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A Quantitative Study on the Relationship between Psychological Climate and Organisational Trust in Schools*

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ABSTRACT	ARTICLE INFO
The objective of this study was to examine the psychological climate and levels of organisational trust among teachers in educational institutions. The study employed a quantitative methodology and was conducted using a relational survey model. The study employed a stratified sampling method to select a sample of 473 teachers working in Onikişubat, Dulkadiroğlu, Andırın and Pazarcık districts of Kahramanmaraş province during the 2023-2024 academic year. Psychological Climate Scale and the Organizational Trust Scale were used to collect the data. The findings indicated that the psychological climate of teachers was rated as high. No significant differences were observed in the level of psychological climate according to the education level of the teachers. However, a significant difference was noted in favour of male teachers in the gender variable. Additionally, the study revealed that teachers exhibited high levels of organisational trust. The level of organisational trust demonstrated by teachers does not appear to vary according to variables such as professional seniority or career level. However, significant differences were identified in favour of male teachers in the gender variable of organisational trust. Furthermore, the correlation between teachers' psychological climate and organisational trust is statistically significant, with a positive, linear, and strong relationship. In this study, psychological climate was found to be the least related to trust in colleagues and the most related to trust in the manager. Organizational trust can be explained by 54.3% of the change in psychological climate.

*This study is based on the master's thesis of the second author, which was prepared under the supervision of the first author at the KSU Institute of Social Sciences, within the Educational Administration programme.

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Okullarda Psikolojik İklim ve Örgütsel Güven Arasındaki İlişki Üzerine Nicel Bir Çalışma

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ÖZET	MAKALE BİLGİSİ
Bu çalışmanın amacı, eğitim kurumlarındaki psikolojik iklim ve örgütsel güven düzeyini öğretmen görüşleri doğrultusunda incelemektir. Çalışma nicel bir metodoloji ve ilişkisel tarama modeli ile yürütülmüştür. 2023-2024 eğitim-öğretim yılında, Kahramanmaraş ilinin Onikişubat, Dulkadiroğlu, Andırın ve Pazarcık ilçelerinde görev yapan ve tabakalı örnekleme ile belirlenen 473 öğretmen çalışmanın örneklemini oluşturmuştur. Verilerin toplanmasında Psikolojik İklim Ölçeği ve Örgütsel Güven Ölçeği kullanılmıştır. Bulgular, öğretmenlerin psikolojik iklim algılarının yüksek olarak değerlendirildiğini göstermiştir. Öğretmenlerin eğitim düzeylerine göre psikolojik iklim düzeylerinde anlamlı bir farklılık gözlenmemiştir. Ancak cinsiyet değişkeninde erkek öğretmenler lehine anlamlı bir farklılık kaydedilmiştir. Ayrıca, çalışma öğretmenlerin yüksek düzeyde örgütsel güven sergilediklerini ortaya koymuştur. Öğretmenler tarafından sergilenen örgütsel güven düzeyi, mesleki kıdem veya kariyer düzeyi gibi değişkenlere göre farklılık göstermemektedir. Ancak, örgütsel güvenin cinsiyet değişkeninde erkek öğretmenler lehine anlamlı farklılıklar tespit edilmiştir. Ayrıca, öğretmenlerin psikolojik iklimi ile örgütsel güven arasındaki korelasyon pozitif, doğrusal ve güçlü bir ilişki ile istatistiksel olarak anlamlıdır. Bu çalışmada, psikolojik iklimin meslektaşlara güven ile en az, yöneticiye güven ile en fazla ilişkili olduğu bulunmuştur. Örgütsel güven, psikolojik iklimdeki değişimin %54,3'ü ile açıklanabilmektedir.	

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Introduction

The study of human nature, which is a complex phenomenon, has been a topic of interest for centuries. Nevertheless, it is challenging to gain a comprehensive understanding of human nature. The endeavour to comprehend the intricacies of the human condition has culminated in the advent of psychology as a distinct scientific discipline. The inaugural psychology laboratory, established by Wilhelm Wundt in 1879, has served as a source of inspiration for numerous researchers in this field. Wundt favoured an experimental approach to understanding the mind and sought to categorise mental processes using a 'periodic table'. He proposed that, just as a mathematical formula is created when its components are arranged in a specific way, the mind's thought processes can be understood in a similar manner (Ertürk, 2017). Subsequent studies conducted after Wilhelm Wundt's work revealed that the first psychology journal, "Philosophical Studies," was published in 1881. With the departure of philosophy from the field of psychology, the first psychological journal, the "American Journal of Psychology," was published (Schultz & Schultz, 2015). This indicates a shift in focus towards psychology as a scientific discipline.

One of the concepts that is thought to be closely related to the discipline of psychology, which studies employee behaviour in organisations, is the concept of climate. The term "climate" is used to describe the cognitive map that employees construct based on their perceptions of the organisational environment. It follows that psychological climate represents the impressions gained by employees as a result of their experiences. Psychological safety represents the pinnacle of trust, situated as it is within a context of peace, serenity and calmness. The psychological security of employees is of significant importance to organisations, as it has a direct impact on the quality of their work lives. When employees are able to cooperate and work in a relaxed and unhurried manner, productivity is increased and error rates are reduced. Furthermore, this situation is reflected in their performance, output and job satisfaction (Semerciöz & Akduru, 2020).

The sense of security and the need to feel safe are fundamental human requirements that must be met. The hierarchy of needs, as postulated by Abraham Maslow, one of the leading motivation theorists, comprises the following five motives: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualisation. (Robbins & Judge, 2013). The hierarchy of needs is a model that describes the fundamental motives that drive human behaviour. These motives are arranged in a hierarchy, with each subsequent motive dependent on the fulfilment of the preceding one. The second most fundamental motive is security. This implies that, in the initial stages of development, a person's need for security supersedes their need for physiological sustenance. Before a person can engage in social interactions, they must first feel safe. This situation allows the individual to be productive, useful, and happy within their environment. In all organisations, it is desirable for people to be able to express themselves comfortably as experts in their field. From this perspective, educational institutions can be considered as organisations in their own right, with the aim of developing individuals who can express themselves effectively. In line with this objective, the establishment of a culture of organisational trust and a positive psychological climate, which are expected to be developed in educational organisations, will result in the creation of highly productive employees in the future. Furthermore, the foundations of high-quality education will be established.

