	66	16.6	
<b>Total</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

\*Customer Representative, Individual Portfolio Manager, Corporate Portfolio Manager, Credit Card Marketer, POS Device Marketer

**Table 2.** Bank Employees' WRQoL Scale and ODS Total, and Subscales Mean Scores (n = 397)

Scales	Min.	Max.	Item Means	Standard Deviation
<b>WRQoL Total</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>3.33</b>	<b>.69</b>
Job and career satisfaction	1.00	5.00	3.55	.79
General well-being	1.00	5.00	3.31	.73
Control at work	1.00	5.00	3.19	.89
Working conditions	1.00	5.00	3.47	.85
Stress at work	1.00	5.00	3.16	.78
Home-work interface	1.00	5.00	3.28	.84
<b>ODS Total</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>4.80</b>	<b>3.24</b>	<b>.74</b>
Participation-Criticism	1.00	5.00	3.09	.92
Transparency	1.00	5.00	3.43	.86
Justice	1.00	5.00	3.07	.93

Equality	1.00	5.00	3.37	.63
Accountability	1.00	5.00	3.21	.94

In Table 2, the total mean score of the WRQoL scale of the bank employees is  $3.33 \pm .69$ . When the subscales were examined, it was found that the highest mean score was job and career satisfaction ( $3.55 \pm .79$ ). The subscale with the lowest mean score was stress at work ( $3.16 \pm .78$ ). The total score means of the participants in the ODS was  $3.24 \pm .74$ . It was determined that bank employees got the highest score at transparency ( $3.43 \pm .86$ ) and the lowest score at justice from the subscales of the ODS ( $3.07 \pm .93$ ).

The relationship of the bank employees' WRQoL scale scores alongside their descriptive characteristics is in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Comparison of the WRQoL and ODS Total Scores According to the Descriptive Characteristics of Bank Employees (n = 397)

Descriptive Characteristics (n)	WRQoL Scale		ODS Scale		
	Mean $\pm$ SS	Tests/p	Mean $\pm$ SS	Tests/p	
<b>Gender</b>	Female (171)	$3.32 \pm .73$	$t = -.233$ $p = .816$	$3.28 \pm .72$	$t = .958$ $p = .338$
	Male (226)	$3.33 \pm .66$		$3.21 \pm .75$	
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married (245)	$3.28 \pm .71$	$t = -1.84$ $p = .066$	$3.17 \pm .77$	$t = -2.30$ $p = .022$
	Single (152)	$3.41 \pm .65$		$3.34 \pm .68$	
<b>Age Group</b>	20–25 (89) <sup>a</sup>	$3.56 \pm .59$	$F = 4.682$ $p = .000$ $a > c$	$3.45 \pm .64$	$F = 5.400$ $p = .000$ $a, b > c$
	26–31 (93) <sup>b</sup>	$3.35 \pm .69$		$3.36 \pm .69$	
	32–37 (144) <sup>c</sup>	$3.14 \pm .72$		$3.00 \pm .78$	
	38–43 (47) <sup>d</sup>	$3.40 \pm .64$		$3.30 \pm .71$	
	44–49 (17) <sup>e</sup>	$3.42 \pm .74$		$3.30 \pm .77$	
	50 and over (7) <sup>f</sup>	$3.24 \pm .76$		$3.15 \pm .90$	
<b>Education Level</b>	High School (15)	$3.19 \pm .79$	$F = .443$ $p = .723$	$3.25 \pm .72$	$F = .244$ $p = .866$
	Associate degree (15)	$3.39 \pm .61$		$3.39 \pm .61$	
	Undergraduate (308)	$3.32 \pm .70$		$3.23 \pm .74$	
	Postgraduate (59)	$3.40 \pm .62$		$3.23 \pm .78$	
<b>Income (Turkish Liras)</b>	2001–3000 TL (120) <sup>a</sup>	$3.39 \pm .64$	$F = 4.712$ $p = .001$ $c < a, b, e$	$3.32 \pm .64$	$F = 3.841$ $p = .004$ $c < b, e$
	3001–4000 TL (97) <sup>b</sup>	$3.40 \pm .71$		$3.35 \pm .70$	
	4001–5000 TL (90) <sup>c</sup>	$3.09 \pm .68$		$3.04 \pm .79$	
	5001–6000 TL (38) <sup>d</sup>	$3.22 \pm .88$		$3.00 \pm .95$	
	6001 and over (52) <sup>e</sup>	$3.54 \pm .52$		$3.35 \pm .70$	

