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The Mediating Role of Organizational Hypocrisy in the Relationship Between Organizational Silence and Organizational Rumor: A Study on Educational Organizations

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ABSTRACT

Research on organizations operating in different fields has shown that organizational hypocrisy has negative impact on employees' organizational behaviors. In terms of educational organizations, the studies show that organizational hypocrisy has a negative relationship with organizational silence, organizational rumor, organizational happiness, organizational commitment etc. Thus, these situations suggest that organizational hypocrisy may have a mediating role between organizational silence and organizational rumor. Based on this thought this study aims to examine the mediating role of organizational hypocrisy in the relationship between organizational silence and organizational rumor in educational organizations. The study was conducted with a total of 323 teachers, 236 females (73%), and 87 males (27%). The data were collected by using the "Organizational Silence Scale", "Organizational Rumor Scale" and "Organizational Hypocrisy Scale." In analyzing the data, descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, path analysis, and bootstrapping method were used to test the significance of the mediating effect. The results of the study showed that there was a positive significant relationship between organizational silence, organizational hypocrisy, and organizational rumor. The bootstrapping results showed that organizational hypocrisy had a partial mediating role in the relationship between organizational silence and organizational rumor. It is considered that the results obtained can be used to reduce organizational rumor at schools. In addition, it can be said that the results obtained from the study will be a guide for future studies.

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Keywords:

Organizational silence, organizational rumor, organizational hypocrisy, mediation effect

1. Introduction

Organizations are social structures formed by people who come together to achieve a specific goal (Etzioni, 1964; Gurtvitch, 2017; Ritchie, 2020). A healthy and effective communication system established among the members of the organization plays an important role in the effective and productive activities of these social structures (Baron & Greenberg, 1990). Numerous studies have also revealed the importance of communication between organization members (Ince & Gül, 2011; Agarwal & Garg, 2012; Hargie, 2016). However, it is possible to experience communication problems for various reasons within the organization (Adu-Oppong & Agyin-Birikorang, 2014). As a result, members of the organization are unable to communicate effectively and may be reluctant to express their opinions and suggestions. Thus, a climate of silence begins to prevail within the organization. This situation, which is called organizational silence and was first included in Morrison and Milliken's study in 2000, was defined as the employees' not sharing their knowledge and thoughts about the organization intentionally (Morrison & Milliken 2000, p. 719). Although the behavioral tendency of employees

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to remain silent is perceived as an indicator of compliance, it is a fundamental element that should be considered as a reaction and withdrawal behavior within the organization (Çavuş, Develi & Sarioğlu, 2015, p.12). However, a silent structure interrupts the sense of creativity and excitement, and the basic indicators of the organization such as performance and efficiency are negatively affected (Perlow & Williams, 2003). In addition, the deterioration of morale and motivation of employees who prefer organizational silence causes an increase in behaviors that negatively affect individual and organizational efficiency such as absenteeism, being late for work, and quitting the job. On the other hand, employees, who are experiencing anxiety and stress, increasingly enter the spiral of silence (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). This silence process reveals many communicative negativities in the organization over time (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). One of these negativities is what is called organizational rumor in the literature.

