



The mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior in the relationship between organizational transparency and school effectiveness

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Abstract

This study examines the effect of organizational transparency on school effectiveness and the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior in this relationship. The study, designed as a correlational survey model, utilized Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to analyze the data. The research sample consists of 327 teachers working in public schools. The findings reveal that teachers' perceptions of organizational transparency significantly impact organizational citizenship behavior and school effectiveness. The results indicate that in schools with high levels of organizational transparency, teachers' voluntary organizational citizenship behaviors increase, positively influencing the school's effectiveness. Correlation analyses confirm significant positive relationships between organizational transparency, organizational citizenship behavior, and school effectiveness. Structural Equation Modeling further shows that organizational citizenship behavior partially mediates the relationship between organizational transparency and school effectiveness. In other words, organizational transparency enhances school effectiveness directly and through organizational citizenship behaviors. As a result, adopting a transparent management approach in schools is crucial for establishing effective schools.

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Introduction

School effectiveness is considered a fundamental measure of educational systems, focusing on its impact on students' academic achievement and social and emotional development. Today, educators and researchers employ

various methods to identify the key factors that enable schools to maximize students' potential and to establish effective educational strategies. In this context, research on school effectiveness plays a crucial role in shaping educational policies and improving school management practices.

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School effectiveness is a multifaceted concept that encompasses maintaining a safe and orderly environment, implementing effective instructional frameworks, enhancing student learning, and ensuring increased student achievement through competency-based systems (Akram et al., 2021). Empirical research has demonstrated that the factors contributing to effective schools enhance student achievement (Zamir, 2020; Zheng et al., 2024). Therefore, identifying the antecedents that influence the development of effective schools is crucial for educational organizations to achieve one of their most important goals—producing qualified graduates.

Edmonds (1979) emphasizes that effective schools prioritize a strong leadership structure, a school climate conducive to learning, high expectations for student achievement, clear instructional goals, the monitoring of student progress, and a focus on the necessary instruction to develop student's basic skills. Additionally, positive school culture, climate, and effective leadership significantly contribute to a school's effectiveness (Manaf & Omar, 2017). Another study found that instructional leadership is critical in enhancing school effectiveness (Kilag et al., 2024). In summary, for a school to be effective, it must be efficient and education-focused in all aspects (Baştepe, 2009). The concept of effectiveness is central throughout the development of organizational theories because all theories claim that their chosen courses of action make the organization most effective. As all relationships among organizational elements aim to achieve organizational effectiveness, the concept of effectiveness is positioned as the ultimate dependent variable in organizational studies (Cameron, 2015).

Literature Review

School Effectiveness

Over the past fifty years, there has been a significant shift in understanding the impact of schools on student development. While early studies on school effectiveness suggested that schools made little difference in children's development, more recent research highlights schools as “value-adding” structures that meaningfully contribute to students' growth. In this context, the primary mission of educational policies is seen as improving all schools in general and making this improvement sustainable (Reynolds et al., 2000). Indeed, the power of educational policies to transform schools is crucial for ensuring that children have a better experience during their education.

Katz and Kahn (1977) argue that the effectiveness of organizations is directly related to the efficiency they achieve. In the same vein, Başaran (1994) asserts that a school is considered effective depending on the extent to which it can achieve its planned organizational goals. Schools are not only institutions that provide students with basic literacy and numeracy skills but also social institutions designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to understand complex and abstract concepts (Tatar, 2001). Given the broad societal reach of such an institution, it is evident that the responsibilities of teachers and other staff members are heightened. Therefore, school accountability emerges as a critical requirement for enhancing the quality of education.