Schein (1985) posits that organisational culture is the process of transferring the rules and norms learned within the organisation to newcomers, thereby completing the internal journey of the organisation in harmony with the environment. Hoy and Miskel (1991) propose

that organisational culture is constituted by ceremonies, symbols, values and attitudes, myths and beliefs. This information, along with the common vision and values determined by the organisation and shared with all stakeholders, constitutes organisational culture.

Organizational culture represents the most crucial structural element that enables organizations to remain unified and ensures their continued survival (Koşar & Yalçınkaya, 2013). In an organisation with a robust culture, employees are highly cooperative, motivated, and demonstrate loyalty through organisational citizenship behaviours. They strive to exceed the expectations of their formal roles and prioritise the organisation's future. Conversely, an organisation with a weak culture may exhibit symptoms such as burnout, low motivation, complexity, low organisational commitment and trust, lack of communication, and low participation in organisational goals.

A robust school culture is one of the key factors that can reinforce individuals' sense of trust and enhance their psychological well-being. The creation of a strong school culture may encounter certain obstacles. One significant challenge in establishing a robust school culture is the lack of trust among teachers in their administrators and in one another. In this context, school principals bear significant responsibilities. Primarily, they must cultivate trust within the educational institution. This is exemplified by the Chinese proverb, "Don't give a job to the person you suspect, and don't suspect the person you give a job to," which elucidates the interconnection between organizational trust and the relationship between employees and managers (Teyfur et al., 2013).

The advantages of a robust organisational trust in educational institutions can be enumerated as follows: teachers in a trusting environment encourage the school to consider how to optimise learning environments; it instils hope and enthusiasm in teachers with regard to their activities; it facilitates the efficient and effective completion of all activities; teachers in schools with strong organisational trust are better able to comprehend their colleagues and are more amenable to collaboration (Yılmaz, 2005).

One of the key factors in fostering a robust organisational culture is the psychological climate. This can be defined as the collective evaluation of the environment and situation within the organisation by its members. Individuals tend to integrate their work environment with their personal values, and thus, the more positive the work experience, the more it is reflected in the psychological climate. Consequently, the psychological climate is directly associated with how individuals perceive themselves within the organisational context (Kaygisiz, 2010).

The experiences that teachers gain during their education and professional lives have an impact on the classroom climate, which in turn affects their professional competencies and the students they train (Kuru & Orçan, 2023). Consequently, the psychological climate levels that teachers develop as a result of their experiences at school are of great importance for their schools.

In light of the aforementioned information, it is imperative that teachers collaborate with their administrators, colleagues, and other employees to establish the mission and vision of the school collectively and to cultivate a robust psychological climate. It is hypothesised that an investigation into the relationship between teachers' perceptions of psychological climate and trust levels and the efficiency and effectiveness of schools, with a holistic examination of relevant variables, will contribute to the existing literature on the subject. This study aims to examine the levels of psychological climate and organisational trust in schools according to teachers' views, and to ascertain whether there is a relationship between these two variables. In order to achieve these aims, answers were sought to the following research questions:

1. What are the opinions of teachers regarding the psychological climate and organisational trust levels in schools?

2. Do the teachers' views on psychological climate and organisational trust levels in schools differ according to gender, seniority, educational degree, career ladder and school type variables??

3. According to teachers' opinions, is there a relationship between the psychological climate at school and organisational trust level?

4. Do teachers' views on the level of psychological climate at school predict organizational trust?''

Methodology

The study was designed with the relational survey model in order to elucidate the relationship between teachers' psychological climate and organisational trust, and to investigate the differentiation of these two in terms of demographic variables. Additionally, it is a descriptive study investigating the psychological climate and organisational trust of teachers. The survey model is a method used to ascertain the intrinsic characteristics of a group. The relational screening method is a technique to identify the differentiation between at least two variables. If a change is observed as a result of the research, correlation and regression analyses are conducted to examine the nature of this change (Karasar, 2023).

Participants

The study universe comprises 11,746 teachers employed in 608 primary, secondary and high schools situated in Pazarcık, Andırın, Dulkadiroğlu and Onikişubat districts of Kahramanmaraş province during the 2023-2024 academic year. The sample for the study consisted of 473 teachers from primary, secondary and high schools in the aforementioned districts, selected using the stratified sampling method. Following the calculations, it was determined that the requisite number of samples had been reached. The frequency table for the research sample is provided below:

Table 1. *Frequency Distribution of the Sample*

Variable	Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Woman	208	44
	Male	265	56
Term of Office	1-5 years	108	22.8
	6-10 years	90	19
	11-15 years	139	29.4
	16-20 years	59	12.5
	21 and above	77	16.3
Education Status	License	387	81.8
	Master's Degree	86	18.2
Career Ladder	Teacher	195	41.2
	Expert and Head Teacher	278	58.8
Type of School	Primary School	175	37
	Middle School	158	33.4
	High School	140	29.6
	Total	473	100

Table 1 reveals a relatively balanced gender distribution among teachers. With regard to educational level, the sample shows a clear predominance of individuals holding a bachelor's degree. Furthermore, the data indicate a higher representation of participants at the expert and head teacher career levels compared to those holding the title of teacher. The distribution according to length of service and type of school also appears to be relatively uniform.

