

## **Understanding of Organizational Democracy: A Research on the Personnel of the Provincial Directorate of Youth Services and Sports**

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### **Abstract**

**Aim:** The purpose of this research was to examine the perceived level of organizational democracy for the staff working in the different statuses and positions in Provincial Directorates of Youth Services and Sports in Turkey. **Material and Method:** The study was carried out using the quantitative research method, which is frequently used in social sciences. In this process, the scanning pattern was utilized. The survey technique was used to collect data from the study group. The universe of the research was the entire personnel working in the Provincial Directorates of Youth Services and Sports, which is the provincial organization of the Turkish sports administration in 81 provinces. The sample group consists of 920 individuals selected using the simple random sampling method. In the analysis process, primarily, descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation values) were used. Subsequently, the nonparametric test techniques (Mann Whitney U and Kruskal Wallis) were used. **Findings:** The perception of organizational democracy in the Provincial Directorates of Youth Services and Sports may be evaluated as above the average (high). When the scores related to the factors constituting this level of democracy perception are examined, it is understood that the personnel of Youth Services and Sports Provincial Directorates find participation-criticism environments in their institutions at the most democratic level while the accountability environment is found to be at the least democratic level. There were statistically significant differences between the factors of participation-criticism, transparency, justice, equity, and accountability, according to the demographic characteristics of the personnel. **Results:** The perception of organizational democracy has been found to be above the average (high) in the Provincial Directorates of Youth Services and Sports. It has been determined that the level of organizational democracy is highest for personnel who work in the South-eastern Anatolia Region and for the personnel who have PhD degree.

**Keywords:** Sport, Youth, and Sport, Sport Management, Democracy, Organizational Democracy.

## Introduction

As the sports improve the mental health of individuals and influence the formation of their personalities, they also contribute in the development of social networks, social integration and social communication (Tel, 2014; Yetim, 2005:132; Allender et al., 2006). In addition, the sports help to improve the productivity, morale and health status of the individuals while also accelerating the multi-faceted development (Koç et al., 2015, Tozoglu et al., 2015, Sherlock et al., 2010, Edwards, 2013, Vermeulen and Verweel, 2006).

The Republic of Turkey has dealt with the benefits and effects of the sports, which are referred above, within the constitutional framework. Article 58 and 59 of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey contain the extension of the sports and the protection of youth (Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, 1982). The institutions, which are responsible for the fulfillment of this constitutional duty of the State in the first place, are the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS) and the Provincial Directorates of Youth Services and Sport (PDYSS), which are the provincial organizations of this ministry.

While steps were being taken in the field of physical education and sports, it was necessary to train educators since the 1920s (Türkmen, 2013). The first organized establishment of Turkish sports administration was Türkiye İdman Cemiyetleri İttifakı (TİCİ - Turkey Training Communities Alliance), founded in 1922; and it can be said that the administrative development started with the establishment of that organization (Fişek, 1998:338) have been continuing under the name of PDYSS, operating under MYS, in accordance with the Decree-Law No.649, adopted in 2011 (Decree-Law No.649, 2011). Therefore, today, PDYSS is the provincial organization which is responsible for the administration of sports (Sunay, 2016: 204).

It can be said that the development of the societies has followed a parallel course with the formation and settlement of the institutional structures. The need for the management of societies has always existed since humanity came together. Hence, different management models have emerged. The oldest and well-established of these models is "democracy". According to the Turkish Language Association, democracy is a form of governing, which is based on the sovereignty of the public (TLA, 2017). In the societies, where democracy is embraced, it can be said that democratic values are internalized and that the needs of the people changed accordingly (Atac and Köse, 2017). In a democratic environment, all individuals will have equal rights to shape policies that affect them in a direct or indirect way (Kesen, 2015).

Since democracy is basically an understanding of management that includes equality and participation, it has begun to shape the organizational policies, not only in the form of being a type of public administration (Coşan and Gülova, 2014). Yet, organizations are also a form of a living-organism established by human communities. Thus, as democracy theories and industrial relations became intricate, democratic understandings have begun to be adapted to organizational administrations and the concept of organizational democracy have emerged (Pausch, 2013). It has been stated that technology, political transitions, democratic lifestyle, globalization, and innovation are very effective in switching to this understanding of management after the emergence of the concept of organizational democracy (Fenton, 2011: 183; Butcher and Clarke, 2002).

