Relationship between Social Justice Leadership and Trust in Principals: Mediating Role of Perceived Administrator Support

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Abstract	Article Info
This study examines the mediating role of teachers' perceived administrator support in the relationship between principals' social justice leadership behaviors and teachers' trust in principals. The sample of the study, which was designed in the relational survey model, consists of 903 teachers working in public schools in a metropolitan city in Southeast Türkiye. In the context of the research model, the SPSS Process Macro (Model-4) application developed by Hayes (2018) was used to determine the mediation effect. Because of the analysis of the research data, it was determined that the social justice leadership behaviors exhibited by school principals predicted both teachers' trust in the principal and teachers' perceived administrator support positively and statistically significantly. On the other hand, it was concluded that perceived administrator support plays a mediating role in the relationship between principals' social justice leadership behaviors and teachers' trust in principals. In this context, it can be staded that if school administrators' social justice leadership behaviors increase, both the administrator support	

perceived by teachers and their trust in the principal will increase.

Cite as:

Introduction

As open social systems, educational organizations comprise individuals with ethnic, cultural, socio-economic, ideological, etc. differences. These differences in individuals can sometimes lead them to be exposed to disadvantageous practices within the organization or perceived as such (Ryan, 2006). In educational organizations, there may be unfair practices or inequalities in the context of social justice. These inequalities lead to a lack of solidarity among individuals in schools, lack of motivation, and disciplinary problems and indirectly reduce the efficiency of the school (Chiu, 2010). Especially in schools with disadvantaged practices, leaders play an important role in improving the quality of the teaching and learning process (Eriçok, 2022; Harris & Chapman, 2004; Küçükaslan, 2022; Muijs et al., 2010; Theoharis, 2007). In this context, social justice in education has become one of the most emphasized issues (Berkovich, 2014; MacDonald et al., 2023). Although social justice in educational organizations has been addressed as an important issue in recent years, school principals have important duties as social justice leaders in ensuring social justice in schools (Oplatka, 2013). With the increase in human mobility in the

world for different reasons (war, migration, disease, economic reasons, etc.), the social structure may include diversity. In this context, schools can also be affected by these differences. Behaviors and practices in line with social justice are important for individuals to benefit equally from institutional opportunities and to be exposed to equal practices in educational institutions (Arar, 2019). In schools, the social justice perceived by stakeholders in their relationships with each other and administrators plays an important role (Çobanoğlu, 2021). As in all organisations, employees in educational organisations expect to trust their administrators and receive support from them. The support provided by administrators to their employees in the work environment and the sense of trust they create strengthens the bonds between employees and the organisation (Türkkan & Ülbeği, 2022). The development of a qualified education and training environment in schools where all educational stakeholders will work in co-operation can be possible through the establishment of reliable relationships based on social justice and the presence of school administrators who will lead this process (Akyürek, 2021). Howley et al. (2009) stated that principals need to gain the trust of relevant stakeholders in order to ensure social justice. In this respect, educational leaders have important roles in creating a trust-based school environment (Rivera-McCutchen & Watson, 2014). Dantley and Tillman (2010) state that this situation is especially guided by social justice and equality and is of critical importance in schools in terms of race, ethnicity and class. In societies where resources are distributed equally and social justice is ensured, individuals feel safe both physiologically and spiritually (Börü, 2019).

In this context, in the current study, the relationship between the social justice leadership behaviors exhibited by school administrators

according to teachers' perceptions in educational organizations and trust in the principal and perceived administrator support was investigated. Accordingly, in the following part of the study, these variables (social justice leadership, trust in the principal and perceived administrative support) will be assessed conceptually and then the relationship between the variables will be presented.

Social Justice Leadership

Conceptually, it can be said that social justice leadership in the field of education was addressed in the 20th-century (Oplatka, 2010). Although studies on social justice leadership have gained momentum, it is not possible to encounter a common definition in a universal sense. Social justice leadership, which has an abstract meaning, is handled in a situational context. Therefore, there may be different definitions.