Data Collection Instruments

This study comprises three distinct instruments: the Personal Information Form, the Psychological Climate Scale (PCS), and the Organizational Trust Scale (OTS). The PCS, as adapted into Turkish by Argon and Limon (2017), comprises four sub-dimensions and 19 items in total. Argon and Limon (2017) established the construct validity of the scale and found that the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) were 0.935 and 0.921, respectively, indicating a value of 0.90 or above. The RMSEA and RMR (RMSEA=0.066, RMR=0.048) were less than 0.08, and the /df (/df= 2.609) was within the range of acceptable values. The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) created using the necessary programs to calculate the construct validity of the scale is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results of the Psychological Climate Scale

Measurement (Fit Indices)	Good Fit	Acceptable Compliance	Model
Overall Model Fit X2/sd	≤3	3≤ X2/sd≤5	2.316
CFI	.950≤ CFI≤1.00	.900≤ CFI≤.950	0.94
RMSEA	0≤ RMSEA≤0.50	0.50≤ RMSEA≤0.80	0.05
TLI	.950≤ TLI≤1.00	.900≤ TLI≤.950	0.92
RMR	0≤ RMR≤0.50	0.50≤ RMR≤0.80	0.05
IFI	.950≤ IFI≤1.00	.900≤ IFI≤0.950	0.94

Table 2 demonstrates that the IFI, CFI and TLI (IFI=0.94, CFI=0.94, TLI=0.92) values are within the acceptable range, as they exceed 0.90. Similarly, the RMSEA and RMR (RMSEA=0.05, RMR=0.05) values are also within the acceptable range. The model is deemed to exhibit a good fit, as evidenced by the fact that the X2/sd ratio is less than 3, which falls within the acceptable range (Browne & Cudeck, 1992: 239; Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008). (Hu & Bentler, 1999, p. 1; Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Muller, 2003, p. 52).

Argon and Limon (2017) calculated the internal reliability coefficient of the scale (α) to be 0.912, and the reliability of the supportive management sub-dimension (α) to be 0.886, as well as the reliability of the organisational contribution. Furthermore, the affirmation sub-dimension (α) yielded a coefficient of 0.780, the self-expression sub-dimension (α) yielded a coefficient of 0.795, and the role clarity sub-dimension (α) yielded a coefficient of 0.738. In this study, Cronbach-Alpha reliability coefficients were calculated for the PCS once more, resulting in a value of .89 for the overall scale and sub-dimensions. This demonstrates that the

reliability level of the Psychological Climate Scale (PCS) and all its sub-dimensions is high (Özdamar, 1999).

The Organizational Trust Scale (OTS), as developed by Çalışkan (2021), is a five-point Likert scale. The Organizational Trust Scale (OTS) comprises a total of 17 items and three sub-dimensions. A Confirmatory Factor Analysis was conducted on three distinct sample groups, comprising representatives from the industry, education, and health sectors, based on the Organizational Trust Scale (OTS) developed by Çalışkan (2021). The results of the calculations yielded the following acceptable fit values: AGFI (0.95), GFI (0.96), NFI (0.96), CFI (0.98), RMSEA (0.03), and /df (2.61). The confirmatory factor analysis, conducted using the requisite program to assess the construct validity of the scale in this study, is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. *Confirmatory Factor Analysis Findings of the SLO Scale*

Measurement (Fit Indices)	Good Fit	Acceptable Compliance	Model
Overall Model Fit X2/sd	≤3	3≤ X2/sd≤5	2.889
CFI	.950≤ CFI≤1.00	.900≤ CFI≤.950	0.96
RMSEA	0≤ RMSEA≤0.50	0.50≤ RMSEA≤0.80	0.63
TLI	.950≤ TLI≤1.00	.900≤ TLI≤.950	0.95
RMR	0≤ RMR≤0.50	0.50≤ RMR≤0.80	0.02
IFI	.950≤ IFI≤1.00	.900≤ IFI≤0.950	0.96

Table 3 illustrates that the IFI, CFI and TLI values (IFI=0.96, CFI=0.96, TLI=0.95) are within the acceptable fit range, as they exceed 0.95. Similarly, the RMR value (RMR=0.02) is also within the acceptable fit range. The RMSEA value is 0.63, which falls within the acceptable fit range of 0.50 to 0.80. Similarly, the X2/sd ratio is 2.512, which is less than 3, indicating a good fit. It can therefore be concluded that the model as a whole is within the acceptable fit range (Browne & Cudeck, 1992: 239; Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008: (Hu & Bentler, 1999: 1; Schermelleh-Engel, Moosbrugger, & Muller, 2003: 52; Kline, 2016: 276–277).

In their 2021 study, Çalışkan, the developer of the Organizational Trust Scale, reported a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.93 for the overall scale and 0.92 for the sub-dimension. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the sub-dimension of trust in colleagues was 0.95, while the coefficient for the sub-dimension of trust in the manager was 0.94. In this study, the Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficients of the sub-dimensions of the Organizational Trust Scale (α) were calculated again and found to be greater than 0.94 for the entire scale and all sub-dimensions. This result indicates that the reliability level of the Psychological Climate Scale (PCS) and all its sub-dimensions is high (Özdamar, 1999).

Data Analysis

In the study, the skewness coefficient was calculated to be -0.59 and the kurtosis coefficient was calculated to be 1.04 in the Psychological Climate Scale. In the

Organizational Trust Scale, the skewness coefficient was found to be -0.64, while the kurtosis coefficient was 0.48. As stated by Liu et al. (2005), the skewness and kurtosis coefficients fall within the 5% confidence interval, between -2.58 and +2.58, and thus are deemed to be within the normal range. In this study, parametric tests were conducted, given that the data exhibited a normal distribution. The data were analysed using a variety of techniques, including the calculation of the mean, standard deviation and frequency distribution, in order to facilitate the interpretation of the results. In the case of variables such as education level and gender, a t-test was employed. In instances where a significant difference was identified, an effect size (Eta Square: h) was calculated. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine the influence of school type and tenure on the dependent variables. In instances where a significant difference was identified, LSD, one of the post hoc tests, was employed to ascertain the source of the discrepancy. A correlation analysis was conducted to determine the presence and nature of any relationship between teachers' psychological climate and their organisational trust, including the direction and strength of this relationship, if applicable. Multiple linear regression was utilised to investigate whether teachers' psychological climate predicts their organisational trust.