Organizational rumor is an informal communication network conducted by the members of the organization implicitly regarding the events within the organization, and it is generally considered as an adverse situation for the organization (Kapferer, 1992; Difonzo & Bordia 2007). There are many reasons for rumors to emerge in organizations. Research has shown that one of the main factors which are the sources of rumors among employees in organizations is the lack of information provided to employees on subjects they need (Guirdham, 2015; DiFonzo, Bordia & Rosnow, 1994), uncertainties about a subject concerning employees (Brown and Napier, 2004), deficiencies or blockages in official communication channels (Zhao, Yin & Zong, 2016; Huo & Ma, 2017), employees' fears and worries (Fine & Ellis, 2010; Boyer & Parren, 2015), organizational changes taking place (Brown & Napier, 2004; Rivero, 2013), and employees' distrust towards the organization (Stewart & Strathern, 2004; DiFonzo & Bordia, 2007). In an organization where organizational rumor is widespread, assumption-based, unproven information flow among members is dominant, and organization members are reluctant to establish open communication (Guirdham, 2015; Zhao, Yin & Zong, 2016; Huo & Ma, 2017). Therefore, it is considered that there may be a significant relationship between organizational silence and organizational rumor. In addition, it is considered that organizational hypocrisy (Simons, 2002; Effron, Lucas & O'Connor, 2015), which is a concept that expresses the inconsistency between the discourses and actions of the members of the organization -especially the members in managerial positions- can play a mediating role between these two variables in organizations where interpersonal relationships are prevalent. In the literature, hypocrisy is defined as inconsistencies between discourses, decisions, and actions to ensure the support of the environment (Brunsson, 1989). Hypocrisy can be considered at the individual level or the level of organizations formed by people coming together around a certain purpose (Kılıçoğlu, 2017). The hypocrisy in the organization is that employees and managers act or claim to have feelings, thoughts, virtues, values and characteristics that they do not have; they try to show themselves to employees, managers, and society in a different way from what they know, believe and who they are (Konan & Taşdemir, 2019).

Organizational hypocrisy has significant direct and indirect effects on business results (Kılıçoğlu & Yılmaz-Kılıçoğlu, 2019). Research on organizations operating in different fields has shown that organizational hypocrisy decreases employees' performance, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction (Brunsson, 1989; Philippe & Koehler, 2004; Cha & Edmondson, 2006) and increases their intention to quit the job (Philippe & Koehler, 2005; Greenbaum et al., 2015). In terms of educational organizations, the limited number of studies conducted show that organizational hypocrisy, according to teachers' perceptions, has a negative relationship with organizational happiness (Konan & Taşdemir, 2019), organizational justice (Kılıçoğlu, 2015; Kahveci, Kandemir & Bayram, 2019), organizational citizenship behavior (Kılıçoğlu & Yılmaz-Kılıçoğlu, 2019) and organizational commitment (Karagül-Kandemir & Kahveci, 2020). Additionally, Kılıçoğlu, Kılıçoğlu & Hammersley-Fletcher (2019) revealed in their extensive research on educational organizations that hypocrisy causes trust problems between teachers and school administrators, weakens communication between members of the organization and increases rumors within the organization, and negatively affects teachers' motivation, job satisfaction, commitment to school and performance. Therefore, it can be said that organizational hypocrisy is an adverse situation for organizations.

There are explanations in the literature that organizational silence, which is a clear indication that there is no healthy communication environment in organizations, triggers organizational rumor (Zhao, Yin & Zong, 2016; Huo & Ma, 2017; Beheshtifar, Borhani & Moghadam, 2012). As a matter of fact, in an organization dominated by organizational silence for many different reasons, the members of the organization refrain from expressing their views and thoughts openly. As a result, it can be considered a situation where communication within the

organization is expected to occur in a covert way through rumors (Kimmel, 2004). Although organizational managers say that they have a strong and healthy communication system and emphasize that they adopt a democratic management approach, it is possible to see that these discourses do not turn into action from time to time (Cha & Edmondson, 2006). Studies have indicated that this situation, which is called organizational hypocrisy is associated with both organizational silence (Pinder & Harlos, 2001; Bowen & Blackmon 2003; Mayhew et al., 2006; Çakıcı, 2008) and organizational rumor (Fernandez-Revuelta Perez & Robson, 1999; DiFonzo & Bordia, 2007; Kılıçoğlu, 2017). However, there is no study in the literature in which these three variables have been studied together. Thus, the main problem of this study is to examine the mediating role of organizational hypocrisy in the relationship between organizational silence and organizational rumor. The study was conducted with teachers working in schools, which are organizations where human relations are most intense. , the study aimed to fill the gap in the field and provide recommendations for practitioners and researchers in line with the findings of the study.