Marshall and Olivia (2006) explain social justice leadership in the educational dimension as a leadership style that aims to improve the performance of minorities, socially and economically disadvantaged people who do not achieve the desired success in schools. McKenzie et al. (2008) state that principals should ensure that all individuals in the school benefit from the opportunities fairly and that inequality should be eliminated for an effective educational process. In other words, social justice should be taken as a basis. Social justice leadership in education involves understanding inequalities in schools and taking action (Bogotch, 2002). DeMatthews (2015) states that social justice leadership is essentially about examining how to use knowledge expertize experience, and resources to address inequalities.

Social justice leaders are defined as individuals who raise awareness of inequalities and injustices arising from individual differences, produce solutions to emerging negativities, and try to develop a more

qualified and fair educational environment (Theoharis & O'Toole, 2011). Social justice-oriented principals attempt to construct a more effective educational environment by taking actions to reduce practices and policies that create inequality and marginalization (Theoharis, 2007). School principals' exhibiting a participatory-democratic management approach in their schools, their efforts to create a positive school climate (Özdemir & Kütküt, 2015), and their fair distribution of resources and tasks show that they exhibit social justice leadership behaviors (Bozkurt, 2017).

Within the context of the current research, critical consciousness, stakeholder support, participation and distributive justice dimensions of social justice leadership are evaluated. Critical consciousness emphasises the awareness of inequalities by school administrators with developed social justice consciousness and to raise individuals with developed critical consciousness (McKenzie et al., 2008). Stakeholder support is related to the quality education of disadvantaged or marginalised individuals or groups. Özdemir and Kütküt (2015) state that the support dimension of social justice leadership is related to interpersonal relationships, and that leaders are sensitive to establishing trust-based relationships with disadvantaged individuals who care about effective communication. The participation dimension draws attention to the fact that school administrators as social justice leaders support the participation of different groups in the school community in the decision-making process and contribute to the development of democracy awareness in the school (Furman, 2012). Finally, distributive justice is evaluated within the scope of Rawls' (1993) concept of justice. In this context, it includes the fair distribution of organisational resources, tasks, workload and positions (Bates, 2005).

Trust in Principal

The concept of trust has attracted the attention of sociologists, psychologists, economists, and management scientists in the historical process, as well as the theoretical and practical attention of educational administrators in schools as a social institution. Therefore, it has been inevitable to introduce many definitions to the concept of trust, which is of interest to different disciplines. In this context, each discipline emphasizes its own viewpoint when defining or explaining the concept. In the literature, studies on organizational trust have focused on trust in principal. The concept of trust in the principal is defined by Mayer, et al. (1995) as "the belief that the principal's honesty, integrity, benevolence, morality and goodwill towards his/her employees are reciprocated by the employees". Burke et al. (2007) stated that in the case of trust and mistrust between leaders and employes in organizations, employes can achieve great things even under high-risk difficult conditions and time pressure. Andersen (2005) states that subordinates' trust in their principals is determined by the principals' behaviors. Folger and Konovsky (1989) observed that employees' participation in decisions increases because of their trust in their principals, thus increasing the performance efficiency. For followers to trust managers, the following factors are listed: the manager's statements and actions should be consistent, the manager should give importance to decision-making and participation, share information, communicate openly with employes think about the well-being of employes, and be loyal (Özdaşlı & Yücel, 2010). Therefore, it can be staded that managers being sensitive to the needs of subordinates, sharing information, ensuring participation in decisions, being fair and honest, and acting consistently in their decisions will be effective in gaining subordinates' trust in the principal.

Perceived Administrator Support

Administrative support is when administrators value and care about their employes socially and emotionally and value their contributions (Pohl & Galetta, 2016; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Perception of administrative support is defined as employees ' values and beliefs about their work (Deconinck & Johnson, 2009). Matthews et al. (2009) define it as the facilitating and supportive practices provided by the administrator to the employe for the organization to run its business. Bhanthumnavin (2000) states that administrative support can be in the form of showing interest and respect to the employe giving value, providing support in stressful situations, and behaviors such as hugging, hugging, and handshaking. Neves and Caetano (2006) state that when the administrative supports the employees creates a fair environment, and meets the needs and expectations of the employes it will lead to the formation of a positive climate in the organization. It can be seen that different definitions and classifications are made about perceived administrator support. It is seen that the definitions are made within the framework of the administrator's valueing, caring, appreciating the contributions of the employe, and increasing the contribution of the employe to the organization.