Organizational democracy is a management approach in which employees are involved in the decision-making and management process, where participation, discussion, and consensus are maintained, mutual communication and solidarity is strengthened, managers have

responsibility against the personnel, and the understanding of acting in unity is presented (Kerr and Caimano, 2004; Hoffman, 2002; Weber et al., 2009; Yazdani, 2010; Harrison and Freeman, 2004).

Geçkil and Tikici (2015) argued that organizational democracy is constituted of seven steps of participation, criticism, transparency, justice, equity, accountability and power sharing. Bozkurt (2012:17) stated that, within this overall process in this democratic organizational environment, the real owners of the sovereignty are the regulations, norms, and the will of the ruler and the ruled. Organizational democracy is an understanding of management that involves taking organizational decisions together, participating and making use of the opinions of the personnel inside the organization. This understanding also aims at the organizational sensitivity (Sadykova and Tutar, 2014, Barley and Kunda, 1992: 17). In the long run, it aligns democratic, social, economic, environmental and individual goals that support creating values (Forcadell, 2005).

The complete harmonization of social, individual and organizational goals is also of special importance in PDYSS. This is because of the fact that the achievement of the managerial productivity of the sport and the expected benefits (organizational-social) from the sports is one of the most concrete examples of the sport the above-mentioned harmony. The functionalization and strengthening of the concept of organizational democracy in the PDYSSs emerge as the inevitable necessities to achieve this harmony. At this point, ways of implementing a democratic public administration model can be sought within the framework of a decentralized sports management approach.

### ***The purpose of the research***

The purpose of this research is to examine the organizational democracy perception levels of the personnel in different statuses and positions in PDYSSs in Turkey. In response to this purpose, the answers to the following questions have been searched:

- What is the level of organizational democracy in the institution according to the perceptions of the personnel working in PDYSSs?
- Does the level of organizational democracy perceived by the PDYSS personnel vary according to the demographic characteristics of this personnel?

### ***The significance of the study***

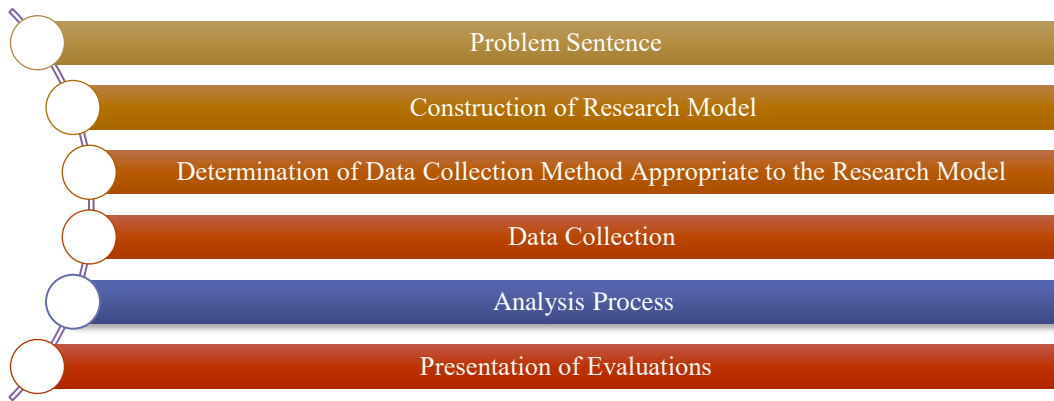
It can be said that the democratic environment in Turkey is also reflected in the management of the organizations. At this point, democratic organization management to be formed in PDYSS, which is responsible for the administration of sports, is extremely striking in terms of being the subject of this study. Deist (2008) stated that organizations have a living structure and a communication-oriented side, which means that organizations must be open to democratic actions. PDYSSs are among the leading institutions that are active in sports society, and development of individuals and therefore a society healthy in the physical, mental, social and cultural aspects. It is because of the fact that Koçak and Sunay (2016) point out that sports structure and adopted policies are important for the development of sports in a country. Therefore working in an environment, where the personnel involved in these institutions are comfortable, independent and able to express themselves, the ideas and discourses are valued, can be decisive in the ability of an institution to achieve its goals. Yet, it is observed that while the productivity and motivation of the individuals working in a democratic and positive organizational environment increases, there are less negative workplace behaviors (Vardi, 2001; Mulki et al., 2008).