1.1. Purpose of the Research

This study aimed to examine the relationship between organizational silence, organizational rumor, and organizational hypocrisy according to teachers' views. In the direction of the study's aim, the hypotheses of the study are as below:

1. Organizational silence has a positive and significant effect on organizational rumors.
2. Organizational silence has a positive and significant effect on organizational hypocrisy.
3. Organizational hypocrisy has a positive and significant effect on organizational rumors.
4. Organizational silence has a positive and significant effect on organizational rumors mediated by rumors.

2. Method

2.1. Research Model

This study examining the mediating role of organizational hypocrisy in the relationship between organizational silence and organizational rumor in educational organizations was designed using the relational survey model, which is one of the quantitative research methods. Relational survey models are a research model that aims to determine the existence and/or degree of change between two or more variables (Karasar, 2010). In this study, the mediating role of organizational hypocrisy in the relationship between organizational silence and organizational rumor was tested using structural equation modeling.

2.2. Population and Sample

The population of the study consisted of 3,657 teachers working in the Kartal district of Istanbul in the 2019-2020 academic year. An unbiased random selection and a representative sample are important in drawing conclusions from a study's results (Sharma, 2017). In simple random sampling, the probability of choosing each element as a sample is equal. Therefore, it is unbiased (Singh, 2015). Based on this information, simple random sampling method was used to determine the sample. In determining the sample, it is considered sufficient that the sample which can represent the population in the 2,000-5,000 range with 5% error rate is between 322-357 (Yazıcıoğlu & Erdoğan, 2004, p.50). In light of this information, the study was conducted with 323 teachers. Table 1 includes the distribution of teachers who participated in the study according to their demographic characteristics.

According to Table 1, 236 of the teachers were female (73%) and 87 were male (27%). In addition, 39 of the teachers had professional seniority of 0-5 years (12%), 62 had 6-10 years (19%), 73 had 11-15 years (23%), 60 had 16-20 years (19%) and 89 of them had professional seniority of 21 years or more (27%). It was observed that 8 of the teachers had an associate degree (3%), 271 undergraduate (84%), and 44 had a postgraduate degree (13%). When the educational levels in which the teachers worked were examined, it was observed that 120 of the teachers worked in primary schools (37%), 125 in secondary schools (39%), and 78 in high schools (24%).

Table 1. Data on Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Demographic Variable	Groups	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	236	73
	Male	87	27
	Total	323	100
Professional seniority	0-5 years	39	12
	6-10 years	62	19
	11-15 years	73	23
	16-20 years	60	19
	21 years or more	89	27
	Total	323	100
Graduation	Associate degree	8	3
	Undergraduate degree	271	84
	Postgraduate degree	44	13
	Total	323	100
Level of Education to Work	Primary school	120	37
	Secondary school	125	39
	High school	78	24
	Total	323	100

2.3. Data Collection Tools

2.3.1. Organizational Silence Scale

The Organizational Silence Scale, was developed by Kahveci and Demirtaş (2013). This 5-point Likert scale consists of 18 items and five sub-dimensions. The total variance explained by the 5 dimensional structure is 57%. The Organizational Silence Scale has 4 items in the "school environment" dimension, 3 in the "emotion" dimension, 5 in the "source of silence" dimension, 3 in the "administrator" dimension and 3 in the "isolation" dimension. The scale is graded as "I do not agree at all (1) - I completely agree (5)". A total score can be obtained from the points of the scale. The increase in the scores obtained from the scale indicates that the perception levels of participants on organizational silence increased, while the decrease in the scores indicates that the organizational silence perception levels decreased. As a result of the second-level confirmatory factor analysis, it was determined that the scale preserved its original 5 factor structure. It was found that the fit values for the analysis were within acceptable limits. According to the CFA findings, $\chi^2/df = 3.13$, RMSEA = .069, GFI = .91, CFI = .92, NFI = .88, TLI = .91 and AGFI = .88 values were obtained. The Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient is .89 for the total score of the scale. In addition, the reliability coefficients, which were calculated for each factor, are .79 for administrators, .81 for emotion, .83 for isolation, .74 for the school environment and .80 for the source of silence. According to the results obtained, it can be said that the scale is valid and reliable.