Employees may perceive administrator support differently. This may result from the mutual communication and interaction between the manager and the employe Determining the expectations and needs of organizational employes is an important determinant of their relationship with the administrator, whom they primarily communicate with and see as the representative of the organization (Göktepe, 2017). Employees may perceive the positive or negative orientations exhibited by administrators as support. According to Shanock and Eisenberger (2006), employes perceive the support they

receive from their administrators as an indicator of the organization's positive or negative orientation toward them. On the other hand, individuals can show positive or negative orientations toward the organization. Individuals who perceive a high level of administrative support increase their organizational commitment over time, enabling them to make intensive efforts to achieve the goals of the organization (Tenteriz & Tozkoparan, 2022). Low levels of administrator support can lead to negative reactions, such as neglecting feedback from their administrators and ignoring information about their job responsibilities (Zhou et al., 2016).

Relationship between Social Justice Leadership, Perceived Administrator Support, and Trust in Principals

In the related literature, it is possible to encounter studies in which there are findings that there are various relationships between the variables whose relationship is examined in the current research. As social justice leaders, school principals should approach all differences in the school within the framework of equality and justice and distribute organizational resources fairly. Özgan and Bozbayındır (2011) stated that teachers' perceived unfair practices in resource allocation in schools have negative effects on teachers' trust and loyalty to administrators. Uzun (2017) stated that individuals working in a fair environment perceive the support of managers positively. On the other hand, Beard (2013) states that differences such as race, gender and ethnicity in school environments have an impact on the formation of trust in school environments. Similarly, Louis and Murphy (2017) emphasize that effective leadership skills develop mutual trust with teachers, strengthen social capital, and positively affect student outcomes. Eğriboyun (2013) stated that there was a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of trust in the administrator

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and their perceptions of support and that as teachers' perceptions of trust in the administrator increased, their perceptions of support also increased. As a conclusion, there are various relationships between the variables of social justice leadership and perceived support, social justice leadership and trust in the manager, and perceived support and trust in the manager.

Importance and Purpose of the Research

The phenomenon of trust is seen as an important leadership characteristic in the context of directing people in line with the determined goals (Northouse, 2013). As a leader, the attitude of managers toward followers can affect the attitudes and behaviors of followers toward the leader. Therefore, the fact that managers value employes and support their work may lead employes to develop positive feelings toward the manager (Kossek et al., 2011). The support provided by the manager to the employe strengthens the employee's ties with the manager and the organization and increases trust in the manager (Türkkan & Ülbeği, 2022). In this context, as stated above, it can be said that there is a relationship between leadership characteristics, support perception and trust in the literature. It is thought that the findings and results to be obtained in the research will be guiding for school administrators to ensure the trust of teachers. In the current study, it is aimed to examine the relationship between school administrators' social justice leadership, trust in principal and perceived administrator support according to teachers' perceptions. No research examining this relationship has been found in the relevant literature. In this context, the research is expected to contribute to the literature. The hypotheses developed in line with the purpose of the study are presented below:

H1: Social justice leadership has a significant positive effect on trust in the principal.

H2: Social justice leadership significantly predicts perceived manager support in a positive direction.

H3: Perceived manager support significantly predicts trust in principal in a positive direction.

H4: Perceived administrative support plays a mediating role in the relationship between social justice leadership and trust in the principal.