It can be said that the organizational democracy level in the PDYSS should be emphasized within the centralized structure of the Turkish sports administration and that the concept of organizational democracy, which is a subject of the literature studies within the scope of management science, has to be discussed in a way specific to PDYSSs. So much so that, as the result of the literature review, the lack of a study that examines the relationship between organizational democracy and PDYSSs emphasizes the authenticity of this research. In addition, it is thought that the views about reviewing the institutional structures in order to increase the efficiency and productivity levels of the PDYSSs are put forward in the study.

## Material and Method

### *Research Process*

It is very important for a researcher to work within the framework of a business plan for a research to be able to produce healthy results. In this context, a plan related to the course of the study was established and it is presented in the Fig.1 below.



**Figure 1.** The work plan

### *Research Model*

This research has been carried out with quantitative research method which is frequently used in social sciences, because, quantitative studies enable the obtained findings to be expressed and measured with numerical values (Ekiz, 2003: 47). In this study, the scanning design, which aims to describe a situation as it exists (Karasar, 2017:84, Merter, 2009). The scanning design mediates the collection of the detailed data from large groups (Büyüköztürk et al., 2017: 97), and the relationship between the different characteristics of the research group can be examined in this collected data (Fraenkel et al., 2012: 121). The questionnaire (Ural and Kılıç, 2013: 53) technique was used to collect data from the study group.

### *Universe and Sampling*

The universe of this research is the entire personnel employed in the PDYSSs, which are the members of the provincial organization of the Turkish sports administration in 81 provinces. According to data from the Ministry of Youth and Sports, there are a total of 7,351 people working in PDYSSs (Koçak and Sunay, 2016). In the study, a simple random sampling method was used to create a sample group of sufficient size over this universe. In the simple random sampling method, each unit in the universe is chosen in an impartial manner in order to be equal and independent in the sampling selection (Balcı, 2016: 74). This working group selected by the sampling method from the overall population is composed of 1200 personnel of PDYSSs around Turkey. According to Balcı (2016: 75), it is sufficient for the sample

group to represent the universe at the level of 3% to 5%. A total of 1200 questionnaires were delivered to the sample group, which was formed within the scope of the study. At the controls after the return, 280 questionnaires were deemed to be invalid, and finally, the study was carried out with a sample group of 920 people. For this study, the sample size was calculated as 12.5%. In this case, it is understood that the sample is at a level that can represent the universe. Descriptive information for the related research group is presented visually in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Demographic Characteristics of the Sample Group

		n	%
Age	25 and under	113	12.3
	Between 26-30	349	37.9
	Between 31-35	165	17.9
	Between 36-40	135	14.7
	Over 41	158	17.2
Gender	Female	322	35.0
	Male	598	65.0
Marital status	Married	559	60.8
	Single	361	39.2
Educational Status	Primary School	16	1.7
	Secondary School	112	12.2
	Associate Degree	181	19.7
	Bachelor's Degree	576	62.6
	Master's Degree	24	2.6
	PhD	11	1.2
Job description	Provincial Director	12	1.3
	Branch Manager	77	8.4
	Sportive Training Specialist	117	12.7
	Coach	156	17.0
	Civil Officer	558	60.7
Geographical region	Marmara	98	10.7
	Aegean	97	10.5
	Mediterranean	153	16.6
	Central Anatolia	128	13.9
	Black Sea	156	17.0
	Eastern Anatolia	160	17.4
	Southeastern Anatolia	128	13.9

12.3% of the PDYSS personnel participating in the survey are 25 years old or younger, 37.9% between 26-30 years, 17.9% between 31-35 years, 14.7% between 36-40 years and 17.2% are 41 and older. In terms of the gender distribution of PDYSS employees, 35% of employees are female and 65% are male. The rate of those who are married is 60.8% and the rate of unmarried people is 39.2%. When the descriptive results regarding the educational status of the employees are analysed, 1.7% of the personnel is primary school graduate, 12.2% is secondary school graduate, 19.7% is associate degree graduate, and 62.6% has undergraduate, 2.6% has master's and 1.2% has PhD degree.

1.3% of the PDYSS personnel participating in the survey were provincial directors, 8.4% were branch managers, 12.7% were sportive education experts, 17% were coaches and 60.7% were civil officers. When the participation to the survey is analysed depending on the geographical area, the ratio of employees in the Marmara Region is 10.7%, in the Aegean Region is 10.5%, in the Mediterranean Region is 16.6%, in the Central Anatolia Region is 13.9%, in the Black Sea Region is 17%, in the Eastern Anatolia Region is 17.4%, and the proportion of those working in the South-eastern Anatolia Region is 13.9%.

