

## INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL GOSSIP TEACHERS' AND ORGANIZATIONAL BURNOUT LEVELS

ÖĞRETMENLERİN ÖRGÜTSEL DEDİKODU İLE ÖRGÜTSEL TÜKENMİŞLİK DÜZEYLERİ ARASINAKİ İLİŞKİNİN İNCELENMESİ

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### Abstract

The purpose of this research is to identify the teachers' views on the functions of organizational gossip in their schools and their level of burnout and to reveal the relationship between them. The research was designed in a correlational survey model. According to the data obtained from the Batman Provincial Directorate of National Education, the population of the research consists of 7600 teachers working in the province of Batman in the 2019-2020 academic year. 340 teachers selected from this population by simple random (non-selective) method constitute the sample of the research. Research data were collected using the Organizational Gossip Scale and Maslach Burnout Scale. It was found out that there was a low-level positive correlation with the aspect of awareness, a very low positive correlation with the aspect of developing relationships and the organizational harm aspect between the sub-aspects of organizational gossip and burnout levels of teachers.

**Keywords:** Teacher, organizational gossip, organizational burnout.

**Jel Codes:**I00, I21, I29.

### Öz

Bu araştırmanın amacı, öğretmenlerin okullarındaki örgütsel dedikodunun işlevlerine ilişkin görüşleri ile tükenmişlik düzeylerini tespit etmek ve aralarındaki ilişkiyi ortaya koymaktır. Araştırma, ilişkisel tarama modelinde tasarlanmıştır. Araştırmanın evrenini, Batman İl Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğünden alınan verilere göre; 2019-2020 eğitim ve öğretim yılında Batman ilinde görev yapan 7600 öğretmen oluşturmaktadır. Bu evrenden basit tesadüfi (seçkisiz) yöntem ile seçilen 340 öğretmen, araştırmanın örneklemini oluşturmuştur. Araştırmanın verileri, Örgütsel Dedikodu Ölçeği ile Maslach Tükenmişlik Ölçeği kullanılarak elde edilmiştir. Öğretmenlerin örgütsel dedikodunun alt boyutları ile tükenmişlik düzeyleri arasında; haberdar olma boyutuyla pozitif yönlü düşük düzeyde, ilişkileri geliştirme ve örgütsel zarar boyutlarıyla pozitif yönlü çok düşük düzeyde bir ilişki saptanmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Öğretmen, örgütsel dedikodu, örgütsel tükenmişlik.

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## INTRODUCTION

The organization is a social unit consisted of two or more people which is consciously coordinated and functions to reach a common objective on a relatively continuous basis (Robbins, Judge & Erdem, 2013: 5). It is possible through organizational communication for workers to participate in discussions and convey information to each other. Communication is the process of sharing and understanding meaning between people. (Han & Dagli, 2018; Solmaz, 2004a). People spend 70% of their time communicating apart from their basic needs such as sleep, nutrition, and sheltering (Robbins, Judge & Erdem, 2013). Healthy organizational communication depends on the basic structure of the organization, the regular performance of organizational work, the internal regulatory processes, and the communication styles of the organization. (Atak, 2005; Gecikli, 2004). Organizational communication takes place in two forms: formal and informal communication (Solmaz, 2004a; Usta, Kaya & Özyurt, 2018). Formal communication takes place vertically in different ways, such as suggestions, presentations, meetings. Informal communication, on the other hand, is outside the basic structure and hierarchy of the organization; a type of communication that occurs as a result of interpersonal interaction and generally takes place in form of rumors and gossip in a horizontal direction. (Dilber, 2018).

The most popular one of the informal communication channels that occupies an important part in terms of organizational impact is gossip. Gossip is different from rumor. A rumor is fed from an anonymous source and does not reflect a specific thought or situation; however, it attracts people's attention. (Dilber, 2018). To gossip, on the other hand, is defined to make assessing comments (i.e., negative, or positive valence gossip) to another person about a party who is not present at the time, which takes place sincerely in organizations (Foster, 2004). The fact that gossip is not possibly avertible effects organization managers' attitudes towards gossip. Since gossip might be seen as an instrument to protect organizational benefits and reach these benefits. (Gluckman, 1963; Nicholson, 2001). Gossip, possibly seen as an instrument to reach organizational goals, gives a chance to supervise organizational balance and check organizational performance. (Glover, 2001; Prietula, 2001). Workers might use gossip at times where the formal communication channels in the organization are ineffective and non-functional, to ease the outcomes the situation brings. Gossip in organizational communication fills in the information gap occurring due to formal communication. In today's organizations, workers' feedbacks to management play an important role with regards to performance

evaluation of both the organization and its managers. Thanks to gossip in organizational communication, organization managers acquire information that can't be acquired through formal communication; thus, they get information about workers' conception of the organization. From this aspect, gossip plays a role as an effective feedback device. That's because workers' feedbacks (gossips) function as a sort of early warning system and guide managers. (Anderson 1995; Gillis, 2006;).

