Perceptions of elementary and middle school teachers about the role of organizational gossip on school climate

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to determine perceptins of teachers about the role of organizational gossip on the school climate in elementary and middle schools. The study adopted the correlational survey model. The participants were selected using simple random sampling method, and were composed of 427 teachers at different elementary and middle schools in different districts of Rize in Turkey in 2020-2021 academic year. The data were collected via the "Organizational Gossip Scale" developed by Han and Dağlı (2018), the "School Climate Survey" developed by Kavgacı (2010), and the "Personal Information Form" developed by the researchers. The results showed that teachers' perceptions of organizational gossip and the levels of school climate were moderate, and a low level negative and significant relationship was found between organizational gossip and school climate. According to the regression analysis, it was concluded that organizational gossip is a significant predictor of school climate and explains 7% of the variance of school climate.

Keywords: Organizational gossip; school climate; elementary school; middle school; teachers

1. Introduction

A community formed by individuals who can communicate with each other to achieve a common goal is defined as an organization (Barnard, 1994). Organizations that want to achieve their goals should have a high level of communication (Usta et al., 2018). It has an important role in strengthening the organization's hierarchy and ensuring its continuity (Han, 2019). It is stated that communication within an organization can occur both formally and informally (Ergin, 2014: 199). Formal communication is defined that

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the necessary information reaches at the people to achieve the goals of the organization in accordance with the hierarchical system (Dilber, 2018). Informal communication, on the other hand, emerges in order to meet the social needs of the people in the organization regardless of the hierarchy. (Ünal-Çolak, 2012: 159). It is seen that the informal communication forms are preferred more than formal communication forms in organizations as they contain more directive discourses (Eroğlu, 2005). Informal communication, which contributes to the socialization of people in the organization and increases sharing with each other, differs from formal communication in this aspect (Özarallı & Torun, 2011). When the informal communication in organizations is examined, it is seen that the concepts of gossip and rumor come to the fore (Solmaz, 2006). While rumors include issues that occur in larger communities and concern the majority of the society, it is said that the area of interest and influence of gossip is in a narrower scope (Artaç, 2017).

Discourses which arise in settings where people build intimacy and make positive or negative comments about people not present there are called gossip (Foster, 2004: 83). According to Dunbar (2004: 100), gossip is an important part of individuals' social relationships. Therefore, the concept of gossip in organizations where social relations are an important factor should be examined (Noon & Delbridge, 1993). Since the relations of employees in organizations where gossip takes place may be negatively affected, it may affect their morale and motivation levels as well. Therefore, that has a negative effect on the realization of organizational goals (Grosser et al., 2012). It is known that gossip also has effects enabling the continuation of information exchange within the organization in cases where formal communication is insufficient, thus it brings the relations between people to a level based on trust, and allows them to get away from working life and relieve stress (Usta et al., 2018). Considering that informal communication is more common in organizations, it can be stated that formal communication channels are not sufficient and informal communication methods fill in this gap (Dilber, 2018).

Employees can get information about others in the organization through gossip and interpret it with their colleagues. This increases the sincerity among the employees and enables them to be a social group (Akdoğan et al., 2009, p. 19). Informal communication tools are used to convey information and news in organizations to employees without getting stuck in official ways, which leads mental relaxation due to the rapid learning of information (Arabacı et al., 2012: 176). When informal communication ways can be used well, it facilitates the information exchange and increases employees' communication within the organization. This situation contributes to the realization of collective work in order to achieve the goals since it enables them to socialize (Thomas & Rozell, 2007). However, when informal communication is not used well, employees especially in fragile organizations can develop feelings of hatred towards each other, which creates a negative climate (Şantaş et al., 2019).

Although the people in the organization are not very close to each other, they can find common points to chat when they come together in some situations (Fay, 2011). When people take a break from work or come together during the rest of the work, they can talk about what has happened in the organization they work with or about the people working there (Akkirman, 2004). It can be stated that informal communication methods have positive and negative effects on organizations. Hence, necessary actions should be taken against all kinds of effects of this communication way. Gossips, which are one of the informal communication tools, make contributions to the organization when they can be managed well, but otherwise affect the organizational climate negatively (Han, 2019).