### **Data Collection Tool**

In the study, *Organizational Democracy Scale* developed by Geçkil and Tikici (2015) was used as the data collection tool. The scale used is a 5-point likert type scale consisting of 28 questions and 5 sub-dimensions. The Organizational Democracy Scale is a 5-point likert type scale with scoring of responses, 1 = Absolutely Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree and 5 = Totally Agree. The items 21 and 23 are reversed and when the scale scores are evaluated, the scores should be reversed to 5 = 1, 4 = 2, 3 = 3, 2 = 4 and 1 = 5. The lowest score that can be taken from the scale is 28, and the highest score is 140. Organizational democracy perception rises as scores from the scale increase. In the study for the development of the scale, Chornbach Alfa value of .95 and a test-retest correlation coefficient of  $r=.87$  ( $p<.001$ ) were calculated by Geçkil and Tikici (2015), and the scale was determined to be a valid and reliable measurement tool.

### **Collection of Data**

In the study group determined by the simple random sampling method in the data collection process of the research, it was asked to fill in the questionnaire once the workers in the approximate regions and provinces were reached individually and detailed information about the questionnaire and the content of the study was transmitted. The PDYSS personnel who could not be reached in a face-to-face way were reached with the online questionnaire and the information about the questionnaire and the contents of the work was also transmitted online. The collected data were recorded in a computer environment and prepared for the analysis process.

### **Analysis of Data**

The analysis of the collected data in accordance with the purpose of the study was made with the SPSS 22 program and worked with a 95% confidence level. In the analysis process, primarily descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation values) were used. Non-parametric test techniques were used for the analyses performed on the organizational democracy scale and subscale scores; since the data were not normally distributed according to the normality analysis ( $p < 0.05$ ).

The Mann Whitney U test was used to examine whether the scores obtained from two unrelated samples significantly differed from each other, and the Kruskal Wallis test was used to examine whether the mean scores of the two samples differed significantly (Büyüköztürk, 2017: 165). Obtained values for the normality test are presented visually in Table 2 below.

**Table 2.** Normality Test on the Points of the Organizational Democracy Scale and Its Sub-Dimensions

	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	n	p
Participation-Criticism	.926	920	.000
Transparency	.974	920	.000
Justice	.953	920	.000
Equity	.959	920	.000
Accountability	.940	920	.000
Organizational Democracy	.968	920	.000

### Findings

In this section, the findings were investigated by analysing the data obtained in accordance with the purpose of the research, and in accordance with the nature of the quantitative studies, the quantitative data were visualized on the tables.

**Table 3.** Descriptive Statistics on the Points of the Organizational Democracy Scale and Its Sub-Dimensions

	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	sd
Participation-Criticism	920	8.00	40.00	29.12	7.20
Transparency	920	9.00	30.00	22.18	3.93
Justice	920	5.00	25.00	18.96	3.90
Equity	920	9.00	30.00	19.77	2.68
Accountability	920	3.00	15.00	11.31	2.52
<b>Organizational Democracy</b>	<b>920</b>	<b>59.00</b>	<b>129.00</b>	<b>101.34</b>	<b>12.75</b>

Table 3 gives the average for the scale and sub-dimensions used. According to this, the average of participation-criticism scores was  $29.12 \pm 7.20$ , the average of transparency scores was  $22.18 \pm 3.93$ , the average of justice scores was  $18.96 \pm 3.90$ , the average of equality scores was  $19.77 \pm 2.68$ , the average of accountability scores was  $11.31 \pm 2.52$  and the mean scores of total scores of organizational democracy scale were  $101.34 \pm 12.75$ . The average score of the PDYSS personnel's total scores on the organizational democracy scale was found to be 101.34. Perceptions of organizational democracy can be interpreted as above average (high) for the PDYSS personnel as the highest score that can be taken from the scale was 140. When the scores of the factors constituting this level of democracy are examined, it is understood that the PDYSS personnel finds the participation-criticism environments in the institutions to be the most democratic level while the accountability environment is the least democratic.