2.3.2. Organizational Rumor Scale

The Organizational Rumor Scale, was developed by Dağlı and Han (2018). The 5-point Likert scale consists of 24 items and three sub-dimensions. The total variance explained by the 3 dimensional structure is 61%. The Organizational Rumor Scale has 8 items in the "acquiring knowledge" dimension, 6 items in the "socialization" dimension, and 10 items in the "cynic effect" dimension. The scale is graded as "I do not agree at all (1) - I completely agree (5)". A total score can be obtained from the points of the scale. The increase in the scores obtained from the scale indicates that the perception levels of participants on organizational rumor increased, while the decrease in the scores indicates that the organizational rumor perception levels decreased. As a result of the confirmatory factor analysis, it was determined that the scale preserved its original 3 factor structure. It was found that the fit values for the analysis were within acceptable limits. According to the CFA findings, $\chi^2/df = 2.73$, RMSEA = .074, GFI = .84, CFI = .91, NFI = .87, IFI = .91 and AGFI = .81 values were obtained. The Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient is .80 for the total score of the scale. In addition, the reliability coefficients, which were calculated for each factor, are .89 for acquiring knowledge; .93 for socialization, and .91 for cynic effect. According to the results obtained, it can be said that the scale is valid and reliable.

2.3.3. Organizational Hypocrisy Scale

The Organizational Hypocrisy Scale, was developed by Kılıçoğlu, Yılmaz-Kılıçoğlu, and Karadağ (2019). The 5-point Likert scale consists of 17 items and 3 sub-dimensions. The total variance explained by the 3 dimensional structure is 59.44%. The Organizational Hypocrisy Scale has 5 items in the dimension of "keeping promises", 7 items in the dimension of "harmony between internal structure and environment" and 5 items in the dimension "inconsistencies in practices". The scale is graded as "I do not agree at all (1) - I completely agree (5)". A total score can be obtained from the points of the scale. The increase in the scores obtained from the scale indicates that the organizational hypocrisy perception levels of the participants increased, while the decrease in the scores indicates that the organizational hypocrisy perception level decreased. As a result of the confirmatory factor analysis, it was determined that the scale preserved its original 3 factor structure. It was found that the fit values for the analysis were within acceptable limits. According to the CFA findings, $\chi^2/df = 1.95$, RMSEA= .075, GFI= .94, CFI= .97, IFI= .93, NFI= .93, TLI= .96 and AGFI= .91 values were obtained. The Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient is .75 for the total score of the scale. In addition, the reliability coefficients, which were calculated for each factor, are .86 for keeping the promises, .87 for harmony between internal structure and environment, .74 for inconsistencies in practices. According to the results obtained, it can be said that the scale is valid and reliable.

2.3.4. Personal Information Form

The personal information form prepared by the researcher included questions about gender, professional seniority, education level of the participants, and the grade levels in which they work.