t: Independent samples t-test, df: 395

F: One Way Anova, Post Hoc test: Tukey HSD, Games-Howel

Accordingly, it was determined that there was no significant difference between the WRQoL scale scores of female and male employees ( $t = -.233$ ;  $p > .05$ ). Likewise, marital status did not cause a significant difference in the scores ( $t = -1.84$ ;  $p > .05$ ). When the WRQoL scale scores are examined by age groups, it is seen that the scores of the employees aged 20–25 years are significantly higher than the scores of those 32–37 ( $F = .682$ ;  $p = .000$ ). There is no significant relationship between the employees' education level and their WRQoL ( $F = .443$ ;  $p > .05$ ), and the WRQoL scores of employees with an income level of 4001–5000 TL are at the lowest level ( $F = 4.712$ ;  $p = .001$ ).

Also, in Table 3, the relationship between the defining characteristics of the ODS scores of bank employees is shown. It was determined that the ODS total scores of the participants did not differ significantly according to gender and education level ( $p > .05$ ) while the scale scores of single bank employees were significantly higher ( $t = -2.30$ ;  $p = .022$ ). It was found that the ODS scores of participants aged 31 and under were significantly higher than those aged between 32 and 37 ( $F = 5.400$ ;  $p = .000$ ). Lastly, the ODS scores of participants with an income level of 4001–5000 TL was significantly lower than of those whose income level was 3001–4000 TL and above 6001 TL ( $F = 3.841$ ;  $p = .004$ ).

In Table 4, it has been determined that there is a significant relationship between bank types of bank employees and their WRQoL scale scores, with the scale scores of Islamic banks employees being significantly higher than the scores of public and private bank employees ( $F = 9.223$ ;  $p = .000$ ). When examined in terms of working time, it was found that the WRQoL scale scores of the participants who were in the first 5 years of working life were significantly higher than those working within 6–11 years ( $F = 5.133$ ;  $P = .002$ ). It was determined that the highest score in terms of task/status belonged to those with manager status ( $F = 2.718$ ;  $p = .013$ ).

Through Table 4, it is determined that the ODS scores of employees working in Islamic banks are higher than the scores of public and private bank employees ( $F = 4.271$ ;  $p = .015$ ). When examined in terms of working time, it was seen that the perception of organizational democracy of those who worked for up to 5 years was statistically significantly higher than those who worked for 6–11 years ( $F = 4.893$ ;  $p = .002$ ). Differences with other study phases were not statistically significant. When examined by position and status, ODS scores of employees as directors were found to be significantly lower than those working as managers, officials, and others ( $F = 4.667$ ;  $p = .000$ ).

**Table 4.** Comparison of the WRQoL Scale and ODS Total Scores of Bank Employees According to Their Employment Characteristics (n = 397)

Employment Characteristics (n)		WRQoL Scale		ODS Scale	
		Mean ± SS	Tests/p	Mean ± SS	Tests/p
Bank type	Public (209) <sup>a</sup>	3.26 ± .72	$F = 9.223$ $p = .000$ $c > a, b$	3.18 ± .79	$F = 4.271$ $p = .015$ $c > a, b$
	Private (72) <sup>b</sup>	3.16 ± .72		3.13 ± .79	
	Islamic (116) <sup>c</sup>	3.55 ± .55		3.40 ± .58	
Operation time	0–5 years (170) <sup>a</sup>	3.45 ± .64	$F = 5.133$ $p = .002$ $a > b$	3.37 ± .65	$F = 4.893$ $p = .002$ $a > b$
	6–11 years (154) <sup>b</sup>	3.16 ± .71		3.07 ± .78	
	12–17 years (54) <sup>c</sup>	3.39 ± .67		3.27 ± .78	
	18 and over (19) <sup>d</sup>	3.34 ± .84		3.24 ± .86	
Position/Status	Manager (15) <sup>a</sup>	3.61 ± .55	$F = 2.718$ $p = .013$ $a > e, f$ $b < a, d, g$	3.57 ± .58	$F = 4.667$ $p = .000$ $b < a, d, g$
	Director (75) <sup>b</sup>	3.17 ± .75		2.91 ± .83	
	Director Asst. (27) <sup>c</sup>	3.36 ± .69		3.26 ± .79	
	Authorized (102) <sup>d</sup>	3.41 ± .68		3.32 ± .76	
	Authorized Assist. (58) <sup>e</sup>	3.20 ± .60		3.18 ± .65	
	Booking Clerk (54) <sup>f</sup>	3.21 ± .73		3.21 ± .68	
	Other * (66) <sup>g</sup>	3.51 ± .65		3.47 ± .60	