Method

Research Model

This study examines the relationship between school administrators' social justice leadership behaviors and trust in the principal and perceived administrator support according to teachers' perceptions using a relational survey model. Christiensen et al. (2015) defined the relational research approach as research that enables description and prediction. In this context, the mediating role of perceived administrator support in the relationship between school administrators' social justice leadership behaviors and trust in the principal was examined. The model established with the independent variable (social justice leadership), dependent variable (trust in principal), and mediating variable (perceived administrator support) is shown in Figure 1.
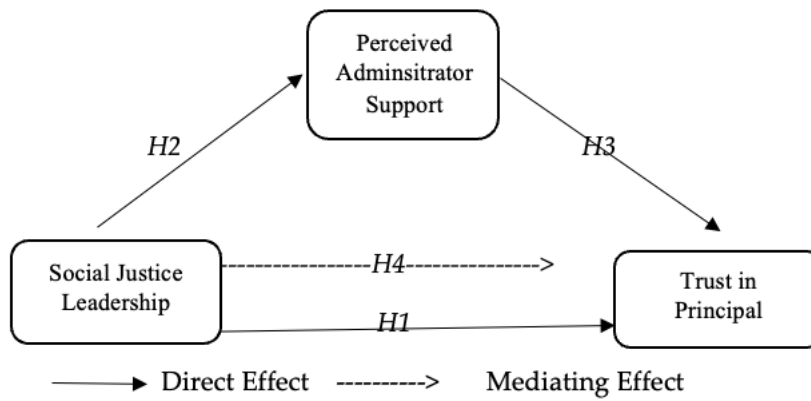
Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

Study sampling

The population of this research consists of 25000 teachers working in public schools in the central districts of Gaziantep province, located in the south of Türkiye. The sample of the study consists of 903 teachers determined by a simple random sampling method. Simple random sampling is a method in which the conditions for inclusion in the sample are equal, the universe is uniform, and the representativeness is high (Cochran, 2007). Gay et al. (2012) stated that for a population of over 5000, the population size becomes meaningless and a sample size of over 400 is now sufficient. Considering the sample size, Yazıcı and Erdoğan (2004) stated that a sample size of approximately 1000 people would be sufficient for this population size within the context of .05 confidence interval and .03 sampling error. In this context, it can be said that the sample size reached is at an acceptable level. Of the teachers who participated in the study, 515 (57%) were female and 388 (43%) were male. Of the 525 married teachers (58%) and 378 single

teachers (42%), 819 were undergraduates (90%) and 84 (10%) were postgraduates. Considering that 432 (48%) of the teachers participating in the study were aged between 20 and 29, 363 (40%) were aged between 30 and 31 (4%) were aged 50 and over, it can be said that young teachers were generally included in the study. When analyzed according to the seniority variable, 497 (55%) teachers had 1–5 years of seniority, 191 (21%) had 6-10 years of seniority, and 235 (24%) had 11 years or more of seniority.

Data collection tools and processes

In the data collection process of the study, "Social Justice Leadership Scale", "Perceived Administrator Support Scale" and "Trust in Principal Scale" were used to determine teachers' perceptions of the dependent (trust in principal), independent (social justice leadership), and mediating variables (perceived administrator support). In addition, various questions were added to the data collection tool to determine the demographic characteristics of the teachers participating in the study. Before data collection, the necessary permissions were obtained from the researchers who developed the scales, Gaziantep University Social and Human Sciences Ethics Committee and Gaziantep Provincial Directorate of National Education. Information about the scales in the data collection tool is given below.

Social Justice Leadership Scale: The research data were collected using the "Social Justice Leadership Scale" developed by Bozkurt (2017), which consists of critical consciousness, stakeholder support, participation, and distributive justice dimensions. The items in the scale are graded on a five-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree ... 5 strongly agree). In the current study, Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for consistency between the data was determined to be .98. In addition,

because of the confirmatory factor analysis conducted in the context of the results between the structure of the scale and the data fit (χ^2/Sd= 3.54, RMR= .038, RMSEA= .050, GFI= .91, AGFI= .88, CFI= .96, IFI= .96, TLI=.95), it was determined that the values obtained were at least acceptable (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004; Kline, 2011). Therefore, the data obtained regarding social justice leadership are valid and reliable.