2.4. Procedures and Data Analysis

During the data collection process, permission from the Ethics Committee for the scales and the legal permission required for the implementation of the scales were obtained from the Istanbul Provincial Directorate of National Education. , Next, interviews were held with the administrators of the schools where the study would be conducted about the implementation of the scales. The scale links prepared via Google forms were delivered by the school administration to the teachers who wanted to participate in the study voluntarily. The data obtained from 323 teachers who responded to the survey were analyzed. Descriptive statistics related to variables were calculated in the analysis of the data obtained within the scope of the study, and the relationships between variables were determined using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Then, mediation analyses were completed using the structural equation model and the path analysis in line with the model proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986). In the study, the data were analyzed by conducting path analyses with the latent and observed variables. In the model, the sub-dimensions of organizational silence and organizational hypocrisy, which are the predictive variables, and the sub-dimensions of organizational rumor, which is the predicted variable, were included as observed variables. In the path analysis, χ^2 , df , χ^2/df , RMSEA, CFI, GFI and NFI values were taken as the criteria for the suitability of the model. The acceptance of the goodness of fit values of the model was based on the views of Hu & Bentler's (1999), Brown's (2006), Çokluk, Şekercioğlu & Büyüköztürk (2016), Sümer's (2000), Marcoulides & Schumacher (2001) and Tabachnick & Fidell (2001). Within the framework of these views, $\chi^2 / df \leq 5$; RMSEA $\leq .10$; CFI $\geq .90$; GFI $\geq .85$; NFI $\geq .90$ values were considered acceptable limits for the model's suitability. The bootstrapping procedure was completed to examine the significance of the indirect effects. The confidence intervals calculated as a result of the bootstrapping process do not include zero, which indicates that the indirect effect is significant (Hayes, 2013). In this study, the bootstrapping coefficient and confidence intervals (CI) were determined through 10,000 resamplings. SPSS 25 and AMOS 20 programs were used in the analysis of the data collected. Before the analysis, it was examined whether the data showed one-way and multi-directional normality assumptions. For this purpose, the skewness and kurtosis values of the data and Q-Q graphs were examined. It was found that the scores of organizational silence (-.17 to .42), organizational hypocrisy (-.71 to .88), and organizational rumor (.10 to -.02) scales were within normal distribution limits. According to Kalaycı (2014, p. 8), the value of kurtosis-skewness between -2 and +2 shows that the data have a normal distribution. In addition, when the Q-Q graph is examined, the fact that the data are in the form of an ellipse around the line with an angle of 45 degrees supports the normality assumption. Lastly, the existence of the multicollinearity problem was examined with correlation values (Tables 2 and 3). The fact that the correlation values between variables are lower than .85 is an indication that there is no multicollinearity

problem (Pallant, 2005). In the interpretation of arithmetic means in the study, the range of 1.00-1.79 is evaluated as "very low", 1.80-2.59 interval is "low", 2.60-3.39 interval is "medium", 3.40-4.19 interval is "high" and 4.20-5.00 range is "very high" in 5-point Likert type scales. In addition, in the interpretation of the correlation analysis, the range of .00-.30 was accepted as "low", the range of .31-.70 as "medium" and the range of .71-1.00 as "high" (Büyüköztürk, 2011). The study's first question was investigated by the arithmetic mean, the second question by Pearson product-moment correlation analysis, and the third question by structural equation modeling (SEM).

3. Findings

Teachers' levels of perception of organizational silence, organizational hypocrisy, and organizational rumor were examined in the study. In addition, correlation analysis results between variables were given, and then the structural equation model for the role of organizational hypocrisy in the relationship between the organizational silence and the organizational rumor was tested.

3.1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

The correlation values between the study's latent variables and the descriptive statistics for these variables are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Correlation Values between Latent Variables of the Study and Descriptive Statistics

	1	2	3
1. Organizational Silence	1		
2. Organizational Hypocrisy	.51**	1	
3. Organizational Rumor	.18**	.31**	1
Mean	3.30	2.33	2.47
Standard Deviation	.58	.46	.48
Skewness	-.17	-.71	.10
Kurtosis	.42	.88	-.02

*p< .05, **p< .01

When the descriptive statistics in Table 2 are examined, it is seen that teachers' perception levels of organizational silence (M=3.30) were relatively medium, organizational hypocrisy (M=2.33) and organizational rumor (M= 2.47) perception levels were relatively low. In addition, when the skewness and kurtosis values of the variables discussed in the study are examined, it is seen that the distribution displays a normal distribution. When the correlation coefficients between the variables in Table 2 are examined, there is a positive, moderately significant relationship between organizational silence and organizational hypocrisy ($r = .51$; $p < .001$). Also, a positive, low-level significant relationship was found between organizational silence and organizational rumor ($r = .18$; $p < .001$). , Finally, it was determined that there was a positive and moderately significant relationship between organizational hypocrisy and organizational rumor ($r = .31$; $p < .001$).