Findings / Bulgular

Findings Regarding the First Research Question

The arithmetic mean and standard deviations of the data obtained for the first research question, which is "What are the opinions of the teachers about the psychological climate of the school?", are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Psychological Climate Levels of Teachers

Dimensions	N	$\bar{x}$	S.D
Psychological Climate (Total)	400	3.83	0,47
Supportive School Management	400	3.80	0,65
Perceived Organizational Contribution and Validation	400	4.03	0,53
Self-Expression at School	400	3.59	0,70
Role Clarity	400	3.81	0,68

Table 4 presents the mean scores of the teachers on the psychological climate scale, which were calculated to be $\bar{x}$ = 3.83, indicating a high level of psychological climate. Upon examination of the sub-dimensions, it was determined that supportive school management ($\bar{x}$=3.80) was rated as "high"; perceived organisational contribution and approval ($\bar{x}$=4.03) was rated as "high"; self-expression at school ($\bar{x}$=3.59) was rated as "high"; and role clarity ($\bar{x}$=3.81) was rated as "high".

Table 5. Organizational Trust Levels of Teachers

Dimensions	N	$\bar{x}$	S.D
Organizational Trust (Total)	473	3.89	0.59
Trust in Colleagues	473	3.83	0.66
Trust in the Manager	473	3.88	0.76
Trust in the Organization	473	3.99	0.67

Table 5 presents the mean scores of teachers on the organisational trust scale, which were calculated to be $\bar{x} = 3.89$, indicating a high level of trust. An examination of the sub-dimensions revealed that trust in colleagues ($\bar{x} = 3.83$) was rated as "high," as was trust in the administrator ($\bar{x} = 3.88$). Trust in the organization ($\bar{x} = 3.99$) was also rated as "high."

Findings Regarding the Second Research Question

The findings for the second research question, which is "Do teachers' views on the level of psychological climate in schools differ according to gender, educational status, career level, school type, and years of service?", were analysed according to five variables.

With regard to the variable of gender, it was observed that the scores of female teachers on the psychological climate scale ($\bar{x} = 3.79$) were at the "high" level, while the scores of male teachers on the psychological climate scale ($\bar{x} = 3.87$) were also at the "high" level. No significant difference was identified between the mean scores across the scale ($p > 0.05$). Upon examination of the sub-dimensions, it was observed that a significant difference existed solely in the perceived organisational contribution and affirmation sub-dimension. Female teachers exhibited psychological climate levels that were classified as "high" ($\bar{x} = 3.97$), while male teachers demonstrated similar levels ($\bar{x} = 4.09$) ($p > 0.05$). The analysis revealed that male teachers exhibited higher psychological climate levels than their female counterparts. The effect size was found to be 0.012, which is considered a small effect size.

The results indicated that teachers with an undergraduate education exhibited higher scores on the psychological climate scale ($\bar{x} = 3.83$) compared to those with a graduate education ($\bar{x} = 3.84$). No significant difference was observed between the mean scores. Similarly, no significant difference was found between the psychological climates of teachers according to the educational status variable in the sub-dimensions ($p > 0.05$). It was determined that the psychological climates of teachers with graduate education and those with undergraduate education were comparable.

It was observed that the psychological climate levels of teachers according to their career levels ($\bar{x} = 3.82$) were classified as "high," while the psychological climate levels of expert and head teachers ($\bar{x} = 3.84$) were also classified as "high." A significant difference was identified in the perceived organisational contribution and affirmation sub-dimension among the teaching cohort. It was thus established that the psychological climate levels of teachers ($\bar{x} = 3.97$) were "high," whereas the psychological climate levels of experts and head teachers ($\bar{x} = 4.08$) were "high" ($p < 0.05$). The results of the analysis indicated that the psychological climates of those with the designation of expert or head teacher were perceived to be higher in comparison to those with the designation of teacher. The effect size was found to be 0.009, which is considered to be a small effect size.

The results indicated that teachers employed in primary schools exhibited higher levels of psychological climate, with a mean score of 3.87 on the psychological climate scale. This was followed by teachers in secondary schools, who demonstrated a mean score of 3.79 on the same scale. The scores of teachers working in primary schools on the psychological climate scale ($\bar{x} = 3.79$) were classified as "high." Similarly, the scores of teachers working in secondary schools on the psychological climate scale ($\bar{x} = 3.83$) were also classified as "high." A significant difference was identified solely in the role clarity sub-dimension with regard to the school type variable. Accordingly, it was found that the scores of primary school teachers on the psychological climate scale ($\bar{x} = 3.78$), the scores of secondary school teachers on the psychological climate scale ($\bar{x} = 3.68$), the scores of high school teachers on the psychological climate scale ($\bar{x} = 3.92$) were "high" ($p < 0.05$). The results demonstrated a significant

difference in the role clarity sub-dimension as a function of the school type variable. As a result of the Post Hoc Test (LSD), this difference is due to teachers working in high school and secondary school.