There are positive and negative aspects of organizational gossip. In other words, gossip has dark sides as well as light-well sides. The organizational functions include having information about "what's going on" inside the organization (Bektaş& Erdem, 2015; Difonzo & Bordia, 2007; Noon & Delbridge, 1993), improving social relationships between the workers (Çalığıuşu, Göral, & Bozoğlu, 2013, 2013; Foster, 2004; Kniffin & Wilson 2005) and organizational harm (Han, 2019; Michelson & Mouly, 2004; Thomas & Rozell, 2007). The functions of having information and improving social relationships between the workers help improve solidarity and cooperation between the workers. Gossip, as a complementary to formal communication; have positive effects on meeting inter-organizational psychological needs (Akduru & Semerciöz, 2017; Eroğlu, 2005) organizational success (Gizir, 2007) and performance (Glover, 2001). However, there have been studies in which the organizational harm function of gossip is significant (Han, 2019). Additionally, in some researches, it has been seen that gossip weakens organizational commitments (Karasu, 2020), results in job dissatisfaction (Kardaş, 2019), and decreases organizational synergy (Çağalı, 2021). As a result, workers might experience individual and organizational burnout due to organizational gossip.

Burnout, a concept that most employees experience in their professional and business life but cannot name because they do not know its definition, assumes its place in the literature today and has been accepted as a syndrome. The idea of burnout was introduced by Freudenberger in 1974 first (Maslach & Jackson, 1981: 99) and defined as "a state of exhaustion that arises from the resources within the individual which come as the result of failure, weariness, decreased energy and power, or unsatisfied desires" (Freudenberger, 1974). Burnout is accepted as a long-term outcome of stress caused by work and professional life, and it is generally seen in jobs and occupations that have a lot of relationships with people such as doctors, nurses, psychologists, teachers, lawyers, babysitters, counselors, and security guards (Gorter, Eijkman & Hoogstraten, 2000; Özdemir, Kılıç, Özdemir H., Öztürk & Sümer, 2003). Burnout causes serious individual and organizational problems. Studies show that interpersonal relationships, lack of motivation, excessive workload, and the ability to handle stress are associated with burnout (Koç,

Topaloğlu, 2010: 240). Burnout causes individual problems in the employee such as coming to work late, leaving work early, quitting work, and getting rest reports and it is also known that burnout causes organizational problems such as lack of innovations, constructive criticism, productivity, and enterprise (Aktuğ, Susur, Keskin & Balcı, 2006). Many factors affect organizational burnout in organizations. Organizational gossip, which is thought to be related to burnout and contains a aspect of communication, causes a decrease in the performance and motivation of employees, especially as a result of affecting their emotional state. Studies have shown that gossip causes job dissatisfaction (Kardaş, 2019), weakening of organizational trust (Karasu, 2020), low motivation (Han, 2019), loss of performance (Bozoğlu, Çalığışu & Göral, 2013), a decrease in synergy among teachers (Çağalı, 2021), and it has been determined that it causes both motivation and low performance (Solmaz, 2004b), loneliness at work (Gürbüzöğlü, 2019), emotional and social loneliness at work (Akduru & Semerciöz, 2017). It has been determined in the research conducted by Duffy, Ganster and Pagon (2002) that while gossip has positive aspects such as improving social relations among teachers, having fun, and having a good time, organizational gossip causes social intimidation among employees and reduces job performance. According to researches, it is observed that informal communication has an important function in organizational and job satisfaction, effective use of human resources in organizations, motivation, organizational commitment and organizational change process (Sabuncuoğlu & Gümüş, 2008: 85). In this respect, gossip, which is one of the informal forms of communication, has an important function in the regular functioning of educational organizations (Han, 2019). Gossip that emerges randomly in line with the wishes and needs of teachers in the communication process in schools; it is a tool for sharing knowledge and experience and establishing warm relations among teachers; As a result, there are positive aspects such as reducing stress sources in the workplace and increasing work efficiency accordingly (Usta, Kaya & Özyurt, 2018). In the research conducted by Duffy, Ganster and Pagon (2002); It has been determined that while gossip has positive aspects such as improving social relations among teachers, having fun and having a good time, organizational gossip causes social intimidation among employees and reduces job performance. As a result of organizational gossip, which dominates the organizational culture, shows organizational behavior problems such as loss of organizational trust and synergy among teachers, low motivation and performance, and loneliness in the workplace, and teachers may experience emotional depression. As a result of an emotionally depressed employee entering the burnout syndrome, it is inevitable for the organization to suffer. In this respect, the relationship between