Organizational effectiveness is a multidimensional concept that researchers emphasize. Hoy and Ferguson (1985) suggest that effectiveness is not a one-dimensional construct but rather a multidimensional structure formed by the combination of various factors. School effectiveness extends beyond student achievement; it also includes factors such as the alignment of teachers with the educational organization, school-parent relations, and collaboration between the educational organization and stakeholders (Çetin & Koçak, 2024). In this context, the effective leadership behaviors of school administrators and teachers have a substantial impact on the overall success of schools. Özdemir (2024) also highlights that the effectiveness of schools is closely related to the management skills of school leaders. Şişman (2013) points out that the competence of school administrators in demonstrating effective leadership behaviors is a determining factor in the effectiveness of schools.

Organizational Transparency

A review of the organizational literature reveals that early references to the concept of transparency date back to the mid-20th century. This period includes discursive explanations of organizational roles and social appropriateness (Coser, 1961). In the 1990s, transparency was considered a complex and marginal concept (Meijer, 2013), but by the early 21st century, it began to be used predominantly in economic contexts (Rawlins, 2008). However, limiting transparency solely to the visibility of financial information neglects ethical values and the needs of stakeholders. Focusing exclusively on financial transparency creates the assumption that external transparency towards stakeholders can be achieved without ensuring internal transparency towards employees. Yet, if an organization is not transparent

internally, it cannot be transparent externally. Therefore, transparency should be defined as the free flow of information between managers and employees (O'Toole & Bennis, 2009).

The primary objective of transparency is to communicate the truth accurately, as it is (Martinson, 1996). In organizations, transparency is almost always considered a desirable characteristic (Grimmelikhuijsen, 2012). It encompasses multiple components, including the availability of information about an institution's internal operations or performance. This allows external individuals and groups to monitor the activities and decisions made within the organization, thereby enhancing internal observability (Grimmelikhuijsen & Meijer, 2014). According to Rawlins (2009), organizational transparency involves a deliberate effort to present all legally releasable information accurately, promptly, and accessibly. In other words, as Moser (2001) suggests, transparency refers to making visible the operations within an organization that are not immediately apparent to outsiders to demonstrate its proper functioning.

Gower (2006) emphasizes that for an organization to be truly transparent, stakeholders must believe that everything they need to know is clearly expressed by the organization. Similarly, Rawlins (2009) argues that for organizations to achieve transparency, it is essential to understand what stakeholders want to know. Meijer (2013) posits that transparency is a source of power, and this power should be harnessed to create even more transparency. Transparency can be defined as the degree to which information is visible and accessible (Gower, 2006; Zhu, 2002). When organizations ensure transparency, they have the opportunity to review and adjust employee behaviors (Kaptein, 2008). Consequently, employee productivity increases (Su et al., 2011), and their organizational commitment strengthens (Rawlins, 2009). In this context, transparency can be considered a prerequisite for fostering organizational commitment and becoming a more effective organization.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) was first introduced in the 1930s by Barnard, who referred to it as "extra-role behaviors" that go beyond formal job duties. This concept reflects the voluntary actions employees undertake in organizational settings, extending beyond their formal job descriptions. Since the 1980s, OCB has gained prominence as an independent concept in academic studies, highlighting the need for a sense of responsibility beyond formal job duties (Karaaslan

et al., 2009; Karaman & Aylan, 2012). Research from this period demonstrates that OCB involves a commitment that goes beyond formal job descriptions.

OCB is a process that values voluntary contributions outside the scope of official job roles. In different studies, this behavior has been referred to as "extra-role behaviors," "social organizational behaviors," and "civic organizational behaviors" (Sezgin, 2005). The actions employees take outside their formal roles positively contribute to the organization's functioning and social structure. OCB plays a critical role in organizational success and efficiency while strengthening the social fabric of the work environment. These voluntary behaviors increase employees' commitment to the organization, thereby enhancing job performance and organizational effectiveness (Çinar, 2001). Through OCB, deficiencies in schools are quickly addressed, collaboration is encouraged, and overall quality is enhanced (Akkoç et al., 2023).

In conclusion, OCB is of great importance for the success, efficiency, and sustainability of organizations. The voluntary behaviors exhibited by employees contribute to both individual and organizational performance, helping the organization achieve its objectives. In essence, OCB reflects employees' willingness not only to fulfill their formal duties but also to contribute to the overall success of the organization (Tutar, 2016).