**Table 4.** Analysis of Organizational Democracy Perception and Scale Sub-Dimension Points in Terms of Educational Status Variable

Educational Status	n	Line Avg.	X2	p	
Participation-Criticism	Primary School	16	410.41	<b>3.866</b>	<b>.569</b>
	Secondary School	112	492.71		
	Associate Degree	181	477.23		
	Bachelor's Degree	576	449.98		
	Master's Degree	24	466.90		
	PhD	11	467.23		
Transparency	Primary School	16	557.75	<b>8.649</b>	<b>.124</b>
	Secondary School	112	447.87		
	Associate Degree	181	483.14		
	Bachelor's Degree	576	450.28		
	Master's Degree	24	455.65		
	PhD	11	621.23		
Justice	Primary School	16	542.03	<b>18.266</b>	<b>.003*</b>
	Secondary School	112	451.55		
	Associate Degree	181	464.85		
	Bachelor's Degree	576	451.47		
	Master's Degree	24	486.88		
	PhD	11	776.45		
Equity	Primary School	16	516.22	<b>3.334</b>	<b>.649</b>
	Secondary School	112	439.91		
	Associate Degree	181	443.62		
	Bachelor's Degree	576	465.83		
	Master's Degree	24	512.17		
	PhD	11	474.91		

Accountability	Primary School	16	585.06	<b>11.441</b>	<b>.043*</b>
	Secondary School	112	496.97		
	Associate Degree	181	471.00		
	Bachelor's Degree	576	444.80		
	Master's Degree	24	439.52		
	PhD	11	602.86		
Organizational Democracy	Primary School	16	540.16	<b>11,542</b>	<b>,042*</b>
	Secondary School	112	471.56		
	Associate Degree	181	482.65		
	Bachelor's Degree	576	444.21		
	Master's Degree	24	488.25		
	PhD	11	660.27		

A statistically significant difference was found in the justice and accountability subscales ( $p < 0.05$ ) when the relationship between the educational status variables of PDYSS personnel and scale subscales was examined. According to this, it is understood that the PDYSS personnel with PhD degree has the highest perception of justice (776.45), while the number of personnel with bachelor's degree is the lowest (451.47). However, while the perception of accountability of the PDYSS personnel with PhD degree was still highest (602.86), the value for the master graduates was the lowest (439.52).

There was a statistically significant difference in terms of Organizational Democracy perception among the PDYSS personnel with different educational status ( $p < 0.05$ ). According to this, while the perception of organizational democracy is the highest (660.27) for the personnel with PhD degree, the perceptions personnel with bachelor's degree is the least (444.21).

**Table 5.** Analysis of Organizational Democracy Perception and Scale Sub-Dimension Points in Terms of Job Description Variable

Job Description	n	Line Avg.	X2	p	
Participation-Criticism	Provincial Director	12	355.83	<b>6.066</b>	<b>.194</b>
	Branch Manager	77	441.45		
	Sportive Training Specialist	117	431.04		
	Coach	156	492.92		
	Civil Officer	558	462.49		
	Provincial Director	12	379.29		
Branch Manager	77	488.51			
Sportive Training Specialist	117	446.32			
Coach	156	512.44			
Civil Officer	558	446.83			
Justice	Provincial Director	12	436.25	<b>9.064</b>	<b>.060</b>
	Branch Manager	77	522.94		
	Sportive Training Specialist	117	475.98		
	Coach	156	486.61		
	Civil Officer	558	441.86		
	Equity	Provincial Director	12		
Branch Manager		77	467.40		
Sportive Training Specialist		117	433.71		
Coach		156	464.93		
Civil Officer		558	463.83		
Accountability		Provincial Director	12	490.71	<b>1.263</b>
	Branch Manager	77	489.00		



	Sportive Training Specialist	117	462.38		
	Coach	156	460.33		
	Civil Officer	558	455.57		
Organizational Democracy	Provincial Director	12	363.71		
	Branch Manager	77	483.60		
	Sportive Training Specialist	117	446.26	<b>9.039</b>	<b>.060</b>
	Coach	156	509.92		
	Civil Officer	558	448.56		

When the organizational democracy perception and subscale scores of PDYSS staff working in different positions and titles were examined, a statistically significant difference was found between the job description of the personnel and only the transparency sub-dimension ( $p < 0.05$ ). According to this, the personnel, who work as a coach, has the highest perception of transparency (512.44), while the provincial director has the least (379.29). A statistically significant difference was not found between the perception of organizational democracy and the job definition of the staff ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 6.** Analysis of Organizational Democracy Perception and Scale Sub-Dimension Points in Terms of Geographical Region Variability