burnout, which is thought to be effective on motivation, performance, and success of employees in organizations, and gossip has been investigated.

In the research, it was intended to determine the relationship between organizational gossip and burnout by revealing the opinions of teachers about the functions of organizational gossip in schools with organizational structure. Considering this, the problem of the research is to identify the teachers' views on organizational gossip and the level it is associated with burnout.

### Research Questions

In the context of this article, the following questions were sought to be replied in the study:

1. What are the views of teachers on the functions of organizational gossip?
2. What is the organizational burnout level of teachers?
3. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' views on the functions of organizational gossip and their burnout levels?

## 1. Method

### 1.1. Model of the research

In this study, it is aimed to reveal the relationship between organizational gossip and burnout, which are two different organizational behaviors. For this reason, relational screening model was used in the research. When using a survey model in research, situations that have existed in the past or the current situation are determined as they are. To detect whether a change between two or more variables exists and the level of the change is determined by using a model called The relational screening (Karasar, 2017).

### 1.2. Research population and sample

The number of teachers forming the universe of the research is 7600. 600 of them work in pre-school education institutions, 3100 in primary schools, 2000 in secondary schools, and 2000 in secondary education institutions. However, since the implementation of the survey study in all public education institutions in Batman is difficult in terms of the time factor, epidemic disease (COVID-19), and economic conditions, 340 teachers who work in primary, secondary, and secondary education institutions/schools in Batman city center compose the sample of this study. 340 teachers selected by simple random sampling method from determining school types. In this context, information about the universe and sample of the research is given in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Population and Sample of the Research

School Level	Population	Sample	Percentage
Pre-school Teacher	600	44	%7.3
Primary School Teacher	3000	117	%3.9
Middle School Teacher	2000	93	%4.6
High School Teacher	2000	86	%4.3
Total	7600	340	%4.5

Women constitute 50.3% of the participants. Most of the participants are between 1 and 5 years in seniority with 48.5%, followed by those with 11 to 20 years of seniority with 29.7%. The employment type of the sample group is dominated by permanent teachers with 63.2%.

### 1.3. Data collection and analysis

Personal information form and two scales were used in this study conducted to analyze the relationship between organizational gossip and organizational burnout:

#### *Personal Information Form*

The personal information form was developed by the researcher and includes the variables of gender, age, marital status, educational status, professional seniority, type of employment, school level, number of teachers in the school, and duration of work at the same school. In the process of creating the personal information form, former studies on the same subject in the literature and the variables related to the subject are included. Some personal characteristics of the teachers participated in the study are given in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Participants' Personal Characteristics

Gender	N	%
Female	171	50.3
Male	169	49.7
Professional Seniority		
1-5 Years	165	48.5
6-10 Years	74	21.8
11-20 Years	101	29.7
Form of Employment		
Regular	215	63.2
Contractual	103	30.3
Paid	22	6.5
Total	340	100

Women constitute 50.3% of the participants. The majority of the participants are between 1 and 5 years in seniority with 48.5%, followed by those with 11 to 20 years of seniority with 29.7%. The employment type of the sample group is predominantly permanent teachers with 63.2%.

In this research to examine the relationship between organizational gossip and organizational burnout, personal information form and two scales were used.