In school effectiveness research, it is important to make significant methodological choices to determine the effectiveness differences between schools. One such choice involves the criteria researchers use to compare schools. For the concept of "school effectiveness" to gain solid structural validity, such research should include multiple effectiveness criteria. In this context, multivariate approaches, which model various variables simultaneously, should be preferred. Multivariate modeling allows for a more comprehensive and in-depth analysis of school effectiveness (De Maeyer et al., 2010). Understanding and improving school effectiveness thus requires a holistic approach that takes into account numerous factors affecting educational outcomes.

This study tests whether the concepts of organizational transparency and OCB are necessary antecedents for school effectiveness. In this regard, the research examines how transparency—encompassing accountability, openness, and participation—and OCB, which includes employees' voluntary positive behaviors towards their organizations beyond their formal job descriptions, influence school effectiveness. Based on the theoretical framework and empirical studies in the literature, the following research questions have been addressed.

1. What is the level of teachers' perceptions of organizational transparency, organizational citizenship behavior, and school effectiveness?
2. Is there a significant relationship between teachers' perceptions of organizational transparency and organizational citizenship behavior and school effectiveness?
3. Does organizational citizenship behavior play a mediating role in the effect of teachers' perceptions of organizational transparency on school effectiveness?

Methodology

Research Model

This study is relational research aimed at determining the relationship between organizational transparency, school effectiveness, and organizational citizenship behavior based on teacher perceptions. To test the proposed model regarding the relationship between organizational transparency, school effectiveness, and organizational citizenship in schools from the perspective of teachers, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed. SEM is defined as a comprehensive method that combines various types of analyses, such as multiple regression analysis, path analysis, and factor analysis, which describe and validate the causality among different variables (Fraenkel et al., 2012). To test the proposed model in Figure 1, the following steps were taken: examining the validity and reliability of the measurement model, testing the structural model, and investigating indirect effects.

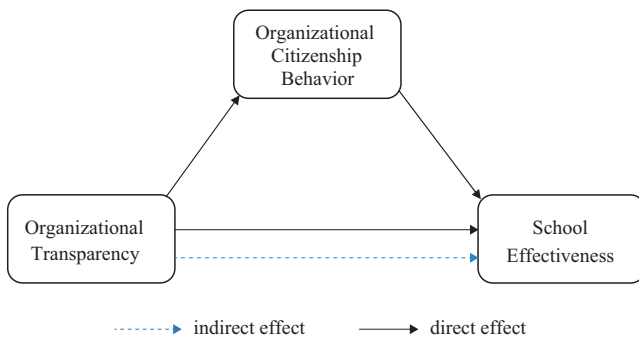


Figure 1 Proposed model within the scope of the research

Sample

The sample of the study consists of teachers working in public schools in Uşak province. Participation in the study is based on voluntary principles. Teachers from different school levels were selected using a convenience sampling method. Data collection tools were applied by providing information about the study through an online form on social media, reaching a total of 335 teachers. Out of the collected data, 8 data points were considered outliers and were removed from the analysis. As a result, a total of 327 teachers were included in the analyses. The demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1.

When Table 1 is examined, it is observed that 61.5 percent of the participants are female ($N = 201$), while 38.5 percent are male ($N = 126$). This indicates that the majority of the study participants are women. Regarding the participants' educational backgrounds, a significant portion holds a bachelor's degree (82%, $N = 268$). The proportion of participants with postgraduate education is 18 percent ($N = 59$). This finding reveals that the educational level of the group is predominantly at the undergraduate level. When the school levels where participants work are analyzed, it is notable that the majority are employed at the primary school level (68.2%, $N = 223$). The proportions of those working at middle school and high school levels are equal, with both groups represented at 15.9 percent ($N = 52$). In terms of participants' professional tenure, the highest proportion consists of those with 11–20 years of experience (44%, $N = 144$). Participants with 21 years or more of experience represent 42.2 percent ($N = 138$), while those with 1–10 years of experience constitute 13.8 percent ($N = 45$). These findings suggest that a significant portion of the participants are highly experienced in their profession.