Coğrafi Bölge	n	Line Avg.	X2	p	
Participation-Criticism	Marmara	98	442.69		
	Aegean	97	487.88		
	Mediterranean	153	389.06		
	Central Anatolia	128	411.78	<b>51.354</b>	<b>.000*</b>
	Black Sea	156	421.08		
	Eastern Anatolia	160	573.34		
	Southeastern Anatolia	128	494.48		
Transparency	Marmara	98	484.86		
	Aegean	97	490.24		
	Mediterranean	153	319.72		
	Central Anatolia	128	490.98	<b>75.255</b>	<b>.000*</b>
	Black Sea	156	442.81		
	Eastern Anatolia	160	456.68		
	Southeastern Anatolia	128	583.43		
Justice	Marmara	98	498.05		
	Aegean	97	545.46		
	Mediterranean	153	358.62		
	Central Anatolia	128	483.45	<b>53.719</b>	<b>.000*</b>
	Black Sea	156	412.66		
	Eastern Anatolia	160	445.42		
	Southeastern Anatolia	128	543.36		
Equity	Marmara	98	460.47		
	Aegean	97	428.41		
	Mediterranean	153	453.03		
	Central Anatolia	128	512.05	<b>17.819</b>	<b>.007*</b>
	Black Sea	156	408.78		
	Eastern Anatolia	160	453.67		
	Southeastern Anatolia	128	513.79		
Accountability	Marmara	98	443.07		
	Aegean	97	488.13		
	Mediterranean	153	437.84		
	Central Anatolia	128	457.00	<b>6.706</b>	<b>.349</b>
	Black Sea	156	449.02		
	Eastern Anatolia	160	454.44		
	Southeastern Anatolia	128	505.06		

	Marmara	98	450.47		
	Aegean	97	518.57		
	Mediterranean	153	331.57		
Organizational Democracy	Central Anatolia	128	460.03	<b>74.494</b>	<b>.000*</b>
	Black Sea	156	414.95		
	Eastern Anatolia	160	507.28		
	Southeastern Anatolia	128	575.80		

A statistically significant difference was found between the geographical region variable and participation-criticism, transparency, justice and equity sub-dimensions when the relationship between the geographical region variable and PDYSS personnel's scale sub-dimensions were examined ( $p < 0.05$ ). However, it is seen that there is a statistically significant difference between the geographical region variable and the organizational democracy perception of PDYSS personnel ( $p < 0.05$ ).

According to this;

- The personnel working in the Eastern Anatolia Region have the highest perception of participation-criticism (573.34), while those working in the Mediterranean Region have the least (389.06).
- The personnel working in the South-eastern Anatolia region have the highest perception of transparency (583.43), while those working in the Mediterranean Region have the least (319.72).
- The personnel working in the Aegean Region have the highest perception of justice (545.46), while staff in the Mediterranean Region have the least (358,62).
- The personnel working in the South East Anatolia region have the highest perception of equity (513.79) while the staff working in the Black Sea Region has the least (408.78).
- The personnel working in the South East Anatolia Region have the highest perception of organizational democracy (575.80), while those working in the Mediterranean Region have the least (331.57).

## Discussion

Management of sports is the responsibility of the state in Turkey. PDYSS, which is a provincial organization operating under the MYS parent organization, is a public institution responsible for the development and spreading of the sports. Therefore, the development of the administrative features of this institution may be decisive in the achievement of sports' reaching the society. One of the management models discussed in the field during the last period in the development of managerial characteristics is the understanding of organizational democracy. The main aim of this understanding, which expresses a democratic organizational environment, can be interpreted as increasing efficiency and productivity. Hence, in the research, organizational level of democracy perceptions of the personnel at different status and positions in the overall of the PYDSSs in Turkey has been studied.

According to the findings obtained in response to the research questions, it was understood that the average score of organizational democracy perception level of PDYSS personnel was 101.34 and the level was above the average (relatively high). When the field is examined, it is determined that the level of organizational democracy perception of the staff working at university hospitals is at the middle level in the study conducted by Geçkil (2013: 85).