It is seen that there are different definitions for the concept of school climate since there are many studies in the literature. However, as the common point of the definitions, it is mentioned that the school climate is affected by the school and affects the school (Çolak & Altınkurt, 2017). Hoy (2003) states that the school climate is the result of common behaviors in the school and it is an unchangeable feature of the school as individuals adopt and practice this climate. The school climate is considered as all of the factors that affect the formal and informal interaction occuring with the expectations and emotions of each employee, the interaction among the employees, how the employees perceive the organization, the employees' sense of belief in the organization, their values and the progress of the organization (Kavgacı, 2014: 21).

Just as each person has characteristics and identity as a whole of them, and in the same way, schools as educational institutions have their own sense of self. The concept of school climate is mentioned to explain this sense of self (Taş, 2009: 2). The climate of a school distinguishes it from other schools. It consists of combining of the behaviors and thoughts of every individual in the school and environmental factors, and at the same time it affects the employees in the school to adapt to this climate (Özdemir et al., 2010). In order to make schools efficient, it is necessary to pay attention to the school climate. The school climate is an essential way to increase efficiency. Schools with high efficiency draw attention from the environment. Besides, it is seen that people working in places with a positive school climate are happier (Boztaş, 2007: 25).

Taymaz (2007) expresses the importance of making the climate in a school positive in order to increase the impact and efficiency. When the positive climate of the school is adopted by the people there, it can lead a positive change in behaviors (Dönmez & Korkmaz, 2011). It is seen that when students adopt a positive school climate, their behaviors improve and they have sympathy towards the school, which positively reflects on their successes (Wang & Degol, 2016). When teachers internalize the school climate, it is figured out that their motivations and senses of self-confidence increase (Gündoğan & Koçak, 2017). Teachers who feel good are more efficient in their lessons, and this is reflected in the academic success of their students (Korkmaz et al., 2014). The school climate contributes to the self-actualization of every student it hosts, makes them

successful in economic terms, and prepares them for the society by teaching social norms. Therefore, every school should make an effort for its own climate to be positive and some activities should be carried out to be adopted this climate by the students (Fontenot, 1993: 7). The climate of the school has a direct effect on students' behavior. It is observed that the behaviors of students attending a school with a good school climate are in the same direction as well (Acarbey, 2006).

It is noticed that students who know that they are safe at school, feel peaceful there and have sympathy for the school are more successful. Hence, schools should transfer their existing climate to students (Cohen & Geier, 2010). Teachers should also feel peaceful at school since they have the biggest share in students' successes. When teachers feel valued and are asked for their opinions, they feel happier. This also contributes positively to their communication among themselves as well (Vail, 2005). It appears that a positive school climate is for benefit of both students and teachers. Therefore, every school should pay attention to its climate and make an effort to understand it well (Topal, 2001, p.3). In schools where teachers who can come together for a common purpose, the struggling is higher and it is put more effort for the success of the students. Accordingly it is seen that creating a climate that carries teachers to a common goal will be helpful for students as well (Goddard et al., 2000).

Although many studies have been conducted on organizational gossip and school climate together from different viewpoints, some deficiencies have been found out in the literature regarding the coexistence of these two concepts and a study involving educational institutions. Therefore, considering that it will contribute to the relevant literature, what the role of organizational gossip is on school climate according to the perceptions of elemenatary and middle school teachers was determined as the problem of this study. When the high number of cases affecting the school climate are considered, it is important to determine the effect of the concept of organizational gossip on the school climate. Based on these considerations, it is aimed to examine the role of teachers' perceptions of organizational gossip on school climate in Rize province of Turkey. In the context of this general purpose, answers to the following research questios were sought:

1. What are the teachers' perception levels regarding the organizational gossip?

2. What are the teachers' perception levels regarding the school climate?

3. Is there a significant relationship between organizational gossip and school climate according to teachers' perceptions?

4. Does organizational gossip predict school climate?

2. Method

2.1. The Research Model

In this study, correlational survey model, one of the general survey models, was used. The correlational survey, model which is one of the quantitative research models, is a research method that enables to examine the relationship between at least two variables, to explain it and to predict the results (Büyüköztürk et al., 2013). Correlational survey model aims to reveal the existence of changes of at least two variables or the degree of these changes (Karasar, 2013). It is aimed to describe the whole of the population quantitatively due to the researches carried out on samples selected from the population (Cresswell, 2012, p.376). In the correlational survey model, instead of trying to influence the variables or control the variables, it is necessary to determine the relationship between the variables and evaluate the results by making statistical comparisons with the scores of each sample (Tekbıyık, 2014).