t: Independent samples t-test, df: 395

F: One Way Anova, Post Hoc test: Tukey HSD, Games-Howel

\* Other employees (security guard, POS machine/credit card marketer, secretary, servant)

**Table 5.** The Correlations Between Bank Employees' Total and Subscales Score of WRQoL and ODS (n = 397)

Scales and Subscales	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. WRQoL total	1												
2. Job and career satisfact.	.861**	1											
3. General Well-being	.881**	.738**	1										
4. Control at work	.863**	.718**	.712**	1									
5. Working Conditions	.870**	.666**	.716**	.723**	1								
6. Stress at work	.731**	.562**	.634**	.475**	.531**	1							
7. Home-work interface	.884**	.704**	.712**	.731**	.772**	.561**	1						
8. ODS total	.801**	.676**	.716**	.684**	.745**	.516**	.732**	1					
9. Participation-Criticism	.771**	.628**	.693**	.697**	.700**	.463**	.735**	.885**	1				
10. Transparency	.776**	.652**	.698**	.635**	.738**	.521**	.705**	.924**	.811**	1			
11. Justice	.726**	.612**	.634**	.624**	.677**	.465**	.676**	.898**	.761**	.802**	1		
12. Equality	.545**	.451**	.509**	.410**	.527**	.421**	.459**	.736**	.522**	.659**	.582**	1	
13. Accountability	.600**	.539**	.531**	.534**	.547**	.359**	.539**	.839**	.656**	.690**	.672**	.537**	1

\*\*  $p = .000$ , Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From Table 5 it is seen that the correlation coefficient between the total of the WRQoL scale and the total scores of the ODS is  $r = .801$ . The correlation coefficient between the

WRQoL scale and the sub-dimensions of the ODS was found to be between  $r = .776$  and  $.545$ . When the correlation of the total of the ODS with the subscales of the WRQoL scale was examined, it was found that it ranged between  $r = .745$  and

.516. It was determined that all correlation values between the total and subscales of both scales were statistically significant at a very significant level ( $p = .000$ ).

In Table 6, results of linear regression analysis showing the effect of ODS scores of bank employees and the WRQoL scale scores are displayed. Variables that significantly affect the bank employees' WRQoL scale scores are ranked from most important to least important according to the  $\beta$  coefficient; participation-criticism ( $p = .000$ ), transparency ( $p = .000$ ), and justice ( $p = .002$ ). These three independent variables explain 67% of the change of bank employees' WRQoL scale score ( $R^2$ ). This result shows that the QWL of bank employees is affected by these three variables by 67%, and 33% of them are other variables. As seen in the table, between the dependent variable and the independent variables, VIF values vary between 1.837 and 4.581, and

Tolerance values vary between  $> 0.218$  and  $0.544$ . It is stated that VIF values greater than 5 and tolerance values less than 0.200 indicate the multiple linearity problem and the  $p$ -value is questionable (Larsen and Marx 2012; Albayrak 2005; Gazibey et al. 2012). Accordingly, it is seen that there is no significant multi-linearity connection problem.

One-unit increase in the participation-criticism score of the ODS sub-dimensions of the bank employees causes an increase of 0.27 points in the WRQoL scale scores, a one-unit increase in the transparency score causes an increase of 0.248 points, and a one-unit increase in the justice score causes an increase of 0.124 points (Table 6).