Table 1 Participant information related to the sample

Variable	Group	<i>N</i>	%
Gender	Woman	201	61.5
	Man	126	38.5
Educational Status	Undergraduate	268	82.0
	Postgraduate	59	18.0
School Level	Elementary School	223	68.2
	Middle School	52	15.9
	High School	52	15.9
Seniority	1-10 Years	45	13.8
	11-20 Years	144	44.0
	Over 21 Years	138	42.2

Measurement Instruments

In this study, a personal information form was developed by the researchers, and three different measurement instruments were used. The personal information form included questions about participants' gender, education level, academic qualifications, school levels worked in, and years of experience.

Organizational Transparency Scale: This scale was developed by Tosun and Çelik (2022). It consists of 3 sub-dimensions and 16 items. These sub-dimensions are participation in decision-making, information flow, and accountability. The items in the five-point Likert scale are ranked from 1: "Strongly Disagree" to 5: "Strongly Agree." Upon examining the obtained Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) fit index values ($\chi^2/df < 2.77$; RMSEA < 0.07 ; SRMR < 0.04 ; CFI > 0.96 ; TLI < 0.95 ; IFI > 0.96), it is understood that the measurement tool was validated in the research sample (Karagöz, 2016).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale: This scale was developed by DiPaola, and Hoy (2005). Taşdan and Yilmaz (2008) conducted the Turkish adaptation of the scale. The scale consists of a unidimensional and 12 items. The items in the five-point Likert scale are varied from 1: "Strongly Disagree" to 5: "Strongly Agree." Upon examining the obtained CFA fit index values ($\chi^2/df < 2.68$; RMSEA < 0.07 ; SRMR < 0.04 ; CFI > 0.96 ; TLI > 0.94 ; IFI > 0.96), it is understood that the measurement tool was validated in the research sample (Karagöz, 2016).

School Effectiveness Scale: This measurement tool was developed by Hoy (2009). The scale was adapted into Turkish by Demirkasımoğlu and Taşkın (2015). The scale consists of a unidimensional and 8 items. The scale is a five-point Likert type. Upon examining the obtained CFA fit index values ($\chi^2/df < 2.17$; RMSEA < 0.06 ; SRMR < 0.03 ; CFI > 0.98 ; TLI > 0.97 ; IFI > 0.98), it is understood that the measurement tool was validated in the research sample (Karagöz, 2016).

Data Analysis

In the study, descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and structural equation modeling were conducted. The correlation coefficient, which is expressed as a data analysis method revealing the relationship between two or more variables and ranges from +1 to -1 (Taşpınar, 2017), was considered to have a high level of relationship when the absolute value was between 1.00 and .70, a moderate relationship between .70 and .30, and a low level of relationship between .30 and .00 (Büyüköztürk, 2012). Chi-square model fit criteria (χ^2/df), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and Incremental Fit Index (IFI) were used to evaluate the fit indices for CFA and SEM.

Results

The mean scores, standard deviations, and correlation analysis results reflecting the participants' views regarding the independent variable of Organizational Transparency and the dependent variables of Organizational Citizenship and School Effectiveness are presented in Table 2.

When examining Table 2, it can be seen that the levels of organizational transparency perception ($M = 3.84$), organizational citizenship perception ($M = 3.61$), and school effectiveness perception ($M = 3.39$) among the participating teachers are at a very high level. Furthermore, as indicated in the correlation analysis results presented in Table 2, there is a moderate positive relationship between organizational transparency and organizational citizenship, between organizational transparency and school effectiveness, and between organizational citizenship and school effectiveness.