The mediating effect of organizational happiness in the relationship between teachers' job commitment and their life satisfaction was examined in line with the model proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986). According to this model, to test the mediator variable model, there should be a significant relationship between dependent, independent and mediator variables. When the findings in Table 2 were examined, it was seen that all variables had significant relationships among themselves. Furthermore, when the variable in which the mediating effect is investigated is added to the model in a significant relationship between variables, if the relationship between variables decreases, this indicates the mediating effect. When the variable that is considered to play a mediating role is added to the model, if the relationship between dependent and independent variable is not significant, it is considered as "full mediation"; while the significance of the relationship and the decrease in the effect level are considered as "partial mediation". In this study, it was examined whether organizational happiness had a mediating role in the relationship between job commitment (independent variable) and life satisfaction (dependent variable).

3.2. Findings on the Mediating Role of Organizational Hypocrisy in the Relationship Between Organizational Silence and Organizational Rumor

The relationships between organizational silence, organizational rumor, and organizational hypocrisy, which is considered as the mediator variable, was examined with path analysis. Moreover, bootstrapping was used to examine the statistical significance of indirect effects. The mediating effect of organizational happiness between job commitment and life satisfaction is shown in Figure 1 and Table 3.

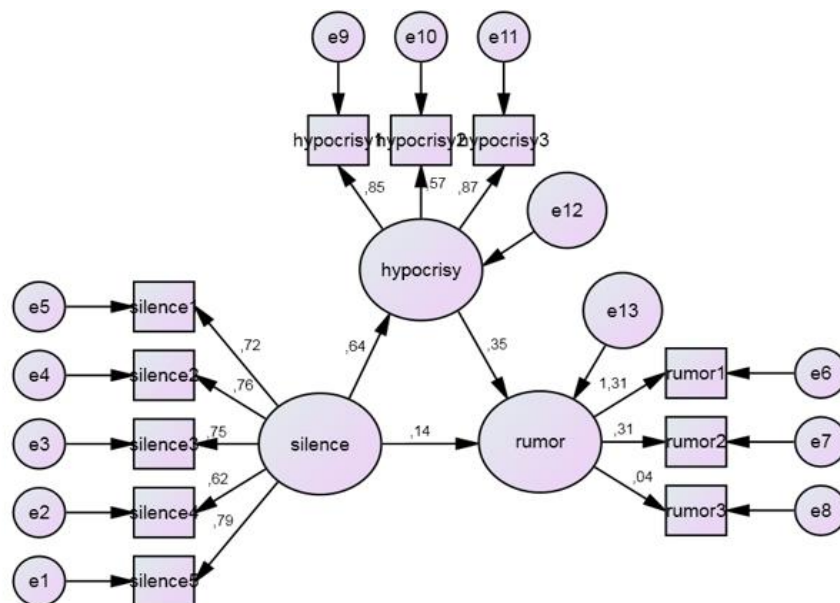


Figure 1. Path Analysis Diagram for Predicting Organizational Rumor (Mediation Effect)

When the goodness of fit values of the model are examined, it can be said that it meets the required goodness of fit values [$\chi^2 = 185.477$, $df = 41$, $\chi^2/df = 4.52$, $IFI = .90$, $CFI = .90$, $GFI = .90$, $NFI = .87$]

Table 3. Findings Regarding The Mediating Effect of Organizational Happiness in the Relationship between Job Commitment and Life Satisfaction

Predictive (Exogenous)	Predicted (Endogenous)	B	Se	t	β	P
Direct Effects						
Organizational Silence →	Organizational Rumor	.46	.06	7.72	.36	.000
Organizational Silence →	Organizational Hypocrisy	.68	.74	9.24	.64	.000
Organizational Hypocrisy →	Organizational Rumor	.69	.11	6.29	.35	.000
Indirect Effects						
Organizational Silence →	Organizational Rumor	.29	.12	2.50	.14	.013