#### *Organizational Gossip Scale*

Using the "Organizational Gossip Scale" developed by Han and Dağlı (2018), the level of organizational gossip functions according to teachers' opinions and how the positive and negative functions of organizational gossip are perceived were examined in this study. A valid and reliable analysis of the scale were conducted by Han and Dağlı (2018) as item-total correlation, interdimensional correlation, anti-image correlation matrix, reliability analysis of internal consistency, confirmatory and explanatory factor analysis. In the explanatory factor analysis for the Organizational Gossip Scale, it was determined that the scale consisted of three factors. It has been determined that the first factor of the scale which is *awareness*, explains 27.7% of the total divergence, the second factor which is *developing relationships*, explains 22.0% of the total divergence, and the third factor is *the organizational loss aspect*, which explains 20.3% of the total divergence. On the other hand, the explained variance of the scale is 70.1%. The Cronbach's Alpha value of the Organizational Gossip Scale used in this study was determined as 0.821. Accordingly, it was concluded that the Organizational Gossip Scale was highly reliable (Han, 2019).

#### *Organizational Burnout Scale*

In this study, the "Maslach Burnout Scale" developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981) and adapted into Turkish by İnce and Şahin (2015) based on the data obtained from classroom teachers in Turkey was used to identify the organizational burnout levels of teachers. On the scale, there are a total of 22 statements regarding the organizational burnout perception levels of participating teachers. Organizational Burnout Scale consists of a total of 22 items including the "Emotional Exhaustion" aspect consisting of 9 items (1,2,3,6,8,13,14,16,20), "Depersonalization" aspect consisting of 5 items (5,10,11,15,22), and Personal Success aspect consisting of 8 items (4,7,9,12,17,18,19,21). High scores from the sub-assessment of the scale, "emotional exhaustion" and "depersonalization", indicate high burnout. Furthermore, low scores in the "personal achievement aspect" indicate that burnout is high (İnce& Şahin, 2015). The reliability of the Maslach Burnout Scale was determined by Maslach and Jackson (1981)

by calculating the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient and using the test-retest method. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient calculated to estimate the internal consistency of the scale was found to be 0.89 in the emotional exhaustion aspect, 0.77 in the depersonalization aspect, and 0.74 in the personal achievement aspect. In the study conducted by İnce and Şahin (2015), Cronbach Alpha values were determined as 0.88 in the "emotional exhaustion" aspect, 0.78 in the "depersonalization" aspect, and 0.74 in the "feeling of personal accomplishment" aspect obtained in the actual application.

### **1.3.1. Data collection**

In this study, teachers who work in primary, secondary, and secondary education institutions/schools in the city center of Batman constitute the population. Research data has been achieved online at (<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1x423jUv6zK58cXI8pIOVkizsmJK1beI8Z9dVNDNvs/edit?usp>) address.

### **1.3.2. Statistical analysis**

Data was statistically analyzed by the SPSS 23.0 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) program. The significance level of the study was based on 0.05. It has been found out that there is a remarkable difference when the p-value is less than 0.05 in the tables, and there is no significant difference between the views of the groups when the p-value is greater than 0.05. Parametric tests were used because distribution normality was ensured in the data. Descriptive statistics (frequency analysis, mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, median) and reliability analysis, correlation analysis t-Test, ANOVA analysis were used in the research. It was analyzed by paying attention to the reverse items in the scale. Since the skewness and kurtosis values of the variables in both scales were between -1,5 and +1,5, it was determined that the variables showed normal distribution and parametric tests were applied. Table 3 was taken as a reference in determining the level range of the mean scores on the scales.



**Table 3.** Five Rubric

Options	Score range	Scale level
1	1.00-1.79	Very low level
2	1.80-2.59	Low level
3	2.60-3.39	Intermediate level
4	3.40-4.19	High level
5	4.20-5.00	Very high level

**References:** Avcı (2015).

In the Five Rubric rating scale developed by Avcı (2015); low numeric expressions indicate low correlation, while high numeric expressions indicate high correlation.

## 2. Findings

In this section, the findings achieved by the analysis of the data obtained based on the sub-objectives of the research are included.