Perceived Administrator Support Scale: In the scale developed by Kottke and Sharafinski (1988) and adapted by Özdemir (2010), 14 items were grouped under one factor. The items in the scale are graded on a five-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree ... 5 strongly agree). In this study, the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for consistency between the data was determined as .97. In addition, because of the confirmatory factor analysis conducted in the context of the results between the structure of the scale and the data fit (χ^2/Sd=3.60, RMR= .018, RMSEA= .051, GFI= .90, AGFI= .88, CFI= .96, IFI= .96, TLI=.95), it was determined that the values obtained were at least acceptable (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004; Kline, 2011). Therefore, the data obtained regarding perceived administrator support are valid and reliable.

Trust in Principals' Scale: The Multipurpose T Scale developed by Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (2003) and adapted into Turkish by Özer et al. (2006) to measure how teachers perceive the level of organizational trust in schools was used in the study. The items in the scale are graded on a five-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree ... 5 strongly agree). The scale consists of trust in colleagues, trust in parents –students, and trust in the principal sub-dimensions. For the study, the trust in principal subscale was used. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient for the trust in principal subscale was determined to .96. In addition, because of the confirmatory factor analysis conducted in the context of the results between the structure

of the scale and the data fit (χ2/Sd=4.06, RMR=.017, RMSEA=.055, GFI= .97, AGFI= .94, CFI= .99, IFI= .99, TLI=.98), it was determined that the values obtained were at least acceptable (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004; Kline, 2011). Therefore, the data obtained regarding trust in the principal are valid and reliable.

Data analysis

SPSS 26 and AMOS 21 package programs were used to analyze the data obtained for this study. To make the data collected face-to-face, individually, and in groups suitable for analysis, the collected forms were examined in terms of incorrect markings, missing values, and extreme values. Twenty-two forms with outliers were identified and these forms were removed from the data set and the data collected from the remaining 903 participants were analysed. Then, the normality and multicollinearity assumptions of the data were checked. For the normality assumption, the (±1.5) interval specified by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) was used as reference. The results obtained in this context are presented in Table 1. As a result, it is assumed that the values obtained are acceptable. In the context of the multicollinearity problem, variance inflation factor (VIF), tolerance index (TI), and conditional index (CI) value ranges were taken as reference (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). In this context, it was determined that the values obtained were VIF<5, TI>.10, CI<.30 and it was assumed that there was no multicollinearity problem. In the context of the purpose of the study, arithmetic mean and standard deviation were used for descriptive analyzes on social justice leadership, trust in principals, and perceived administrator support according to teachers ' perceptions. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the relationships between variables.

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Then, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to determine the relationship (mediator) between the variables using the maximum likelihood estimation method. To check the goodness-of-fit values of the model, which can measure the relationships between variables in a single model (Preacher & Hayes, 2008), the ratio of chi-square to degrees of freedom ($\chi2$/sd), square root of approximate errors (RMSEA), standardized root mean square residual (RMR), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis fit index (TLI), general goodness -of-fit index (GFI), incremental fit index (IFI), and adjusted goodness -of-fit index (AGFI). The goodness of fit values were based on the criteria accepted as the minimum acceptable range ($\chi2$/sd $\leq$ 5, RMSEA $\leq$ .08, RMR $\leq$ .08, CFI $\geq$ .95, TLI $\geq$ .90, GFI $\geq$ .85, IFI $\geq$ .90, AGFI $\geq$ .85) (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004).

The SPSS PROCESS macro (Model-4) application developed by Hayes (2018) was used to determine the mediation effect in the context of the research model created in line with the purpose of the study. The process method is based on the confidence interval (CI-95%) calculation. If this confidence interval does not contain the value 0 and both BootLLCI and BootULCI values are positive or negative, the mediation effect can be mentioned (Hayes, 2018).

Findings

In this section, normality (Skewness, Kurtosis) and multicollinearity (VIF and TI) values, descriptive statistics (arithmetic mean and standard deviation), and correlation values are given for the variables of the study. The related values are presented in Table 1.