A significant difference was identified between the psychological climate levels and the variable of professional seniority. Teachers with 1-5 years of seniority in the psychological climate scale exhibited high scores ($\bar{x}$ =3.81), while those with 6-10 years of seniority demonstrated similarly elevated scores ($\bar{x}$ =3.82). The results indicated that teachers with 11-15 years of seniority ($\bar{x}$ =3.83) exhibited a "high" level of psychological climate, while those with 16-20 years of seniority ($\bar{x}$ =3.74) demonstrated a "high" level. Teachers with 21 or more years of seniority ($\bar{x}$ =3.96) also exhibited a "high" level of psychological climate. A significant difference was observed in the sub-dimension of being able to express oneself at school, according to the teachers' tenure. The psychological climate perceptions of teachers with one to five years of seniority ($\bar{x}$ = 3.51) were rated as high, as were the psychological climate perceptions of teachers with six to ten years of seniority ($\bar{x}$ = 3.65). The psychological climate perceptions of teachers with 11 to 15 years of seniority ($\bar{x}$ = 3.50) were rated as high. The psychological climate perceptions of teachers with 16-20 years of seniority ($\bar{x}$ =3.64) were also rated as "high", as were those of teachers with 20 or more years of service ($\bar{x}$ =3.79) (p<0.05). The results of the post hoc test indicated that the psychological climate levels of teachers with 21 or more years of seniority were higher than those of teachers with 1-5 years of seniority and teachers with 11-15 years of seniority.

The findings obtained for the second research question, which is "Do teachers' views on organisational trust levels in schools differ according to gender, educational status, career level, school type, and seniority?" were subjected to analysis according to five variables.

With regard to the gender variable, it was observed that the scores of female teachers on the organisational trust scale ($\bar{x}$ = 3.82) were indicative of a "high" level of trust. Similarly, it was determined that the scores of male teachers on the organisational trust scale ($\bar{x}$ = 3.95) were at the "high" level. A significant difference was observed between the overall scale scores and those of the sub-dimensions of trust in the administrator and trust in the organisation. No significant difference was identified in the sub-dimension of trust in colleagues (p > 0.05). The results of the analyses indicated that the organisational trust of male teachers was higher than that of female teachers across the entire scale, as well as in the sub-dimensions of trust in the institution and trust in the administrator.

The results of the study indicated that teachers with an undergraduate education exhibited higher levels of organisational trust ($\bar{x}$ = 3.90) compared to their counterparts with postgraduate qualifications ($\bar{x}$ = 3.78). A noteworthy discrepancy was observed solely in the scores attained on the subscale measuring trust in the organisation. It was thus established that the levels of trust exhibited by teachers with undergraduate qualifications ($\bar{x}$ =4.01) were classified as "high", while the organisational trust levels demonstrated by teachers with graduate qualifications ($\bar{x}$ =3.90) were also "high" (p<0.05). The analysis revealed that teachers with undergraduate education exhibited greater trust in the organisation than those with graduate education. The effect size was found to be 0.017, indicating a small effect.

The results demonstrated that the teachers' scores on the organisational trust scale were at a "high" level, irrespective of their career stage. Similarly, the expert teachers and head teachers exhibited a "high" level of organisational trust, with an average score of 3.87 on the aforementioned scale. No statistically significant difference was observed between the mean scores (p < 0.05). It can be concluded that organisational trust levels of teachers does not differentiate depending on the titles of teachers.

The results revealed that teachers employed at primary schools exhibited high levels of organisational trust, with a mean score of 3.96 on the organisational trust scale. Similarly, teachers at secondary schools demonstrated similarly high levels of organisational trust, with a mean score of 3.81. The organisational trust scale scores for teachers in primary schools were found to be high ($\bar{x}$=3.96). Similarly, the scores for teachers in secondary schools were also high ($\bar{x}$=3.81). The analysis revealed that, with regard to the school type variable, the trust scale scores of primary school teachers ($\bar{x}$=4.05) were the only ones to reach the "high" level of trust. Secondary school teachers ($\bar{x}$=3.88) and high school teachers ($\bar{x}$=4.05) also demonstrated high levels of trust. A significant difference was identified between the averages ($p < 0.05$). Post-hoc tests revealed that teachers working in primary school and high school exhibited higher levels of organisational trust than those in secondary school.

The results of the study indicated that teachers with 1-5 years of seniority exhibited high levels of organisational trust, with a mean score of 3.93 on the trust scale. Teachers with 6-10 years of seniority also demonstrated high levels of organisational trust, with a mean score of 3.83 on the trust scale. Teachers with 11-15 years of seniority rated the level of organisational trust as "high" ($\bar{x}$=3.89). The same was true for teachers with 16-20 years of seniority ($\bar{x}$=3.80). Upon analysis of the mean scores, no significant difference was identified ($p < 0.05$). It was determined that teachers held similar perceptions of organisational trust according to their seniority.

Findings Regarding the Third Research Question

In order to ascertain whether there is a correlation between psychological climate and organisational trust level in schools according to the opinions of teachers, correlation analysis was conducted. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. *Psychological Climate and Organizational Trust Correlation Table*

Variables	Psychological Climate	Supportive School Management	Perceived Organizational Contribution and Affirmation	Self-Expression at School	Role Clarity
Organizational Trust	0.725				
Trust in Colleagues	r=0.535 p=0.000	r=0.368 p=0.000	r=0.337 p=0.000	r=0.399 p=0.000	r=0.557 p=0.000
Trust in the Manager	r=0.683 p=0.000	r=0.680 p=0.000	r=0.300 p=0.000	r=0.437 p=0.000	r=0.609 p=0.000
Trust in the Organization	r=0.677 p=0.000	r=0.616 p=0.000	r=0.369 p=0.000	r=0.412 p=0.000	r=0.633 p=0.000

The correlation analysis presented in Table 6 revealed a strong and positive relationship between teachers' psychological climate levels and organisational trust levels (r=72; p<0.05). While there are different groupings in the literature, generally speaking, values between (.00-.30) indicate a weak relationship, (.31-.49) indicate a medium relationship, (.50-.69) indicate a strong relationship, and (.70-.100) indicate a very strong relationship (Tavşancıl, 2006).