### 2.1. The level of organizational gossip in schools according to teachers

**Table 4.** Descriptive Statistics on Organizational Gossip Functions

Scale Subgroup	$\bar{X}$	SS	N	Degree
Awareness	2.82	1.11	7	Partially Agree
Developing Relations	2.04	1,07	7	Disagree
Organizational Harm	3,53	1,15	10	Agree

To identify the distribution of the views of the teachers who participated in the research on the functions of organizational gossip, the aspect averages, levels, and standard deviations of the sub-aspects of organizational gossip were calculated and the results are presented in Table 4. As is presented in Table 4, the teachers expressed an opinion at the degree of *partially agree* in the aspect of awareness ( $\bar{x} = 2.82$ ), which is the first aspect of organizational gossip. In the aspect of developing relationships, which is the second aspect of organizational gossip, teachers ( $\bar{x} = 2.04$ ) expressed *disagreement*. In the organizational harm aspect which is the third aspect

of organizational gossip, teachers expressed an opinion at the degree of *agree* ( $\bar{x} = 3.53$ ). In this context, teachers think that gossip is more functional in terms of organizational harm.

## 2.2. Teachers' organizational burnout level

To determine the distribution of the views of the teachers who participated in the research on organizational burnout and its sub-aspects, the aspect averages and levels and standard deviations of organizational burnout and its sub-aspects were calculated, and the results are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Descriptive Statistics on Organizational Burnout

Sub-Aspects	$\bar{X}$	SS	N	Degree
Emotional Burnout Aspect	2.40	1.00	9	Low
Depersonalization	1.85	0.87	5	Very Low
Sense of Personal Success	3.69	0.88	8	High
Organizational Burnout	2.78	0.90	22	Moderate

Teachers have a *low* level of burnout in the *emotional burnout* aspect ( $=2.40$ ). In the second aspect which is *depersonalization*, teachers' burnout levels ( $=1.85$ ) are *low*. Teachers are at a *high* level in the third aspect, the sense of personal success ( $=3.69$ ), and they find themselves successful. According to teachers' opinions, the item with the highest average in this aspect is the aspect of personal success. It was found out that the general burnout levels of the teachers ( $=2.78$ ) were *moderate*.

### 2.3. The relationship between teachers' views on organizational gossip functions and organizational burnout levels

**Table 6.** Pearson Correlation Analysis Results Between Sub-Aspects of Organizational Gossip and Organizational Burnout Levels

Değişkenler	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Awareness	1.000						
Developing Relations	.557	1.000					
Organizational Harm	-.080	-.391	1.000				
<b>Organizational Burnout</b>	<b>.280</b>	<b>.110</b>	.073	1.000			
Emotional Burnout Aspect	.256	.114	.030	.872	1.000		
Depersonalization	.277	.277	-.108	.613	.617	1.000	
Sense of Personal Success	-.140	-.177	.162	.032	-.376	-.555	1.000

It was found out that there was a low and significant positive correlation between the awareness aspect of organizational gossip and the level of burnout ( $r=.280$ ;  $p<0.1$ ), and a low and positive correlation between the function of developing relationships and the level of organizational burnout ( $r=.110$ ;  $p<0.1$ ), a very low positive correlation between the organizational harm aspect and the level of organizational burnout ( $r=0.73$ ;  $p<0.1$ ).

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Teachers partially accept the awareness function of organizational gossip. In other words, teachers see gossip partially as a means of obtaining information. Employees in the organization want to complete the missing information on the subjects they are curious about by researching and questioning. As a matter of fact, some researches show that the employees of the organization want to complete the missing information about the subject they are curious about (Difonzo, Bordia & Rosnow, 1994), they try to obtain information about the social relations of the people around them (Foster, 2004), they try to reach this information through gossip, depending on factors such as lack of information or the fact that the content is not clear enough (Çalikuşu, Göral, & Bozoğlu, 2013). In parallel to the research findings, there are researches revealing that gossip is seen by the employees of the organization as a means of getting news (Grosser, Lopez-Kidwell & Labianca, 2010), it is used by the employees to disseminate the information they have acquired about a subject (Noon & Delbridge, 1993), it is a way of

obtaining information about newcomers to the organization (Çağlar, Uğurlu & Güneş, 2013: 3), it provides information about how newcomers to the organization would behave in social environments (Gabriels & Backer, 2016: 685). Teachers try to reach the information that they cannot obtain through formal means, through gossip. For this reason, keeping the information channels in the school constantly open or bringing the positive function of such gossip groups to the forefront will provide results that may be in favor of the organization.