2.2. Participants

Studies in quantitative researches are carried out on a certain part, but the results are generalized over the whole. The group that is thought to be able to respond to the problem/s of the study, can be divided into small pieces by sampling if it is large in volume and the results are generalized is defined as the universe (Altunışık et al., 2010; Karasar, 2013).

The population of the research consists of teachers working in elemantary and middle schools in Rize (in Turkey) and its districts in the 2020-2021 academic year. In study, the simple random sampling method was preferred. The type of sample in which each sample has an equal chance of being selected is expressed as simple random sampling (Büyüköztürk et al., 2013). The fact that every sample in the population has an equal chance of being selected (Karasar, 2013) is effective in the simple random sampling.

Following the necessary permissions from the Rize Provincial Directorate of National Education, 440 participants were reached through the online questionnaire filling method. Analyzes were carried out after 13 scales out of 440 data were excluded from the total data because they contained missing values. The personal information of the teachers who constitute the sample of the study is as follows:

According to the gender of the teachers participating in the study, 304 (71.20%) are female, 123 (28.80%) are male. Considering their professional seniority, there are 123 (28.80%) teachers between 1-5 years, 140 (32.80%) between 6-10 years, 116 (27.20%) between 11-20 years, 48 (11.20%) over 21 years. When the branch variable is examined, it is seen that 67 of them (15.70%) are elementary school teachers, 360 (84.30%) are branch teachers. When the length of service at school is examined, it is figured out that there are 305 (71.40%) teachers between 1-5 years, 94 (22.00%) between 6-10 years, 28 (6.60%) teachers between 11-20 years. Finally, when the educational status variable is examined, it is determined that 375 (87.80%) of the teachers have undergraduate education and 52 (12.20%) have graduate education.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

It was used the "Personal Information Form", which consists of questions developed by the researcher and aims at gathering information about the demographic characteristics of the teachers. In order to determine teachers' perception levels of organizational gossip, Han and Dağlı's (2018) "Organizational Gossip Scale" was used in the second section, and Kavgacı's (2010) "School Climate Survey" was preferred in the third section to determine the level of school climate. For the use of the scales, necessary permissions were obtained from the aforementioned researchers via e-mail.

2.3.1. Validity and Reliability Analyses of Data Collection Tools

In order to reveal the validity level of the "Organizational Gossip Scale" and "School Climate Survey" in the study, the confirmatory factor analysis was carried out. Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficients were calculated for the reliability analysis. Before the confirmatory factor analysis, some assumptions such as sample size, missing values, multicollinearity and singularity, univariate and multivariate normal distribution (Çokluk et al., 2012) need to be checked and verified.

Information about these assumptions is explained below. When the literature is examined, there are different views regarding the determination of the sample size. It is seen that Tabachnick and Fidel (1996) evaluates the sample total as 200 participants as fair, 300 good, 500 very good, 1000 and above participants as excellent. According to some researchers, the number of items in the scale plays a role in determining the sample size. Based on this statement, Bryman and Cramer (2001) states that the sample total should be at least 5 times the number of items in the scale, if possible 10 times, while Büyüköztürk, Kılıç Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz and Demirel (2013) state that the sample total should be at least 5 times the number of items in the scale. They say that it is sufficient.

When the scales conducted in this study are examined, it is seen that the "Organizational Gossip Scale" consists of 24 items and the "School Climate Survey" consists of 25 items. In the study, the sample total was determined on the basis of the number of items in the scale. Therefore, as a result of the maximum number of items in the applied scales, the minimum sample size should be (25x5) 125 or (25x10) 250 and above. In this context, the data collection tools in the study were conducted to 440 teachers, and it is understood that the essential sample total was achieved.

As a result of the analysis within the scope of the research, incomplete and incorrect filling of the scales causes missing values. It means that the information is incomplete, thus causing information loss (Bal, 2003). Even if the participants are informed about being necesarry to answer all questions, there is a case of missing data in the studies (Ginkel et al., 2007). Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, scales were filled in online by teachers. After eliminating 13 of the 440 data collected, relevant analyses were carried out. Therefore, the sample group of the study consists of 427 teachers.

When there is a strong relationship between the independent variables, the interpretation of the results of the regression analysis may cause mistakes. However, the fact that the interpretation to be made is close to reality is due to the independent

variables being unrelated. If there are one or more linear relationships between the independent variables, it can be mentioned about the multicollinearity problem (Kasalar, 2015). Factor analysis is used to demonstrate the quality of the measurements in social sciences as well as to reveal their validity (Yaşlıoğlu, 2017). It is the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) which is used to reveal the suitability of a previously carried out scale with the original factor structure in the current study. Moreover, it shows that if it is appropriate, to what extent it is appropriate (Suhr, D. D., 2006).