When the relationship between the level of organizational democracy and the demographic characteristics of the personnel was examined, it was determined that there was a statistically significant difference between the educational status of the personnel and the geographical region variables and the level of organizational democracy. According to this, while the level of organizational democracy is highest for the PhD graduates (660.27), the level of bachelor's degree graduates is the lowest (444.21). Again, while the level of organizational democracy perception is highest in the personnel working in the South-eastern Anatolia Region (575.80), the personnel working in the Mediterranean Region is the lowest (331.57). When the previous studies were examined, it was determined that there was no significant relationship between the educational status of the employees and the organizational democracy perception levels in the research conducted by Erkal (2012:176). However, according to the results obtained by Geçkim (2013:93), Collom (2001) and Catherine and Evelyn (2009), the level of organizational democracy perception increases as the level of employees' education increases. It has been found that there is no statistically significant difference between the level of organizational democracy perceived in the research findings and the job description variable of the personnel. Unlike the results of this research, it was determined that managers' perception level of organizational democracy is higher than other employees in the studies conducted by Şeker (2010: 117) and Erkal (2012: 177).

The democratic rules applied in organizations can not only favour workers but also affect the productivity of enterprises positively (Bilge, 2003). So much so that, in organizations, democratic management contributes to freedom, meaningfulness of work and increased efficacy (Gourevitch, 2016). This contribution can be felt by both the organization and the workers. When it brings innovation and change for the organization, the sense of responsibility is reinforced for the workers. (Harrison and Freeman, 2004; Breen, 2015). Finally, with the understanding of organizational democracy, the behaviours and loyalty of employees are positively affected, and the organizational citizenship perceptions are developed (Geçkil, 2013: 2).

When findings related to organizational democracy level were examined, a statistically significant difference was found between participation-criticism factor and geographical region variable. According to this, while the perception of participation-criticism of the personnel working in the Eastern Anatolia Region is the highest (573.34), the employees working in the Mediterranean Region have the least (389.06). It has been determined that there is no significant difference between the education and job definition variables and the participation-criticism factor.

A similar result was obtained in the research conducted by Takmaz (2009: 85), and it was determined that there was no statistically significant difference between the level of participation of the personnel and the education level. However, in the research carried out by Şeker (2010: 114), it was concluded that the level of participation of personnel with bachelor's degree is higher than that of associate degree and the level of participation of personnel working in managerial status is higher than other personnel. Adoption of the organization by the employees and the establishment of an effective working environment are elements by participation-criticism of the personnel are a sensitive subject for them. Thus, employees consider it unfair if decisions are taken without considering their own views and without their active participation (Greenberg and Colquitt, 2005: 164). Because, involvement in decisions brings important benefits in organizational commitment, team mentality, motivation, self-sacrifice, coordination and job satisfaction (Bakan and Büyükbeşe, 2008).

According to the findings related to the transparency factor revealing the level of organizational democracy, a statistically significant difference was found between the personnel's perception of transparency and the job description and the geographical region variables. According to this, while the employee who works as a coach has the highest sense of transparency (512.44), the staff working as a provincial director has the least (379.29). Employees working in the Southeast Anatolia region have the highest sense of transparency (583.43), while those working in the Mediterranean region have the least (319.72). Depending on the developments in management understanding, principles and values such as openness and transparency are seen as the foreground (Usta and Akıncı, 2016). Transparency, as one of the most important parts of the public administration, plays an important role in the management structures of organizations. In addition, a sense of transparency at a high level enables a corporate chain to be formed by initiating a positive chain reaction (Narbay and Sönmez, 2016).

According to the research findings, a statistically significant difference was found between organizational democracy level, justice factor, personnel education status and geographical region variables, however, it was determined that there was no significant difference in terms of job definition. According to this, it is understood that the PDYSS personnel with PhD degree has the highest perception of justice (776.45), while the value for the personnel with bachelor's degree is the lowest (451.47). Again, the personnel working in the Aegean Region has the highest perception of justice (545.46), while the personnel working in the Mediterranean Region has the least (358.62). In a study conducted by Güner and Bozkurt (2017), it was determined that one of the factors negatively affecting employees' happiness at work was the perception of justice. According to participant statements, the main reason for unhappiness at work is unfair working conditions and management understanding.

In the literature, it is emphasized that there is a close relationship between the sense of justice in organizations and the attitudes and behaviours of employees. In the democratic organizational environment, this relationship is more important. As such, Çetinkaya and Çimenci (2014) point out that the perception of justice is an important motivator in organizations. Because, when a fair management mentality is displayed in the business environment, positive attitudes and behaviours can be seen in the employees, whereas negative results can occur in terms of organizations and employees in adverse conditions (Beugr, 2002). Justice perception is important for the sustainability of relations. When the sense of justice is not observed between the employer and the employee, mutual trust is reduced and internal relations are damaged (Çakır, 2006: 31). Indeed, there is a strong link between employees' perceptions of justice and the attitudes and behaviours they exhibit (Çakıcı, 2012: 8).