As seen in Table 3, organizational silence positively and significantly predicts organizational rumor ($\beta = .36$, $t = 7.72$, $p < .000$) and organizational hypocrisy ($\beta = .64$, $t = 9.24$, $p < .001$). In addition, organizational hypocrisy predicts organizational rumor significantly and positively ($\beta = .35$, $t = 6.29$, $p < .001$). Kline (2015) suggested critical values for the evaluation of standardized effect sizes. If these are less than .10, it is a low-level effect, if they are around .30, it is a medium effect, and if they are .50 and above, it is a high-level effect. Accordingly, organizational silence and organizational hypocrisy have a medium effect on organizational rumor. It was found that organizational silence and organizational hypocrisy together predicted 20% of the variance of organizational rumor ($R^2 = .20$, $p = .000$). The regression values' significance between variables was interpreted as the assumptions of the mediation test were met. After the addition of organizational hypocrisy as a mediator variable in the model, it was observed that the relationship between the organizational silence and the organizational rumor was significant ($\beta = .14$, $t = 2.50$, $p < .05$). However, when the relationship between variables occurred directly, it was determined that the β value was .36 (Table 3), while the value of β decreased to .14 (Figure 1) with the addition of organizational hypocrisy to the model. These findings indicate that organizational hypocrisy plays a partial mediating role in the relationship between organizational silence and organizational rumor. For this reason, bootstrapping was performed to evaluate the significance of the indirect

effect. In order to support the research hypothesis in this analysis, the values obtained at the 95% confidence interval (CI) as a result of the analysis should not include the zero (0) value (Hayes, 2013; Gürbüz, 2019). According to the results of bootstrapping performed through 10,000 resamplings, it was seen that the indirect effect of job commitment (bootstrapping coefficient = .22, Se = .07, 95% CI = .093, .378) was significant since the confidence interval values did not include zero. According to these findings, it can be said that organizational hypocrisy has a partial mediating role in the relationship between organizational silence and organizational rumor.

4. Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations

In this study, the perception levels of organizational silence, organizational rumor, and organizational hypocrisy were examined in line with the views of 323 teachers working in public schools in the Kartal district of Istanbul during the 2019-2020 academic year. In addition, the relationships between variables and the mediating role of organizational hypocrisy in the relationship between organizational silence and organizational rumor were examined.

Study findings showed that teachers' perception levels of organizational hypocrisy were relatively low. In similar studies conducted on educational organizations, it was found that teachers' perception levels of organizational hypocrisy were low (Kılıçoğlu, 2017; Konan & Taşdemir, 2019; Kahveci, Karagül-Kandemir & Bayram, 2019; Snelson-Powell, Grosvold & Millington, 2020) and moderate in others (Kılıçoğlu, 2015; Kılıçoğlu, Yılmaz-Kılıçoğlu & Karadağ, 2019). Both inputs and outputs of educational organizations are human beings; therefore, it is considered that negative attitudes and behaviors among the members of the organization may negatively affect the organizational climate and prevent the provision of a qualified education service. Another finding of the study was that teachers' perception levels of organizational silence were relatively medium. In many similar studies, it was also found that teachers' perception levels of organizational silence were at a medium level (Kahveci & Demirtaş, 2013; Karabağ-Köse 2014; Demirtaş, Özdemir, Küçük, 2016; Okeke-James, Igbokwe, Anyanwu & Obineme, 2020; Ngozi, Okeke-James & Igbokwe, 2021). On the other hand, some studies found that teachers' perception levels of organizational silence were low (Helvacı & Çetin, 2012; Çavuşoğlu & Köse, 2016; Alqarni, 2020). Kahveci (2010), on the other hand, found that teachers' perceptions of organizational silence were high. Organizational silence is the employees' unwillingness to express problems at work intentionally or unintentionally (Eroğlu, Adıgüzel & Öztürk, 2011). Therefore, employees may prefer to remain passive in their organizations because they think they will be harmed if they talk about issues that are sensitive to the organization (Milliken, Morrison, & Hewlin, 2003). Besides, employees tend to remain silent for fear of being fired or not getting promoted, in order not to be seen as a complaining person and so that their social relations are not damaged (Çakıcı 2008). Findings showed that teachers' perception levels of organizational rumor were relatively low. Han (2019) found in his research that the perception levels of teachers regarding organizational rumor were not high. Rumor is defined as unproven and unreliable information that circulates through word of mouth or electronic communications (Fearn-Banks, 2007). Therefore, teachers' low level of organizational rumor perception indicates a healthy communication process in their organizations (Bursalıoğlu, 2005). Studies have revealed that the most common reactions of teachers who are exposed to the rumor mechanism are sadness and anger (Arabacı, Sünkür & Şimşek, 2012). , it is stated that such a situation may negatively affect the performance of employees and negatively affect work productivity (Xueming 2013; Artaç, 2017). In light of this information, the low perceptions of organizational rumors of teachers participating in the study can be considered as a positive situation.