**Table 6.** Regression Analysis Results Showing the Effect of Organizational Democracy and Its Subscale Scores on the WRQoL Scale Scores of Bank Employees' ( $n = 397$ )

Independent variables	B	SE	Beta ( $\beta$ )	t	p	95% Confidence Interval	Collinearity Statistics	
							Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.047	.110		9.496	.000	.83–1.26		
Participation-Criticism	.270	.040	.359	6.772	.000	.19–.35	.298	3.358
Transparency	.248	.050	.310	5.008	.000	.15–.35	.218	4.581
Justice	.124	.039	.168	3.189	.002	.05–.20	.303	3.303
Equality	.054	.043	.049	1.249	.212	-.03–.14	.544	1.837
Accountability	.009	.031	.012	.288	.773	-.05–.07	.464	2.154

Dependent Variable: The WRQoL Scale Total Score,

B: Regression Coefficient, SE: Standard Error, R: .82, Adjusted  $R^2$ : .67, F: 160.97,  $p$ : .000

## 5. Discussion

This study was conducted with 397 bank employees. Among the participants, 56.9% are male, 61.7% are married. Most have received training at undergraduate level (77.6%), 52.6% work in a public bank, 42.8% are in their first five years of working life, and 25.7% hold the title of “authorized.” The findings obtained from this study are discussed under three headings: (1) QWL and influencing factors (2) organizational democracy and influencing factors, and (3) the impact of organizational democracy on QWL.

### 5.1. QWL and Influencing Factors

It was found that bank employees' WRQoL scale total mean score was  $3.33 \pm .69$ . When other studies are examined, it is seen that the QWL scores of participants is found to be  $3.15 \pm .70$  by Çelebi and Uysal (2019) and  $3.36 \pm .83$  by Güleç and Öncül (2019), and the results are similar. It can be said that the QWL of bank employees is slightly above the middle level. This result shows that various steps should be taken to improve the QWL.

When the characteristics affecting the QWL of bank employees were examined, it was determined that marital status, gender, and education level did not have a significant effect ( $p > 0.5$ ). Similarly, some studies show that there is no significant relationship between marital status and the QWL (Çelebi and Uysal 2019; Ayesha et al. 2012). Çelebi and Uysal (2019) found that male employees and secondary school graduates have high QWL, and age does not affect the

QWL. Ayesha (2012) found that the QWL of female employees is more positive. Bolhari et al. (2011) found that there is no relationship between gender and quality of life. Jerome (2013) found that there is no significant relationship between educational characteristics and the QWL. In this study, it was determined that age and income level affect the QWL. It was found that the QWL of employees aged 20–25 years was higher than those aged 32–37 ( $p = .000$ ). This situation makes us think that individuals at the beginning of their working life expressed their QWL as being high because they have an income and are approved by society as a working individuals. In terms of income level, it is seen that those in the

High-income group have a higher perception of the QWL than those in the middle-income group. This situation can be considered as an income-dependent quality of life. However, the expression of high QWL for those in the lower-income group compared to those in the middle-income group can be explained similarly to the age criterion. Those with lower incomes are those who are still at the beginning of their career. In this phase, individuals have not yet established a family and their income requirements are likely less. This allows them to achieve a higher quality of life with less income. From the results of this study, it can be deduced that there is not a consistent relationship between the QWL and demographic characteristics, and different results are obtained according to the working group.

Considering the working characteristics, it has been determined that the QWL of the employees is affected by the type of bank, working time, and position/status. It has been

determined that the QWL of Islamic bank employees is higher than that of state and private bank employees. The QWL of employees in the first five years of working life is higher than those of 6–11 years. Ayesha et al. (2012) similarly found that the QWL is high at the beginning of work life. Newly recruited individuals transform into individuals with a job and a social status in society, and reach the luxury of gaining regular income and meeting their needs in a period of high unemployment. This situation may explain the high QWL level at the beginning of working life. It has been determined that the QWL of employees in the manager position is significantly higher. Being a manager signifies the realization of an important level in the career path. Simultaneously, the status and income that this career level will provide can explain the high expression of the individual's work-life level.

H<sub>2</sub>: QWL is affected by the demographic characteristics of employees. According to the analysis made in line with this hypothesis; It has been determined that gender, marital status, and educational status do not affect QWL while age groups do affect it. It has been determined that the type of banks they work with, their working periods, and their status also affect it. Hence, H<sub>2</sub> was partially accepted.