The function of organizational gossip to improve relations is at the degree of *disagree*. That is, the teachers do not accept that the relationship development aspect of gossip is dysfunctional, and that gossip develops teachers socially within the organization. Despite the information and explanations, they obtained in gossip groups, teachers do not think that these sharings improve the relationship between teachers. In line with the research findings, Han (2019) concluded that teachers' gossip is not functional in terms of developing relationships. When the other studies in the literature are analysed, it has been determined that the relationship development aspect of organizational gossip is functional. As a matter of fact, research findings in the literature show that there is a positive relationship between employees' participation in gossip groups and their social ties within the organization (Grosser, Lopez-Kidwell & Labianca, 2010), gossip enables employees to socialize within the organization (Solmaz, 2003: 27), gossip strengthens people in the context of social bonds (Brondino, Fusar-Poli & Politi, 2016:1), it contributes to the development and socialization of relations depending on the increase in the sincerity of the employees (Çalikuşu, Göral & Bozoğlu, 2013), it provides new friendships (Difonzo & Bordia, 2007), it provides a certain harmony in the organization (Uğurlu, 2014: 88). Even though organizational gossip has such a function of improving relations within the organization, it can be said that the fact that the aspect of gossip was not accepted as functional by the teachers in terms of improving relations was caused by the negative evaluations socially attributed to gossip in terms of both religion and tradition. Berkos (2003) found in his research that those who gossip also state that what they do is not correct can be evaluated as teachers are in attribution complexity. In short, the existence of gossip is believed by teachers, but it is not seen as useful in the function of improving relationships.

The organizational harm aspect of gossip is considered functional by teachers, so teachers think that gossip harms the organization. In the study conducted by Han (2019) on teachers, it was determined that the organizational harm aspect of organizational gossip was functional in parallel with this research finding. As a matter of fact, in other studies conducted in the

literature, parallel results have been revealed. In the studies conducted by Arabacı, Sünkür, and Şimşek (2012), Hallett, Harger, and Eder (2009), and Leblebici, Yıldız, and Karasoy (2009), it has been determined that organizational gossip is evaluated as negative behaviors by the employees of the organization. As a result of gossip marginalizing other teachers in the organization, causing the emergence of dominant groups, the emergence of trust problems in the school, the individual's effort to prove himself, the weakness of ethical values, lack of motivation, grudge, jealousy, and envy dominating the organization (Han, 2021a), teachers are of the opinion that the organizational harm aspect of gossip is functional due to reasons such as decreased cooperation and solidarity. In the study conducted by Stewart and Strathern (2004), it was determined that gossip stems from the individual's unpleasant feelings such as revenge, hatred, and jealousy. Again, Çalığışu, Göral, and Bozoğlu (2013) stated in their research that gossip stems from insecurity, curiosity, jealousy, anxiety, beliefs, and attitudes. On the other hand, there is a gap of information that is not clear and understandable at the root of gossip (Houmanfar & Johnson, 2004). For all these reasons, gossip is generally seen as a negative communication tool, although it is effective in informal organizations (Erol & Akyüz, 2015). As a matter of fact, managers do not like gossip within the organization as it weakens the informational power and wastes time and energy to eliminate gossip (Newstrom et. al.,1974; cited by Erol & Akyüz, 2015). On the other hand, there are studies that have been found to cause great harm in the organization, as gossip is perceived as "harmful information", although it is "a fun, enjoyable and attractive act" (Han, 2020). Studies in the literature have shown that gossip causes undesirable behaviors in organizations (Abdullah & Marican, 2014, s.15) and results in big problems in the organization (Thomas & Rozell, 2007), organizational performance (Michelson & Mouly, 2004) and decreases the productivity of employees in organizations and disrupts the functioning in the organization (Grosser, Lopez-Kidwell & Labianca, 2010) when gossip itself is not managed well and destroys the cooperation among the employees as a result of causing groupings among the employees (Çalığışu, Göral & Bozoğlu, 2013). Grosser, Kidwell and Labianca (2012) reached similar findings in their research that gossip has positive and negative effects and that its negative effects harm the organization. For this reason, the negative functions of gossip should be tackled, and the lack of information caused by the formal communication of teachers and the confusion of information among teachers should be prevented. For this, attention should be paid to providing on-site and timely information. In schools, which are public institutions, the aim should not be to fight by reducing gossip, on the contrary, the main goal should be to combat the negative

function of organizational damage by highlighting the positive functions of gossip, which are awareness and relationship development.