When the CFA results performed in order to reveal whether the factors in the original form of the Organizational Gossip scale were confirmed or not were examined, it was figured out that the error relations between the d9-d11 (e9-e11) indicators of the dimension of developing relations and the d22-d23 (e22-e23) indicators of the dimension of organizational harm were found to be high. By adding covariances between them, the model was improved in a meaningful way. According to the modification index results, the goodness of fit values was determined as $\chi^2/df=3.352$ (p<.01), GFI=0.854, CFI=0.912, RMSEA=0.074 and SRMR=0.0818. It can be stated that the values in question are in an acceptable range since it is found that they are in accordance with the goodness of fit index values.

The Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the overall total of the Organizational Gossip Scale and the dimensions of having information, developing relations and organizational harm were calculated. The relevant values are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Reliability Coefficients Calculated for the Total and Dimensions of the Organizational Gossip Scale

Organizational Gossip Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Having Information	7	.92
Developing Relations	7	.92
Organizational Harm	10	.87
Total	24	.85

According to Table 1, the Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was calculated as .92 for the dimension of having information, .92 for the dimension of developing relations, .87 for tha dimension of organizational harm, and .85 for the total of the scale. It was observed that it varied between .85 and .92 values. The results reveal that the reliability level of the scale is at a high level.

When the results of the confirmatory factor analysis were evaluated to reveal whether the factors found in the original School Climate Survey were confirmed or not, the goodness of fit values were $\chi^2/df=2.861$ (p<.01), GFI=0.869, CFI=0.922, RMSEA=0.066 and SRMR=0.0619. It can be stated that these values are within the acceptable range since it is seen that they are in accordance with the values of the goodness of fit index.

Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficients of the dimensions of supportiveness, restrictiveness, directiveness and intimacy were calculated together with the overall total of the School Climate Survey. The values are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Reliability Coefficients Calculated for the Total and Dimensions of the School Climate Survey

School Climate Survey	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Supportiveness	8	.94
Restrictiveness	4	.81
Directiveness	5	.88
Intimacy	8	.87
Total	25	.88

According to Table 2, the Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was calculated as .94 for the dimension of supportiveness, .81 for the dimension of restrictiveness, .88 for the dimension of directiveness, .87 for the dimension of intimacy and .88 for the total of the scale. It is concluded that it varies between .81 and .94 values. The results show that the reliability level of the scale is at a high level.

2.3.2. Data Collection and Analysis

During the process of data collection, after getting the necessary permissions from the Rize Provincial Directorate of National Education, school administrators were contacted to deliver the online scales to the teachers who would volunteer to participate in the research. Teachers were asked to fill in the questionnaire whenever they would be available to respond. It was especially emphasized that the information to be gathered will be kept confidential in order to ensure that participants answer the questionnaire sincerely. The data as a result of the research were analyzed using SPSS and AMOS package programs. The characteristics of the sample of the research were revealed by calculating the frequency and percentage values of the data regarding the demographic information of the teachers. Since the skewness and kurtosis coefficients of organizational gossip are found respectively as .160 and -.026 and the skewness and kurtosis coefficients for the school climate are found respectively as -.228 and .006, it can be stated that the normality assumption is verified on the basis of these values. Correlation analysis was conducted in order to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of organizational gossip and school climate levels. A regression analysis was conducted for the effect of organizational gossip on school climate.

3. Results

The participating teachers' perception levels of organizational gossip and school climate, the correlation between the aforementioned concepts, and finally the results of the regression analysis revealing the effect of organizational gossip on the school climate are presented via tables as follows.

Table 3 below shows the teachers's views on organizational gossip are presented in.

Table 3. Teacher's Views Regarding the Dimensions of Organizational Gossip

Organizational Gossip	N	X	SS
Having Information	427	2.79	1.11
Developing Relations	427	1.96	0.97
Organizational Harm	427	3.59	0.91
Organizational Gossip	427	2.78	0.64

In Table 3, it is seen that teachers' perception levels of organizational gossip are $\overline{X}$ =2.79 for the dimension of having information, $\overline{X}$ =1.96 for the dimension of developing relations, $\overline{X}$ =3.59 for the dimension of organizational harm. Teachers perceive the dimension of organizational harm the highest and the dimension of developing relations the lowest. Their general perception level of organizational gossip is $\overline{X}$ =2.78, which means "partly agree".