The relationship between teachers' psychological climate levels and their levels of trust in colleagues was found to be positive, linear, strong and significant (r=0.53), with a p-

value of less than 0.05. The level of trust in colleagues was found to be least related to the perceived organisational contribution and approval sub-dimension and most related to the role clarity sub-dimension.

The study revealed a statistically significant and positive correlation between teachers' psychological climate levels and their trust in administrators, with a correlation coefficient of r=0.68 and a p-value less than 0.05. The analysis revealed that trust in the administrator was least related to the perceived organisational contribution and approval sub-dimension and most related to the supportive school management sub-dimension.

There was a positive, linear, strong and significant relationship (r=0.67) between teachers' psychological climate levels and trust in the organisation (p<0.05). The lowest levels of trust in the institution were found in the perceived organisational contribution and affirmation sub-dimension, while the highest levels were found in the role clarity sub-dimension.

Findings Related to the Fourth Research Question

A regression analysis was conducted to address the fourth sub-problem of the study, which was "Do teachers' views on the level of psychological climate at school predict organisational trust?"

Table 7. Regression Analysis Results

Variable	β	Standard Error		t	P	Tolerance	VİF
Fixed	1.631	0.100		16.287	0.000		
Trust in Colleagues	0.134	0.027		4.944	0.000	0.680	1.471
Trust in the Manager	0.211	0.032		6.616	0.000	0.370	2.702
Trust in the Organization	0.219	0.036		6.037	0.000	0.368	2.717
R			0.737				
R^2			0.543				
F			185.43				
ANOVA p value			0.000				

Y: Psychological Climate (Dependent Variable)

X1: Trust in Colleagues

X2: Trust in the Manager

X3: Trust in the Organization

The mathematical equation is as follows in the model:

Y=1.631+0.134X1+0.211X2+0.219X3

In Table 7, it is seen that the constant term is 1.631. An increase of one unit in trust in the organisation will result in a 0.219 unit increase in psychological climate. Similarly, an increase of one unit in trust in the manager will result in a 0.211 unit increase in psychological climate, while an increase of one unit in trust in colleagues will result in a 0.134 unit increase in psychological climate.

The model explains 54.3% of the change in the dependent variable. The ANOVA p-value indicates that the model is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). The t-test revealed that the predictive power on organisational trust was found to be significant. As the VIF value is less than 10 and the tolerance value is more than 0.2, it can be concluded that there is no multicollinearity issue in the data.

Discussion and Conclusion

The objective of this study is to assess the psychological climate and organisational trust levels of teachers in educational establishments. The research is quantitative and employs a relational survey model. The research population comprises teachers employed in primary, secondary and high schools in four districts of Kahramanmaraş province (Onikişubat, Dulkadiroğlu, Pazarcık, Andırın). Stratified sampling was employed in the study to ensure a representative sample. The data collected through the scales was analysed to reach certain conclusions. This section presents the results, a discussion based on the results and recommendations based on all these results.

There is a significant difference in the psychological climate scale mean scores of male and female teachers. Upon examination of the sub-dimensions of psychological climate, it was determined that male teachers' perceptions of psychological climate were higher only in the organisational contribution and affirmation sub-dimension. A review of the literature revealed studies that demonstrated both differences and similarities to our own research. The studies conducted by Eroğlu and Özen (2019) and Şengül (2022) revealed that male teachers exhibited higher levels of psychological climate than their female counterparts. Similarly, Moç (2023) also found this to be the case. The results of this study are therefore confirmed. This discrepancy may be attributed to the fact that women tend to receive less organisational support, whereas men often have closer ties with the administration. A review of the literature suggests that differing results according to gender may be attributed to organisational expectations, social roles and statuses, and the differentiation of thought worlds according to individuals. It should be noted that other studies in the literature have yielded different results. Ağırman (2018), Akçe (2019), Aydoğan (2019), Kırbaç and Demirtaş (2019), Özdemir (2019) found no significant difference in psychological climate according to gender. Atitsogbui and Tawiah (2018) found female teachers had higher perceptions of psychological climate than male teachers.

The findings obtained according to the educational status in psychological climate revealed no significant difference in the psychological climate scale and its sub-dimensions. The results of the studies conducted by Yılmaz (2018), Aydoğan (2019) and Şengül (2022) were similar. This indicates that the psychological climates of teachers with both undergraduate and graduate-level qualifications are similar. The results of these studies align with those of the current study. Ağırman (2018) and Moç (2023) reached the conclusion that psychological climate and trust perception will decrease as the education level of individuals increases. This may result in individuals with higher education levels facing challenges in meeting their job satisfaction due to a lack of opportunities to utilise their talents effectively. Yılmaz (2018) and Kılıç (2023) found that psychological climate increases in line with educational level. It may therefore be assumed that performance also rises in line with psychological climate, particularly among those with a high level of education.

The study revealed a significant difference in the scores obtained from the entire psychological climate scale according to the career stages of the teachers. In the sub-dimensions of perceived organisational contribution and approval, which are sub-dimensions of psychological climate, it was observed that expert and head teachers exhibited higher psychological climate perceptions. No significant difference was identified in the dimensions of role clarity and self-expression at school. As the concept of teachers' career steps is novel, there is currently no study on career steps. It is therefore hoped that this study will make a valuable contribution to the existing literature.

A review of the study findings according to the type of school in the whole psychological climate scale reveals a significant difference in psychological climate levels between teachers in high schools and those in primary and secondary schools. Furthermore, an analysis of the impact of school type on role clarity revealed a significant discrepancy. A Post Hoc Test was conducted to identify the source of the difference. The results of the test indicated that the difference was in favour of teachers working in high school. Factors such as unified classrooms, adaptation issues with new students starting primary school, and parents selecting teachers may contribute to a reduction in the psychological climate level of primary school teachers. In secondary schools, the significant pressure of high school entrance exams, students' efforts to adapt to adolescence, discipline and behaviour problems based on this, and the challenges teachers face with their colleagues and administrators may result in a decline in teachers' perceptions of psychological climate.