Based on reviewing 4 hypotheses, -there were positive and significant relationships between organizational hypocrisy, organizational silence, and organizational rumor. There is no study in the literature in which all three variables have been studied together. However, in the literature, it has been emphasized by various researchers that organizational silence increases organizational rumor (Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Pinder & Harlos, 2001) and that organizational hypocrisy can also be related to both organizational silence (Milliken et al., 2003; Çakıcı, 2008) and organizational rumor (Stewart & Strathern, 2004). Employees working at an organization dominated by silence will avoid expressing their thoughts openly, so the flow of information will take place informally in the form of rumors (Stewart & Strathern, 2004). Research findings showed that the effect of organizational silence on organizational rumor was partly through organizational hypocrisy. In other words, it was concluded that organizational silence increased organizational hypocrisy, and as a result, organizational rumor was positively affected. Therefore, reducing organizational silence in schools can be

interpreted as reducing organizational hypocrisy and organizational rumors. In this context, steps can be taken towards less hypocritical behaviors of all school staff, especially school administrators, to reduce rumors in schools.

This study has some limitations. The study was conducted in public schools in Turkey's largest city, Istanbul. A similar study can be conducted with teachers working in rural or private schools with fewer teachers, and the results can be compared. In collecting data, tools based on self-report were used. Therefore, the data obtained are limited by the participants' responses to the measurement tools and the scope of the measurement tools. Considering this limitation, it is thought that it may be beneficial to use different methods such as observation and interview besides self-report measurement tools in future studies.

In the light of the results obtained from the study, some recommendations can be made for researchers and practitioners. Many factors cause rumors in organizations as an informal form of communication. Extensive research to include different types of organizations can be conducted to determine the impact of these factors on organizational rumor. Among teachers' perceptions of organizational silence and organizational rumor, the mediating effects of variables such as education level, age, and expertise can be examined. While a quantitative research method was used in the research, qualitative or mixed research methods can also be used in similar studies to have more detailed information about the relationship of variables. In addition, some recommendations can be provided for practitioners in line with the results obtained from the research. School administrators should adopt a democratic management approach in which teachers can clearly express their opinions and suggestions to minimize the organizational silence in their schools. In-service training on effective communication can be given to teachers in order to minimize teachers' organizational silence behaviors. Request and complaint boxes can be placed in schools to get the views of all parties. In order to avoid the negative effects of rumors emerging as a form of informal communication, it can be suggested to adopt an open communication in schools. Also, school administrators can eliminate the concerns of teachers and the uncertainty of the situation by organizing meetings on the rumored issue in order to minimize the negative effects of rumors and convey the information they need directly to them. In reducing organizational hypocrisy, it can be suggested that school members adopt organizational integrity, which is defined as being consistent in their discourse and actions. It can be ensured that more consistent and feasible decisions are made in terms of administration by avoiding an over-centralized understanding of schools and by transferring more authority to school administrators. , Finally, school administrators can minimize hypocritical behaviors by creating a sincere, honest and transparent organizational structure in their schools.

5. References

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