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Table 1.

Descriptive findings and correlation values of the variables

Variables	$\bar{X}$	Sd	Skewness	Kurtosis	1	2	3
1. Social Justice Leadership	3.72	.85	-.23	-.25	1	.76**	.80**
2. Trust in Principals'	3.61	.98	-.15	-.48		1	.74**
3. Perceived Administrator Support	3.68	.95	-.27	-.42			1

**p≤ 0.01; VIF_1= 2.94; TI_1= .33; VIF_3=2.94; TI_3= .33

According to Table 1, when the mean values of social justice leadership behaviours (X=3.56), perceived administrator support (X=3.43) and trust in the principal (X=3.51) are examined, it can be said that teachers have "agree" level perceptions. Table 1 also shows that kurtosis and skewness values vary between.65 and.22. When these values are taken into consideration, it can be said that the data obtained exhibit a normal distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). On the other hand, according to teachers' perceptions, there is a positive and highly significant relationship between social justice leadership and trust in principal and perceived administrator support (r=.76; p<.00, r=.80; p<.001). There is a positive and highly significant relationship between perceived administrative support and trust in the principal (r=.74; p<.001).

Table 2 shows the results obtained using the Process Macro (v4.2) plug-in developed by Hayes (2018), Model 4, Bootstrap, and 5000 sample criteria in the SPSS 26 program to determine the mediating effect of perceived administrative support in the relationship between social justice leadership and trust in principal. Hayes (2018) stated that the

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bootstrap method is more reliable than the Sobel test used by Baron and Kenny (1986). To determine the mediating effect, Baron and Kenny's (1986) assumptions were considered. This approach consists of three stages. First, the dependent variable should significantly affect the independent variable. Then, the independent variable should significantly affect the mediating variable. Finally, when the independent variable and the mediator variable are analyzed together, the mediator variable should significantly affect the dependent variable. The analysis results of the research hypotheses (H1, H2, H3) are given in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2.

Findings on the direct effect between variables

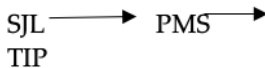| Hypotheses	Paths	R²	β	Std. β	t	P
H₁	SJL ⟶ TIP	.58	.88	.76	35.88	***
H₂	SJL ⟶ PMS	.62	.36	.36	10.41	***
H₃	PMS ⟶ TIP	.66	.92	.81	41.89	***

***p<.001; χ2/df=3.87; RMSEA=.056; RMR=.027; GFI=.90; AGFI=.89; NFI=.95; TLI=.95; CFI=.96

According to Table 2, structural equation modeling was performed with the AMOS 21 package program, and it was seen that the goodness of model fit values were at least in the acceptable range (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). When the findings related to the hypotheses formed in line with the purpose of the study are examined, it is seen that social justice leadership positively and significantly affects trust in principal (Std. β= .76; p<.001; BootLLCI= .831; BootULCI= .929) and perceived administrator support (Std. β= .36; p<.001; BootLLCI= .299; BootULCI=

.438). At the same time, perceived manager support has a positive and significant effect on trust in the principal (Std. β=.81; p<.00; BootLLCI=.884; BootULCI=.971). In this context, the first three hypotheses (H1, H2 and H3) are accepted. The results obtained using Process Macro, which was run to determine the mediating role of perceived managerial support, are given in Table 3.

Table 3.

Findings on indirect effect (or mediator)

Hypothes	Paths		β	Std. β	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
H4	SJL → PMS → TIP		.34	.29	.042	.225	.369

In Table 3, the mediating role of perceived administrator support (H4) was examined. When the findings obtained in this context are analyzed, according to teachers' perceptions, perceived administrator support plays a mediating role in the relationship between principals' social justice leadership and trust in principals. In other words, social justice leadership has an indirect effect on trust in principals through the mediating role of perceived administrator support (Std. β = .29; p<.001; BootLLCI= .225; BootULCI= .369). According to this result, hypothesis H4 can also be accepted (Hayes, 2018).