In parallel with the findings on organizational gossip functions obtained from the research, Gürbüz (2019) found in his research on branch teachers that teachers have positive and negative functions of organizational gossip. This result obtained from the research shows parallelism with the findings obtained from the studies conducted by Levent and Türkmenoğlu (2019), Akyürek (2020), Arabacı, Sünkür and Şimşek (2012). Again, in the study conducted by Erol and Akyüz (2015) on healthcare workers, the fact that gossip is made in organizations even though no one likes gossip reveals an ethical dilemma. In addition, teachers show that gossip has a more organizational harm function, and they think that this situation is dangerous for the organization. For this reason, the harm caused by gossip can be minimized because of adopting a transparent management approach and organizing informative seminars on communication and values (Han, 2021b).

According to the opinions of the teachers, the aspect of emotional burnout is at the degree of disagree. In other words, teachers experience *low levels* of emotional burnout. The statement "I think the workload in teaching is too high" is the item with the highest average according to the opinions of the teachers. In this context, the fact that teachers prepare before the lesson, give lectures in the classroom, do the paperwork that needs to be prepared, and do the tasks given by the administration shows that the workload is high in the profession. At the same time, the teaching profession does not end only at school. The fact that teachers take their work home most of the time, and constantly inform parents through social life or communication tools can cause them to run out of energy in the profession. Excessive demands in the workload cause the individual to deplete his energy over time and make it difficult for the individual to renew himself (Leiter and Maslach, 2003). On the other hand, the statement "I feel like I can't stand teaching any longer" is the item with the lowest average. Although teachers think that their profession is difficult and tiring, they show that they are determined to continue their profession. This may be due to compelling factors such as the lack of alternative job opportunities, as well as the fact that they love their profession and are committed to their profession. In the study conducted by Erkul and Dalgılıç (2014), it was determined that although teachers think that their workload is too high, they are determined to continue their profession and consider themselves successful enough. According to Tsigilis, Zachopoulou, and Grammatikopoulos (2006), when teachers are provided with a better work environment, their emotional burnout

can be reduced by increasing their job satisfaction. For this reason, efforts should be made to reduce the excessive workload in order to keep teachers' performance and motivation high.

The depersonalization aspect of teachers' organizational burnout is the aspect with the lowest average at the level of disagree. Accordingly, teachers have a very low level of depersonalization towards their profession. In this context, factors such as teachers' commitment to their profession and the satisfaction they get from their jobs can be effective in this situation. In parallel with the findings of the research, it was determined that the depersonalization aspect was at a low level in the studies conducted by Kırs (2014), Yılmaz Toptan (2012), Acar (2020), Erkul and Dalgılıç (2014). Factors such as the stress experienced by teachers in business life and working in the same position all the time can cause the teacher to become desensitized in business life. In their study, Cano-Garcia, Padilla-Munoz, and Carrasco-Ortiz (2005) found that factors such as low opportunities for promotion in teaching, teachers' thinking that they do not receive the necessary professional dignity and appreciation, working in the same position for a long time, and the high number of students cause depersonalization in the profession of teachers. As a matter of fact, in the study conducted by Cemaloğlu and Kayabaşı (2007) in the literature, it was determined that teachers experienced high levels of burnout in the depersonalization sub-aspect and a moderate level of burnout by Teltik (2009).

The opinions of the teachers are at the degree of *agree* in the sub-aspect of organizational burnout, in the aspect of personal achievement. Emotional burnout and depersonalization sub-aspects of the teachers participating in the research are *low/very low*, and in the personal achievement sub-aspect, most of them are at high personal achievement levels. In other words, teachers see themselves as highly successful in addition to having a low level of emotional burnout and a very low level of depersonalization towards their profession. In this context, it can be evaluated that teachers consider themselves competent in the profession in terms of personal success and that they find themselves sufficiently effective and successful in the profession. It can be evaluated that the active participation of the teachers in the education process, the support they receive from their colleagues and friends, and the satisfaction they receive from their job have a positive effect on personal success. As a matter of fact, in the studies conducted in the literature, the active participation of the employees in the decision-making processes ensures a high level of personal success (Lee & Ashforth, 1993). However, in the study conducted by Maslach and Leiter (2008), it was determined that the support received by the individual from his/her colleagues is related to the aspect of personal success.

In parallel with the findings of the research, the studies conducted by Erkul and Dalgılıç (2014), Kırs (2014), Budak and Sürgevil (2005), Acar (2020), Teltik (2009), and Ozan (2009) show that teachers find themselves successful in their profession, thus personal success. It has been determined that they experience less burnout in the field compared to other aspects. The general burnout level of teachers is moderate.