Table 2 Descriptive statistics results for research variables

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Organizational Transparency	Organizational Citizenship Behavior	School Effectiveness
Organizational Transparency	3.84	.65	1		
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	3.61	.47	.376**	1	
School Effectiveness	3.39	.69	.454**	.657**	1

** $p < .01$; $N = 327$

In the conceptual model, organizational transparency is expected to impact organizational citizenship, which in turn is predicted to influence school effectiveness. Here, organizational transparency functions as the independent variable, organizational citizenship as the mediating variable, and school effectiveness as the dependent variable. The model posits that organizational transparency directly affects organizational citizenship and influences school effectiveness both directly and indirectly. The research model, aligned with the theoretical framework, explores the mediating role of organizational citizenship in the relationship between organizational transparency and school effectiveness through structural equation modeling analyses. (Figure 2)

Table 3 shows the fit indices for the model examining the multiple mediating role of organizational citizenship in the effect of organizational transparency on school effectiveness, as presented in Figure 2.

Table 3 Fit index values for the model

Fit Indices	Model Values	Criterion Values (Karagöz, 2016)	Conformity to Criterion Values
χ^2/sd	2.322	0-5	Acceptable
RMSEA	.064	$\leq .08$	Acceptable
SRMR	.062	$\leq .08$	Acceptable
CFI	.909	$\geq .90$	Acceptable
TLI	.902	Between .90 and 1	Acceptable
IFI	.910	Between .90 and 1	Acceptable