According to research findings, a statistically significant difference was found between the level of organizational democracy and the equity factor and the geographical region where the personnel worked, however, it was determined that there was no significant difference in terms of educational status and job definition variables. According to this, while the sense of equality is the highest in the employees working in the South-eastern Anatolia Region (513.79), the personnel working in the Black Sea Region has the least (408.78). Employees should be guided and managed with an equal understanding of management, and having the knowledge or feeling of this by organizational personnel can shape the attitudes and behaviours within the organization. Because, according to the perceptions of equality within the organization, the employees develop negative or positive attitudes towards the managers, the business and the organization (Cihangiroğlu, 2009: 87, Gürbüz, 2006). Management may establish a cohesion and co-operation among personnel (Kirby and Richard, 2000) (Polat,

2012). Therefore, it can be said that, in the commitment of employees to their organizations, as in the sense of justice, the concept of equality is also determinant (Sağnak, 2005). It was determined that there was no significant difference in terms of geographical region and job definition variables when there was a statistically significant difference between the factor of accountability of organizational democracy level and the educational status variable of personnel in the obtained findings. According to this, while the perception of accountability of PDYSS personnel having PhD degree is highest (602.86), the value for the master's degree graduates is the lowest (439.52).

Accountability, which is questioning the organizational activities or outcomes, ensures continuity of activities (Andre, 2010), enabling the monitoring of services, the identification of errors, and the verification of the adequacy of individual services (Lin and Chang, 2009). In addition, accountability, a tool that organizations use to capture maximum performance, allows institutions to learn from their mistakes and righteousness (Cavill and Sohail, 2007). Yet, in a study conducted by Çınar (2016), managers stated that they are in compliance with the accountability principles and attach importance to them for institutional performance success. Accountability is a determining factor in increasing the institutional performance, providing quality service, lowering costs and providing services in a respectable manner. (O'Connell, 2005).

## Conclusion

Organizational democracy can be an understanding of management that both private and public institutions can adopt in increasing their performance and productivity. In PDYSS, responsible for referral and administration of sports, institutional productivity can be strengthened through the democratic organizational environment to achieve the goals and objectives adopted. In this context, in the research, whether the perceived level of organizational democracy across the PDYSS staff in Turkey and demographic characteristics of workers varies in response to questions has been sought. The following results were obtained in the light of the derived findings.

- It is understood that the level of organizational democracy perceived by PDYSS personnel is above the average (relatively high).
- It has been determined that the level of organizational democracy is highest for personnel who work in the South-eastern Anatolia Region and have PhD degrees.
- It is determined that the factor, which the personnel perceives at the least democratic level, is accountability.
- PhD graduate personnel have the highest perceptions of justice and accountability.
- Personnel working as coaches have the highest level of transparency, while provincial directors have the lowest level of transparency.
- Personnel working in the Eastern Anatolia Region have the highest perception of participation (573.34), while those working in the Mediterranean region have the least perception (389.06).
- Personnel working in the South-eastern Anatolia Region have the highest perception of transparency (583.43) while those working in the Mediterranean Region have the least (319.72).
- Personnel working in the Aegean Region have the highest perception of justice (545.46), while those working in the Mediterranean region have the least (358.62).

- Personnel working in the South-eastern Anatolia Region have the highest perception of equity (513.79), while those working in the Black Sea Region have the least (408.78).

Since the acquisition of the expected benefits from the sports, PDYSS represent an important institutional figure. Hence, these institutions' having a democratic structure, increasing the level of organizational democracy in all regions and provinces to a certain level, and the attainment of a standard will bring up organizational efficiency and performance. Hence, it is expected that MMS will be able to identify more areas of action and increase the organizational initiative potential for PDYSSs. For this reason, it can be said that the Ministry needs to emphasize the factors of participation-criticism, equality, transparency, justice and accountability in provincial directorates, to make these elements operative and to develop policies and practices in this direction. From this point of view, this research, which is expected to shed light on the relationship between organizational democracy and sports management, may also be a source of inspiration for future studies. Organizational democracy studies can be carried out in different units and institutions of sports management.

### Conflict of Interest

The author has not declared any conflicts of interest.

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