Conclusion and Discussion

This study examined the relationship between principals' social justice leadership behaviours and teachers' perceived administrative support and trust in principals. As a result of the study, teachers perceived that school administrators exhibited social justice leadership behaviours at a partially high level. Likewise, it was observed that they perceived high levels of administrator support. Similarly, teachers reported high levels of trust in the principal as a social justice leader. McGuigan and Hoy (2006) emphasized that school principals who want to create a positive climate in schools can improve educational processes by ensuring trust. In the context of the research sample, these results can be expressed as a positive situation in terms of ensuring social justice in educational organizations. Because in the context of ensuring social justice in schools, school administrators have important responsibilities (Kondakçı & Beycioğlu, 2020; Wang, 2016). The social structure of educational organizations is multidimensional and interactive (Lee et al. 1991; Wang & Eccles, 2013). In particular, the behaviors, attitudes, and actions of school administrators, who are considered as the representative of the school, can be effective in influencing the perceptions and attitudes of the school community. The school community, which consists of different cultures, beliefs, experiences, languages, religions, ethnic structures, past experiences, etc., can often perceive or interpret the practices in schools in different ways. This situation may affect teachers' perceptions of social justice toward school administrators who they accept as the representatives of the school. The fact that the school principal prioritizes justice in the policies he/she implements and respects individual differences without discrimination shows the importance that the school principal attaches to social justice (Çalışkan, 2015). Teachers with positive

perceptions of social justice leadership are expected to exhibit attitudes and behaviors beyond what is expected of them (Chang, 2011).

Based on the study, it was concluded that principals' social justice leadership behaviours are statistically significant and positive factors that influence teachers' perceived administrative support and trust in the principal. It was also determined that teachers' perceived administrator support has a statistically significant and positive effect on trust in the principal. Finally, it was concluded that the teachers' perceived administrator support had a mediating role in the relationship between the principal's social justice leadership behaviors and trust in the principal. In other words, it can be said that social justice leadership not only predicts trust in the principal directly but also indirectly through perceived administrator support. These results show that social justice leadership behaviors exhibited by school principals are effective in increasing teachers' trust in the principal. In the research conducted by Akman (2020), it was found that the social justice leadership behaviours of school administrators significantly predicted trust in the principal and thus played an effective role in trust in the principal. In this context, school principals should reassure teachers about their behaviors and discourses (Bryk & Schneider, 2003), support activities that will benefit teachers, keep their promises, stand by employes support them financially and morally, and make them feel that they are with them even if they make mistakes. According to Nienaber et al. (2015), the behaviors exhibited by administrators are indicators of subordinates' trust in the administrator. In addition, school administrators should appreciate, value, and care about teachers' work and show that they are always with them. Administrator support perceived by employees directly affects trust in the administrator (Taş et al., 2021). As a social justice

leader, school principals should care about the differences in the school, see them as cultural richness, value and be tolerant, try to provide disadvantaged individuals with an equal and fair environment, and distribute the resources of the school equally and fairly. As a social justice leader, these behaviors of school administrators will ensure that teachers perceive administrator support positively and increase trust in the principal.

Limitations and recommendations

Although this study examines the mediating role of administrator support perceived by teachers in the relationship between social justice leadership and trust in the principal it also has some limitations. One of the limitations of the study is that it only deals with teachers within the school population, and the opinions of other stakeholders of the school were not consulted. In addition, the quantitative design of the study limits the in-depth examination of the reasons underlying teachers' perceptions. In this context, research can be conducted using different samples and through different research designs. Based on the findings of this study, further studies can be conducted to examine the relationship between variables in depth. It was concluded that principals' social justice leadership behaviours are a factor explaining teachers' trust in principals and that the administrator support perceived by teachers is a variable affecting the perception of trust. In this context, in order to increase teachers' perceptions of trust in the principal, it is necessary to show that their work is valued, to care about them, and to encourage them to participate in the decision-making process. It can be said that principals should see diversity as a source of richness within the school community, support them in their work, and exhibit fair policies in workload distribution and access to school resources.

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