3.1. Teachers' Levels of School Climate

The teachers' views regarding school climate are presented in Table 4.

Tablo 4. Teacher's Views Regarding the Dimensions of School Climate

School Climate	N	$\overline{X}$	SS
Supportiveness	427	2.69	0.84
Restrictiveness	427	2.06	0.74
Directiveness	427	2.85	0.74
Intimacy	427	2.83	0.63
School Climate	427	2.61	0.44

In Table 4, it is seen that the teachers' levels of the school climate are $\overline{X}$ =2.69 for the dimension of supportiveness, $\overline{X}$ =2.06 for the dimension of restrictiveness, $\overline{X}$ =2.85 for the dimension of directiveness, $\overline{X}$ =2.83 for the dimension of intimacy. In addition, the level of the school climate is the highest in the dimension of directiveness and the lowest in the dimension of restrictiveness. The teachers' general perception levels regarding the school climate is $\overline{X}$ =2.61, which means "often".

3.2. Examining the Relationship Between Organizational Gossip and School Climate

The results of the correlation analysis conducted to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions of organizational gossip and levels of school climate are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Relationship Between Organizational Gossip and School Climate

	Organizational Gossip	School Climate
Organizational Gossip	1	

School Climate			-.26**		1

When Table 5 is examined, a low level of negative significant relationship is found between organizational gossip and school climate [r=-.26, p<.01].

The results of the regression analysis conducted to examine the effect of organizational gossip on the school climate are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Results Regarding the Effect of Organizational Gossip on School Climate

Variable		B	Std. Error	B	T	p
Organizational Gossip	Constant	3.11	.09		33.688	.000
	School Climate	-.18	.03	-.26	-5.61	.000
			R= .26	R^2= .07	$F_{(5.846)}$=31.500	p= .000

When Table 6 is examined, it is determined that organizational gossip is a significant predictor of the school climate according to the results of the regression analysis [R=.26, R^2=.07, $F_{(5.846)}$=31.500, p=.000]. As a result, it is seen that organizational gossip explains 7% of the total variance of school climate.

4. Discussion

As a result of the findings, it was determined that teachers' perceptions of organizational gossip are at the level of "partly agree". When teachers' perception levels of organizational gossip are evaluated on the basis of the dimensions according to the means, they are respectively organizational harm, having information, and developing relations.

When the literature is examined, it is seen that although there are findings about the perceptions of gossip due to the desire to learn what exists in the organization, the dimension of having information of organizational gossip is not effective enough in this study. To interpret this finding from a different perspective, the teachers stated that they could not get enough information through gossip in the institutions where they worked. However, it is known that formal communication methods do not always function adequately in organizations and that it is difficult to access some information. In such a situation, it is seen that informal communication tools are used. Therefore, it can be expressed that teachers' communication with each other is not sufficient and measures can be taken regarding this situation. When the studies in the literature are examined, it is found out that although people meet their social needs by coming together through gossip and increase their intimacy by forming groups, it can be said that the teachers in this study do not develop their relationships adequately through gossip. Since the friendly settings established by people working in organizations together contribute to the achievement of organizational goals by providing team spirit, it may be necessary to take measures related to the result of this study. It was determined that the teachers

who participated in the study showed a high level of participation in the dimension of organizational harm. However, when the literature is scanned, it is understood that if the gossip can be managed well by the school administrators, it can benefit the organization and can be used as a power in achieving the organizational goals. Based on the answers given by the teachers, it can be said that the administrators of the institutions are not able to manage the gossip in organizations well enough.

Whereas there are studies in the relevant literature that are similar to the findings of the study, it has been found that there is a perception of organizational gossip at the level of "partly agree" in these studies (Han, 2019). In addition, in the research by Karasu (2020), it is seen that teachers' perceptions regarding organizational gossip are in the range of "totally disagree" and "agree moderately".

According to the results of the research, it is determined that teachers' views on school climate are at the level of "often". When the teachers' levels of school climate are evaluated on the basis of the dimensions, they are respectively directiveness, intimacy, supportiveness and restrictiveness. Based on these results, it can be concluded that school administrators take teachers' suggestions into account, have a democratic attitude, and teachers have sincere relations with each other. In addition, it can be commented that teachers who are new to the school do not have a problem of adaptation, they complain too much about the workload, and are supported to do their jobs under all circumstances.