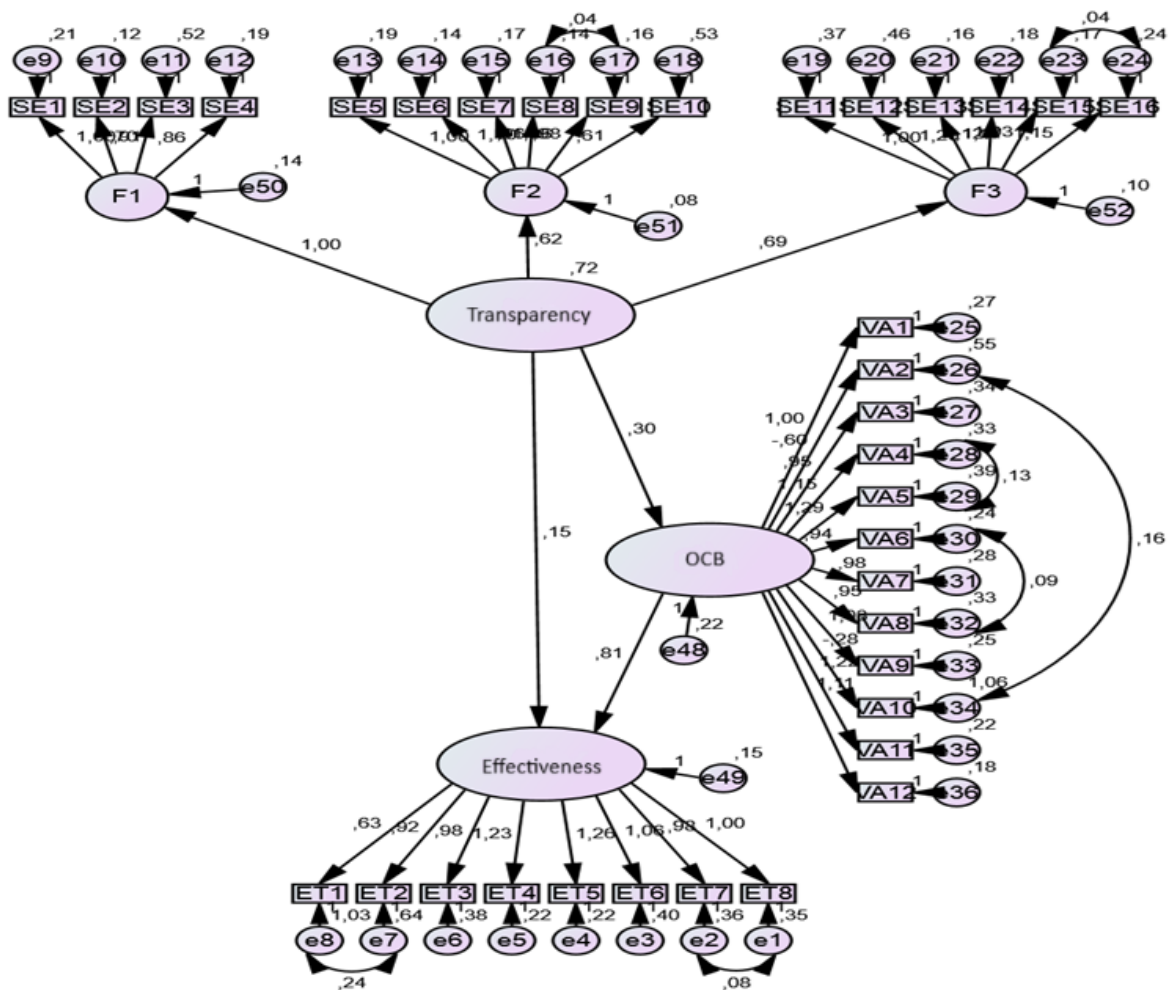


Figure 2 The conceptual model of the mediating role of organizational citizenship in the impact of organizational transparency on school effectiveness

The fit index values presented in Table 3 indicate that the model fit is acceptable when compared to the acceptable fit index values ($\chi^2/sd < 5$; RMSEA $< .08$; SRMR $< .08$; CFI $> .90$; TLI $> .90$; IFI $> .90$). As the fit index values for the model fall within acceptable ranges, it can be stated that the model is validated by the data obtained from the sample group. The significance levels of the paths among the variables in the research model are presented in Table 4.

In Table 4, it is observed that the path between organizational transparency and organizational citizenship behavior, as well as the path between organizational citizenship behavior and school effectiveness, is significant ($p = .000$). Additionally, the path between organizational transparency and school effectiveness is also found to be significant. Accordingly, it appears that organizational citizenship behavior partially mediates organizational transparency and school effectiveness. To present these findings in a more concrete and comparable manner, the standardized coefficients and effect sizes for the supported model are reported in Table 5.

When examining Table 5, it is observed that a one-unit increase in the standard deviation of organizational transparency directly increases the standard deviation of organizational citizenship by .47 points; a one-unit increase in the standard deviation of organizational citizenship directly increases the standard deviation of school effectiveness by .68 points. According to Table 5, the positive direct relationship between organizational transparency and organizational citizenship (.47, $p < .05$) is at a “medium” effect level; the positive direct relationship between organizational citizenship and school effectiveness (.68, $p < .05$) is understood to have a “large” effect level. It is seen that organizational transparency has an indirect effect of .32 on school

effectiveness (526*.206). Based on these effect values, it can be said that organizational citizenship plays a partial mediating role in the effect of organizational transparency on school effectiveness. This finding suggests that organizational citizenship contributes significantly to the model as a mediating variable. Organizational transparency positively affects school effectiveness both directly and indirectly. In other words, organizational transparency influences organizational citizenship, and this influence on organizational citizenship can predict school effectiveness. When examining the explained variance values between the variables, it is found that organizational transparency accounts for 22 percent of the variance in organizational citizenship; organizational citizenship, along with organizational transparency, accounts for 88 percent of the variance in school effectiveness.

Discussion

According to the findings obtained from the research, it has been determined that teachers' perceptions of organizational transparency, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and school effectiveness are very high. These three variables are generally considered elements that produce positive outcomes in the literature and are encouraged for the success of organizations. The high levels of perception among teachers in these fields indicate that the organizational atmosphere is shaped positively and contributes to the overall effectiveness of the school. Various studies support that teachers' perceptions of organizational transparency are very high (Tosun, 2022) or at high levels (Ayril, 2020; Babayigit, 2024; Büyük, 2021; Elekoğlu, 2021; Ergün, 2020; Gökçe, 2020). Similarly, studies conducted on perceptions of