When the data achieved from the research are examined, there is a low-level positive relationship with the organizational burnout and depersonalization aspect, which is the first aspect of organizational gossip, and a very low-level positive relationship with the emotional burnout aspect. This relationship can be evaluated as the fact that gossip is seen by teachers as functional in obtaining information about school, management, and colleagues, and that teachers think that gossip affects burnout at a low level. It was determined that there was a very low level of negative correlation between the awareness function of organizational gossip and the feeling of personal accomplishment, which is a sub-aspect of burnout. Accordingly, as the awareness function of organizational gossip increases, the sense of personal accomplishment decreases.

A very low level of positive and significant relationship was found between the relationship development aspect of organizational gossip and burnout and its sub-aspect, emotional burnout, and a low level of positive correlation with the depersonalization aspect. Accordingly, teachers see gossip as a form of emotional support and a way to reduce stress (Waddington and Fletcher, 2005) and they also think that gossip made to improve relationships have a low impact on burnout. On the other hand, a very low and negative correlation was found between the relationship development aspect of gossip and personal achievement levels. Teachers' sense of personal accomplishment decreases as the function of gossip improves relationships.

It has been found out that there is a very low positive relationship between the negative function of gossip, the organizational harm aspect, and burnout, and its sub-aspects, emotional exhaustion and a sense of personal accomplishment, and a very low negative relationship between the depersonalization aspect. Depending on the increase in the negative function of gossip, teachers' burnout, emotional burnout, and sense of personal accomplishment increase at a very low level. In parallel with the findings obtained, there are also some research findings that cause organizational damage by complicating the functioning of the organization. Georganta, Panagopaolu, and Montgomery (2014) examined the relationship between gossip and burnout on healthcare workers. As a result of the research, in parallel with the findings



obtained from this study, a positive relationship was found between the negative functions of gossip and the aspects of emotional burnout and depersonalization, which are the sub-aspects of burnout. Organizational gossip (Kieffer, 2013), which can sometimes be more dangerous than physical violence, causes a major problem in the organization (Thomas & Rozell, 2007: 113) and disrupts the functioning in organizations (Grosser, Lopez-Kidwell & Labianca, 2010). Increasing burnout on the employees in the workplace causes the employee to turn to gossip, and the gossip to be made accordingly will have conversations that will negatively affect the organization (Levin & Arluke, 1985). The increase in the negative function of gossip in schools may cause a decrease in the motivation and performance of teachers due to the increase in burnout (Özgen, 2007). Achieving the targeted goals in education depends on the high level of teacher performance (Çelik, 2011). There are many studies in the literature that associate burnout and performance. Burnout, which was founded by Maslach on the idea that it causes a decrease in perceived performance (İbrahimağaoğlu, 2013), causes the performance of individuals to decrease to the lowest level (Maslach, 2001), negatively affects teacher performance and thus education quality (Çelik, 2011), and decreases individual performance (Işıklar, 2002), causes the academic performance of students to decrease (Blandford, 2000) by affecting the job performance as a result of decreasing the teaching quality. In order to prevent gossip from decreasing educational quality and student achievement, the harmful function of organizational gossip that increases teacher burnout should be minimized.

As a result, gossip is a type of communication that cannot always be noticed whether it is beneficial or harmful (Noon & Delbridge, 1993). Although organizational gossip is known by society for its negative functions, gossip is a phenomenon that has bright and dark sides (Grosser, Lopez-Kidwell, Labianca & Ellwardt, 2012). In this respect, it should be ensured that organizational gossip can benefit more from its positive functions and the damage of its negative functions should be minimized.

The function of awareness of gossip can be used by school administrators about the transmission of information that seems difficult to spread within the institution through formal communication channels. At this point, school administrators can use the awareness function of gossip in order to spread information about teachers and students within the school more quickly. By adopting a transparent management approach, first, school administrators can inform teachers accurately and quickly, if necessary, through digital communication tools, depending on the importance of the subject. Thus, by preventing the formation of information pollution within the organization, it can be prevented from damaging the organization by

preventing confusion and uncertainty that wears out the organization. This research was carried out using a scale that measures how functional teachers see gossip. In new researches; studies addressing different characteristics such as the amount of gossip, how often it is done, and the speed of gossip can be prepared and evaluated from different perspectives.

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