Studies related to the school climate in the literature indicate that teachers' perceptions of school climate are medium (Arabacı, 2010; Memduhoğlu & Şeker, 2011; Yurter, 2016; Bakkal, 2019, Alpay, 2019; Avşar, 2019), at a good (Kavgacı, 2010) and high (Ada, 2020) levels. In terms of the branch variable, a significant difference was found between the teachers' school climate levels.

According to the analyses conducted to determine the relationship between the teachers' perceptions of organizational gossip and the school climate, it is determined that there is a low level negative and significant relationship between organizational gossip and school climate. In addition, it is found that organizational gossip significantly predicts the school climate and explains 7% of the variance regarding the school climate level. Although it is not encountered with any study related to the relationship between organizational gossip and school climate in the literature, it is seen that some concepts are studied with organizational gossip. In Hekimoğlu's (2020) qualitative study titled "An Assessment of Gossip and Rumor in Organizations from the Point of Organizational Communication", it is concluded that gossips and rumors fill in the gaps in formal communication channels in the moments in which the economic situation of the organization is uncertain, the salary increase is approaching, there are some changes in the organization, and the managers cannot manage the organization well.

In the study conducted by Karasu (2020) on the relationship between teachers' perceptions of organizational gossip and organizational trust working in primary education institutions, it is seen that the dimension of having information of organizational gossip has a negative and moderate relationship with all dimensions and total of organizational trust. Moreover, in the same study, it is concluded that the dimension of developing relations has a negative and low level relationship with all

dimensions and total of organizational trust. The dimension of organizational harm of organizational gossip is not related to all other dimensions and total of organizational trust. Based on these results, Karasu (2020) states that an increase in teachers' perceptions of organizational trust will decrease their perception levels of organizational gossip. In the study conducted by Han (2019) on the investigation of rumors and gossip in schools as a form of informal communication using the descriptive and correlational survey model, the average of teachers' views on the dimensions of having information of organizational gossip and developing relations was at the level of "disagree", and the average of their views on the dimension of organizational harm is at the level of "agree".

In the study by Grosser, Lopez-Kidwell, Labianca, and Ellwardt (2012), they state that more effort will be required if the gossip emerges as a result of distrust in management and the problem in official communication channels. In a research by Ellwardt, Steglich, and Vittek (2012), they state that by gossiping, people are more likely to make friends, but since people who gossip a lot have less friends, gossip should have a limit.

The suggestions for practitioners and researchers are as follows:

- Due to the high perception of the dimension of organizational harm by teachers, necessary activities can be done to deal with the negative atmosphere of gossip in schools.
- Teachers state that they have some information through gossip. As this situation may come from the inadequacy of official communication channels, necessary measures can be taken.
- Teachers who come together in a social settings are more likely to achieve the goals of the school. In this study, it is seen that teachers cannot come together and strengthen their communication through gossips. Therefore, gossip settings can be created for teachers to suit the interests of the school.
- Since the organizational gossip perceptions of branch teachers in middle schools are higher than the teachers' perceptions in elementary schools, administrators in middle schools can take necessary measures to manage the process better.
- In addition to this study conducted with a sample of elementary and middle school teachers, teachers' views working at other educational levels can also be sought.
- The school type can be used as a variable in future studies. Thus, the perception levels of gossip among school types can be determined and compared.
- Gossip can be examined with different organizational concepts and contributed to the literature.
- A qualitative study can be conducted to determine the views of other stakeholders of schools (students, administrators, etc.) about organizational gossip.

5. Conclusions

According to the results of this research, it can be stated that organizational gossip has a negative effect on the school climate. Just as each organization has its own atmosphere and climate, schools also have their own climate. The more this climate is positive, the more every individual at the school will be affected by it, and they will be able to do their own work more efficiently. Like the domino effect, the positive climate of

schools will affect teachers and therefore the students first. In this case, what needs to be done is to offer them a positive school climate. If managed, gossip is a phenomenon that contributes to the organization positively. People can meet their social needs through gossip, reinforce their feelings of friendship, and learn about what they want to be aware of without the need for formal communication. However, as a result of not controling the gossip, terrible results may emerge and damage the organization. It is not possible for gossip to disappear completely from life and school. Therefore, school administrators should follow and control the gossip well. Thus, they can use the positive aspects of gossip to strengthen teachers' communication and contribute to a positive school climate.

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