The studies conducted by Akçe (2019), Eroğlu and Özen (2019), Kırbaç and Demirtaş (2019), and Mert and Özdemir (2019) revealed significant differences in the psychological climate levels of teachers. In contrast to this result, Yılmaz (2018) concluded that the type of school where teachers work did not have a significant impact on the overall scale and its sub-dimensions. Based on this, it can be concluded that teachers attach importance to cooperation, the type of school where they work is positively affected by this situation, there is freedom of expression and a democratic environment at school.

The overall and sub-dimensions of the psychological climate scale showed no significant correlation with professional seniority. The analysis revealed a significant discrepancy in the sub-dimension of self-expression at school. The results indicated that teachers with 21 or more years of tenure had more positive perceptions of the psychological climate than teachers with 11-15 years of tenure and those with 1-5 years of tenure. This situation may be attributed to the lack of experience among teachers with less professional seniority, given that they are relatively new to the profession. In contrast, teachers with more seniority possess a greater depth of knowledge and experience. Aydoğan (2019) found that teachers with 21 years or more of seniority had higher perceptions of psychological climate. This result supports the current study. In contrast, Moç (2023) found that new recruits' psychological perceptions decreased as their tenure increased.

Akçe (2019) and Şengül (2022) identified a significant difference in outcomes according to professional seniority. In contrast to the aforementioned studies, Yılmaz (2018) and Eroğlu and Özen (2019) found no significant correlation between professional seniority and the overall scale and sub-dimensions of teachers' psychological climate.

It can be stated that teachers who are able to express themselves comfortably at school and who receive support from their administrations will experience an increase in their psychological climate levels. The acceptance of teachers by their institutions and the clarity of duties and roles at school can contribute to an increase in the perception of the psychological climate at school.

This study revealed that teachers exhibited a high level of organisational trust. An analysis of the findings by gender revealed a difference in organisational trust levels between

men and women. It can therefore be seen that male teachers have higher levels of organisational trust. Similarly, other studies have reached similar conclusions. These include the studies by Üstüner and Cömert (2006), Kalaycı (2007), Taşkın and Dilek (2010), Taş (2012), and Sağır and Parlak (2018. The studies by İsmayilov (2019), Karakuş (2019), Sarıkaya (2019), and Özer, Demirtaş, Karasu (2020) also found that male teachers have higher levels of organisational trust. These results align with those of the current study.

Polat and Ceep (2008), Bökeoğlu and Yılmaz (2008), Yazıcıoğlu (2009), Baş and Şentürk (2011), Afşar (2013), Çintay (2013), Polat (2013), Güler (2014), Karimi Bakhshkandi (2014), Aktuğ (2016), Demirdağ (2017), Bil (2018), Bulut (2018), Dağ (2018), Mutluay (2018), Korkmaz (2019), Güneş (2020), found that there was no significant difference in the relationship between organizational trust and gender variable.

The research conducted by Teyfur, Baytekin, and Yalçınkaya (2013) in primary schools revealed that women tend to exhibit higher levels of overall organisational trust and its sub-dimensions compared to their male counterparts. The study concluded that organisational trust levels are higher among female teachers than among male teachers.

The research findings indicate that there is no significant difference in organisational trust according to gender in the majority of studies. The majority of studies have indicated that men tend to exhibit higher levels of trust than women. This difference may be attributed to several factors. Firstly, school administrators are predominantly male, which may influence the perception of trust among female teachers. Secondly, male teachers often have closer interactions with the school administration, whereas female teachers may perceive a lack of trust due to their more reserved temperament. Thirdly, female teachers often shoulder greater responsibilities at work and home, which may contribute to a perception of less trust.

The findings revealed a significant difference in organisational trust between teachers with undergraduate education and those with postgraduate education, with the former group displaying higher levels of trust. Yazıcıoğlu (2009), Büte (2011), Afşar (2013), Teyfur, Baytekin and Yalçınkaya (2013), Güler (2014), Aktuğ (The studies conducted by Yazıcıoğlu (2009), Büte (2011), Afşar (2013), Teyfur, Baytekin and Yalçınkaya (2013), Güler (2014), Aktuğ (2015), Bulut (2018), Mutluay (2018), Ismayilov (2019) and Sarıkaya (2019) revealed a significant discrepancy in organisational trust between teachers with undergraduate education and those with graduate education. The results of these studies align with those of the current research.

Furthermore, Dilek (2010), Baş and Şentürk (2011), Taş and Taş (2012), Çintay (2013), Uslu and Ardıç (2013), Bil (2018), Dağ (2018) found no correlation between organisational trust and educational level in their studies. This indicates that there is no significant difference in organisational trust between teachers with different levels of education. The results of these studies differ from those of the current research.

The analysis of organisational trust according to career level revealed no significant differences in the overall scale or in any of the sub-dimensions. This indicates that the level of trust exhibited by expert and head teachers in teachers' organisations is comparable.

A review of the literature revealed no studies that included analyses related to career steps in the context of psychological climate and organisational trust. This may be attributed to the recent introduction of legal regulations governing teacher career steps, which came into force on 1 January 2023. It is anticipated that this study will serve as a foundation for further research in this field.

The analysis of organisational trust according to the type of school revealed no significant differences in the sub-dimensions of trust in the administrator and trust in colleagues. A notable discrepancy was observed in the sub-dimension of trust in the organisation, with teachers in primary and secondary schools demonstrating a higher level of

trust than those in high schools. This can be attributed to the fact that middle school serves as a transitionary period between primary and high school. Özer, Demirtaş, Üstüner and Cömert (2006), Çintay (2013), Polat (2013) and Sandal (2014), Dağ (2018), Güneş (2020) identified significant differences in their studies. This situation is comparable to the current study. In contrast to these results, Bil (2018) and Sağır and Parlak (2018) did not identify a significant difference according to the type of school in their research.