## 5.2. Organizational Democracy and Influencing Factors

The ODS total score mean of the bank employees was found to be  $3.24 \pm .74$ , and it was considered to be medium level. In a similar study conducted with bank employees on the same scale, the organizational democracy scores of participants were found to be  $3.40 \pm .88$  (Tokay and Eyübođlu 2018). The results are very similar. In this study, organizational democracy perception of those who are single, under the age of 31, and with middle income was found to be significantly higher. It was determined that the gender and educational status of the employees did not affect their organizational democracy scores. It has been found that the perception of organizational democracy is high among those who are employees of the Islamic bank, in the first 5 years of their working life, and working as managers or officials. Tokay and Eyübođlu (2018) found that all these variables do not affect employees' organizational democracy scores. Bilge et al. (2020) found that organizational democracy perception is not significantly related to gender and age, the participation-criticism subscale is affected by marital status, and the justice subscale is affected by education and income levels. Geçkil et al. (2016) found that gender, marital status, working time, and educational status do not affect organizational democracy, but age does in their study with nurses and physicians. In another study on healthcare workers, Geçkil and Tikici (2016) found that gender (higher perception of organizational democracy in men compared to women), profession (physicians higher than nurses), and working time (higher at the beginning of working life) affect the perception of organizational democracy. According to the above study results, it can be said that the perception of organizational democracy does not have a regular and stable relationship with the demographic and working characteristics of employees, and it differs depending on the sampling and time.

H<sub>3</sub>: Organizational democracy perception is affected by the demographic characteristics of the employees. According to the analysis made in line with this hypothesis, it was determined that gender and educational status did not cause a significant difference, but marital status and age groups did cause a significant difference. It has been determined that the type of banks worked with, working hours, and status cause a significant difference in the perception of organizational democracy. Hence, H<sub>3</sub> was partially accepted.

## 5.3. The Impact of Organizational Democracy on QWL

There is not much research in the literature on the effects of organizational democracy on other organizational variables. This situation can be explained by the fact that the measurement of organizational democracy is relatively new. In the literature searches, there was not enough research to compare the results of the study. In this study (on bank employees), high-level correlations were found when the relationship between organizational democracy and the QWL was examined (Table 5). The positive correlation between the total score of the ODS and the WRQoL scale was calculated as .801. It has been observed that a one-unit development that will emerge at the level of perceived organizational democracy will lead to a high rate of change, such as .67, in the QWL. This value is not common in research. It caused the research findings to be checked repetitively. In the period when the study was planned and structured, although the positive effect of organizational democracy on the QWL was the results we expected and we assumed our hypothesis in this direction, the possibility of high effect at this level was not anticipated. Although there are no such research results to compare the results specific to organizational democracy, we believe that comparisons can be made by political democracy. In the 20th century, it was observed that the quality of life in countries where democracy was uninterrupted and settled with all its institutions (generally western countries) increased (Heywood 2019; Frey and Al-Roumi 1999; Yazdani 2010). Businesses that want to benefit from the positive effects of high QWL by improving the QWL of their employees may turn to practices that will increase the perception of organizational democracy. When examined in terms of subscales, it was found that there were statistically highly significant ( $p = .000$ ) and medium- and high-level relationships between the subscales of the organizational democracy and the subscales of the WRQoL scale.

When the effect of organizational democracy perception of bank employees on the QWL is examined, it is seen that organizational democracy has 67% predictive power (Adjusted  $R^2 = .67$ ) on the QWL (Table 6). A one-unit increase in organizational democracy causes .67 units to increase in the QWL. This rate is quite high. If the principles and rules of organizational democracy are embedded in organizations, employees will reach a significant level of QWL. When a detailed analysis is made on the subscales of organizational democracy that this value is due to, it is seen that it originates from the subscale of participation-criticism ( $p = .000$ ), transparency ( $p = .000$ ), and justice ( $p = .002$ ), by



looking at the “ $\beta$ ” values in terms of influence power (Table 6).