Table 4 Results related to the proposed model on the mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior in the effect of organizational transparency on school effectiveness

Relationships between Variables		β	SE	CR	p
Organizational Transparency	⇒ Organizational Citizenship Behavior	.15	.040	7.45	***
Organizational Transparency	⇒ School Effectiveness	.30	.038	4.09	***
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	⇒ School Effectiveness	.81	.083	9.69	***

Note: *** $p < .01$; ** $p < .05$

Table 5 Standardized coefficients and effect sizes for the supported model

Relationships between Variables		Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Explained Variance
Organizational Transparency	⇒ Organizational Citizenship Behavior	.47	.00	.47	.22
Organizational Transparency	⇒ School Effectiveness	.21	.32	.53	.63
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	⇒ School Effectiveness	.68	.00	.68	

** $p < .01$;

school effectiveness show that teachers have very high (Aksu, 2021) and high levels of perception (Atcıoğlu & Köse, 2018; Çetin & Koçak, 2024; Çevrik, 2022; Çiftçi, 2019; Dalbudak & Özgenel, 2022; Elekoğlu, 2021; Ermeýdan, 2019; Tepe, 2018; Yalçın, 2019; Yüner & Özdemir, 2020). In addition, medium levels of perception have also been encountered (Karagöz et al., 2024). Regarding OCB, the literature indicates that teachers' perceptions on this issue are high (Gürbüz & Dede, 2017; Kara & Avcı, 2022; Yücesan & Zincirli, 2022) and in some studies at a medium level (Akpınar & Tuna, 2024). It can be said that teachers' positive perceptions regarding these variables lead to schools becoming more efficient and effective.

The research findings indicate that there are positive and significant relationships between organizational transparency, OCB, and school effectiveness. Organizational transparency positively affects both organizational citizenship behaviors and school effectiveness. Additionally, it has been determined that OCB is effective in increasing school effectiveness. Gökmen (2011) revealed that teachers evaluate organizational citizenship behaviors as "important" in terms of school effectiveness. Similarly, Alanoğlu and Demirtaş (2016) emphasized that OCB predicts effective school characteristics. Karabatak, Alanoğlu, and Şengür (2018) also found a significant and positive relationship between OCB and school effectiveness. Tosun (2022) identified a positive and moderate relationship between organizational transparency and school effectiveness. In the literature, it is stated that transparency strengthens the collaboration between the organization and stakeholders and contributes to the establishment of mutual support mechanisms (Jahansoozi, 2006). In this context, transparency is considered an important factor in increasing the effectiveness of schools. Furthermore, it has been noted that transparency plays a motivating role in encouraging teachers to exhibit more OCB and provides a work environment where educational personnel feel secure (Klein, 2012). In conclusion, organizational transparency constitutes an important building block for the effective functioning of the school and encourages better performance from both teachers and other staff.

Another finding from the research is that OCB partially mediates the effect of organizational transparency on school effectiveness. This finding shows that organizational transparency directly increases school effectiveness; however, OCB plays an important role in making this effect stronger or more pronounced. Accordingly, transparent management practices in

schools can not only enhance the capacity of teachers and other staff to achieve the school's goals but can also be associated with the citizenship behaviors they voluntarily exhibit. This positively contributes to the organizational effectiveness of the school.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the research findings, researchers can conduct longitudinal studies to examine in more detail the relationships between organizational transparency, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and school effectiveness. Such studies would allow for a deeper understanding of the dynamic effects of these variables over time and their long-term implications in the school environment. Additionally, future studies could explore the effects of organizational transparency and OCB on school effectiveness within the context of different types of schools, education levels, or socio-economic conditions, which could enhance the generalizability of the obtained results. This situation would contribute to policymakers designing more specialized interventions for different school types. When developing policies aimed at increasing school effectiveness, it is also important to organize training programs that promote organizational transparency and OCB. These arrangements can strengthen collaboration in the school environment, improve the quality of education, and ensure the active participation of all stakeholders in the process.

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