The analysis of organisational trust according to professional seniority revealed no significant differences in the overall organisational trust scale or in any of the sub-dimensions. This may be attributed to the specific organisational context in which they operate. If the institution has a democratic structure and managers adopt an open leadership approach, and if colleagues cooperate within the institution, it can be predicted that organisational trust will not change according to the length of service. Yılmaz (2008), Bökeoğlu and Polat (2013), Çintay (2013), Uslu and Ardıç (2013), Karimi Bakhshkandi (2014), Sandal (2014), Bil (2018 The studies by Bulut (2018), Dağ (2018), Mutluay (2018), Sağır and Parlak (2018), Korkmaz (2019), Karasu (2020) also found no significant correlation between tenure and organisational trust. This aligns with the findings of the present study.

Özer, Demirtaş, Üstüner and Cömert (2006), Polat and Ceep (2008), Yazıcıoğlu (2009), Baş and Şentürk (2011), Taş (2012), Afşar (2013), Tekingündüz and Tengilimoğlu, Güler (2014), Kaygun and Atay (2014), Halıcı, Söyük and Gün (2015), Aktuğ (2016), Demirdağ (2017), İsmayilov (2019) and Karakuş (2019) revealed a significant correlation between tenure and organisational trust. The results align with the findings of the current study. Teachers who have confidence in their school administrations and believe they have positive relationships with their colleagues are more likely to perceive a higher level of trust. Teachers who have trust in their school are more likely to have a positive perception of trust in the broader organisation.

The study revealed a strong and positive correlation between teachers' psychological climate and their organisational trust, with a correlation coefficient of 0.725. A 53.5% positive, linear and strong relationship was identified between teachers' psychological climate and their colleagues' trust. There is a 68.3% positive, linear and strong relationship between teachers' psychological climate and their trust in the administrator. A positive, linear and strong relationship was identified between teachers' psychological climate and their trust in the organisation, with a correlation rate of 67.7%. The study revealed a significant relationship between psychological climate and organisational trust. When the teachers' psychological climates were analysed according to their sub-dimensions, the lowest relationship was found between the psychological climate and the sub-dimension of organisational trust pertaining to trust in colleagues (53.5% positive and significant). Upon analysis of the psychological climates of the teachers according to the sub-dimensions, it was determined that the highest relationship was between the psychological climate and the sub-dimension of organisational trust pertaining to trust in the manager (68.3% positively and significantly). The results demonstrate that teachers place the greatest trust in their administrators, in line with their psychological climate. In light of these findings, it may be surmised that administrators can be individuals who possess knowledge, expert, and charismatic power, and who demonstrate sustaining, transformational, and shared leadership styles. Secondly, it can be said that teachers place a high degree of trust in their institutions, based on their psychological make-up.The results demonstrate that teachers adopt and trust the institution and its physical qualities. Additionally, teachers trust their colleagues based on the psychological climate. This may indicate that teachers do not collaborate, compete with each other, and withhold information. The regression analysis indicates that this model, which

is significant overall, explains 54.3% of the change in psychological climate on organisational trust.

The results of the research indicate that teachers' psychological climate levels are largely influenced by their trust in school administrators. It can therefore be concluded that administrators and teachers should demonstrate openness to innovation, adapt swiftly to developments and change, and embrace their institutions. This will foster positive psychological perceptions of teachers and produce future individuals who are more qualified, useful and successful.

Recommendations

1. The study revealed that female teachers held less favourable perceptions of organisational trust and psychological climate than their male counterparts. To enhance these perceptions, it would be beneficial to implement supportive practices, including positive discrimination in the organisation of female teachers' curricula.

2. The study revealed that specialist and head teachers achieved higher scores than those with only a teaching title on the organisational contribution dimension. In light of the above, it would be beneficial to appoint teachers at the excpert and head teacher career levels as mentors to other teachers. It is therefore possible to enhance teachers' organisational contribution skills by fostering professional solidarity and learning networks.

3. The study revealed that the psychological climate perceptions of primary and secondary school teachers were lower than those of high school teachers. Factors such as unified classrooms, the difficulties new teachers face when starting out in primary school, and the process of teacher selection by parents may contribute to a reduction in the psychological climate perceptions of primary school teachers. In secondary schools, the pressure of the high school entrance exam, students' efforts to adapt to adolescence, discipline and behaviour problems, and the problems teachers have with their colleagues and administrators have been identified as factors that reduce teachers' perceptions of psychological climate. To address these issues, it is essential to identify the root cause of the problem by seeking input from all stakeholders in the school and enhancing the effectiveness of guidance activities.

4. The research findings indicate that teachers with a tenure of 21 years or more exhibit higher psychological climate levels in the sub-dimension of self-expression at school compared to those with a tenure of 1-5 years and 11-15 years. This situation can be attributed to a lack of experience, loss of motivation and frustration caused by the fact that teachers with less tenure are new to the profession, while teachers with more tenure have more knowledge and experience. The reward system should be redesigned to maintain motivation and psychological levels among these teachers. This could include bonuses and various incentives.

5. The study revealed that teachers in secondary schools exhibited lower levels of organisational trust than those in primary and high schools. The reason for this can be attributed to the challenges inherent in the middle school role as a transitionary phase between primary and high school. To address this, we propose the implementation of various social activities that will enhance the effectiveness of administrators, students, and the institution for teachers working at this level of education. By increasing interest and trust among all stakeholders, we aim to foster a more collaborative and productive environment.

6. The results of this study indicate that teachers place the greatest trust in their administrators. To enhance trust in colleagues and the organisation, it is essential to ensure

job satisfaction and commitment to the organisation, establish a transparent communication environment in the school, and encourage employees to embrace ideas and innovations.

Support/Financing Information

Ethics Committee Decision

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