When the participation-criticism subscale, which is one of the organizational democracy subscales is examined, it is seen that “ $\beta$ ” = .359 effect value on the QWL (Table 6). It is known that employees' participation in management in matters related to them leads to a high level of satisfaction and motivation. In contrast, if they can easily express the things they think are wrong or right about what is happening around them, it will make them feel “good” (high QWL). The perception of transparency can be expressed as that the individual does not carry out hidden works around him (criticism), and he is informed about the issues he needs to know. When the transparency subscale is examined, it is seen that there is “ $\beta$ ” = .310 effect value on the QWL (Table 6). We can state that as the transparency perception of the employees' increases, the QWL also increases, and it is recommended that the administrations demanding high the QWL for their employees should establish a transparent organization and business culture.

Finally, the subscale of justice will be examined. Justice has been examined as a dimension of organizational democracy in this study, which is about organizational democracy. However, organizational justice has been the subject of many studies as an important variable by itself. In studies related to organizational justice, it is stated that a high level of organizational justice perception leads to positive attitudes and behaviors in employees (Gilliland and Chan 2001). In the findings of this study, it was determined that the increase in the perception of justice per the literature leads to an increase in the QWL (“ $\beta$ ” = .168).

Overall, the findings of this study show that organizational democracy affects QWL. Similar studies have shown that employee democracy (Gupta 2016) and participation in management (Hyde and Gupta 2018) affect the QWL for bank employees. Mahalingam and Suresh (2017) found that the grievance handling procedure and chance to participate in decision-making affects the QWL for employees in private banks. These effects of the perception of organizational democracy on the QWL may encourage organizations to establish and develop organizational democracy practices.

H<sub>1</sub>: The perception of organizational democracy positively affects QWL. H<sub>1</sub> was accepted.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The success of organizations is closely related to motivating employees, offering career plans, preparing positive working conditions, allowing employees' autonomy, ensuring employees' family-work life balance, and improving the QWL. Businesses implement programs to improve the QWL of employees to increase their success. Thus, they aim to increase the success of the enterprise by ensuring the happiness of the employees. The first step in improving the QWL is to determine the factors that affect them. The results of this study, which examines the effect of organizational democracy on the QWL of bank employees, revealed information that can contribute significantly to this first step.

In this study, it was concluded that bank employees' perceptions of organizational democracy, especially the dimensions of participation-criticism, transparency, and justice, significantly affect the QWL. It has been determined that bank employees' perceptions of both QWL and organizational democracy are at a moderate level. As the reasons for this, it can be said that due to the character of the competitive structure that has become tougher in the banking sector in recent years, the increasing workload and target pressure despite the decreasing number of branches and employees can be said to be effective.

The result of this research will guide managers who prepare a program to improve the QWL of employees. The fact that QWL and organizational democracy perception were determined as medium level in this study reveals the necessity of improving them. Business managers can plan programs with employees that can improve QWL. It would be useful to review the democratic practices in the organization in plans to increase the QWL. It is recommended that decision-makers and managers ensure employees' participation in decisions, instill a culture of criticism in the organization, and create a transparent and fair structure.

In the banking sector, which is one of the most competitive sectors, a structural transformation aimed at improving the perception of organizational democracy is recommended by senior management. It can be said that the dimensions of participation-criticism, transparency, and justice, which are also supported by the research results, should be taken into consideration. If an organizational climate is realized in which the equality and accountability dimensions of organizational democracy are realized, this will positively affect QWL and provide a competitive advantage.

Conversely, this research can guide researchers who will plan experimental research to improve the QWL of employees. Researchers planning initiatives to increase QWL take into account the practices of organizational democracy. Also, the study, which is limited to Konya due to time, budget, and accessibility constraints, can be repeated with a higher number of participants in different provinces, regions, and even countries. In this way, the findings to be obtained can be compared. Thus, researchers who are interested in the subject can provide more generalizable results.

## Limitations and Strengths of Study

The data collected were obtained from bank employees and the findings were reached with the analysis made on the data. Therefore, it should not be ignored that the findings obtained can be generalized to bank employees according to the sample. The information obtained in this research is based on the self-report of the participants. Therefore, it should be taken into consideration that there may be a subjectivity effect in the results achieved. Another limitation is that other studies that examined these two variables together in similar samples could not be found, so the chance to compare this study's findings could not be obtained. Alternatively, the lack of a similar study can be considered as a strength/original aspect of this study.

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