



## The effect of organizational uncertainty level in schools on organizational depression

Esef Hakan TOYTOK<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Assoc. Prof.Dr., K.Maraş Sütçü İmam University, Faculty of Education, Educational Sciences Department

Email: hakantoytok@hotmail.com

Orcid Id= 0000-0003-3638-1901

Fatma GÜZELGÖRÜR<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>K.Maraş Sütçü İmam University Faculty of Education

Email: fatmaguzelgorur1705@gmail.com

Orcid Id : 0000-0002-2046-2507

### Abstract

The purpose of this research is revealed the effect of organizational uncertainty in schools on organizational depression according to teacher perceptions. The sample of this research has been composed of 366 teachers that are employed in varying kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools and high schools in Dulkadiroğlu and Onikişubat central districts of Kahramanmaraş province in the 2022-2023 academic years and chosen by random sampling method. “Organizational Uncertainty Levels Scale in Schools” and “Organizational Depression Scale” have been used as data collection tools. For the analysis of accumulated data, percentage, frequency, arithmetic mean, standard deviation calculations, t test, Anova test, Tukey HSD test, Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis have been utilized. It has been also found that there is a moderately positive correlation between organizational uncertainty in schools and organizational depression level in schools. It has been determined that organizational uncertainty is an important variable predicting organizational depression.

**Keywords:** Organizational uncertainty, chaos, complexity, organizational depression

### 1. Introduction

Today, developments in the field of technology and communication have accelerated. Borders between countries have been removed and the world has become a small village. This situation has increased the global interaction between countries. It has also formed several complex cases. Globalization has created chaos in the economic, social and political fields. Along with the confusion, a small change and transformation takes place at the other end of the world. This can cause unpredictable situations. Some organizations cannot show flexibility in environments of unpredictability and uncertainty. Organizations continue to maintain environments of conflict and chaos. The raw material of their schools is human. Schools also have complex systems. Therefore, small changes in initial states have big consequences. This situation can create uncertainty and unpredictability situations.

Education is all about the universe and it is closely related to the complex system of chaos. Uncertainty, unpredictability and confusion in schools can be seen in every situation and environment. All stakeholders in the education system should be able to accept uncertainty as a natural state (Bülbül, 2018). Schools are involved in micro and macro social change. Schools can reorganize themselves and shape society. Schools constantly learn and adapt quickly to the environment (Balyer, 2017). Schools may not be able to cope with uncertainty and threats from both the environment and the organization. Schools may find it difficult to see the future. If they cannot keep up with the new order and show the necessary flexibility, they may experience organizational collapse over time (Dinçman, 2016).

Uncertainty is a feature of the environment or a psychological state. Uncertainty is a situation where it is not possible to predict or know what will happen after an event occurs (Milliken, 1987; Bordia, Hunt, Paulsen, Tourish & DiFonzo 2004; Kasperson, 2008). Uncertainty is a condition that cannot be adequately structured or categorized by the individual. Uncertainty can occur in situations that we encounter for the first time, are not easy to understand, are complex (Stanley Budner, 1962). Uncertainty creates stress and tension in individuals in the organization. Uncertainty is often incomprehensible, difficult, complex. It can be clashed from time to time (Ersanlı & Uysal, 2015; Kajs & McCollum, 2009). Unclear future or future expectations affect individuals' view of events negatively. Therefore, negative effects on human psychology can be experienced (Sarı & Dağ, 2009; Çaplı & Taş, 2009).

Individuals may feel threatened if the information flow is not clear, there is turmoil, changes progress rapidly and unpredictably (Sargut, 2015).

Depression is generally accepted as a result of irrational, distorted thoughts and judgments. Negative cognitive thoughts about the world and the future may be dominant in the individual (Hussian, 2012). Some of the causes of depression can be listed: Failing at work, losing a loved one, being exposed to some long-term problems (Sabuncuoğlu & Tüz, 2001). Depression reduces the amount of energy, makes it difficult to focus. The individual may lose faith in herself and cause the individual to self-destruct (İvanov, 2015). Individuals with organizational depression do not know what to do in the future. They have not desire to try new things. As a result, there is a state of stagnation and fixation that spreads to the organization, and there are situations of not being able to plan the future (Bilchik, 2000). Organizational depression creates negative effects in business life. It affects organizational commitment. It reduces the motivation of the employee, reduces the work efficiency, and leaves negative psychological effects on the members of the organization (Sağır, Göksoy& Aslan, 2017).

Uncertainty situations are a situation that affects the psychology of individuals. Organizations may not know how long their plans will be delayed during the day. Organizations may not be sure of what will happen in the future. In these cases, individuals in the organization may experience cognitive, behavioral and affective psychological disorders along with intense anxiety. The more information individuals in the organization have about the future, they may have experienced the less anxiety and stress. Organizational depression has a significant impact on society in general. Organizational depression can also cause greater damage to schools. There may be problems in adapting to technological developments in schools. Education policies and regulations can change very frequently. Time management may not be provided in education planning. The budget in education expenditures may not be sufficient. These problems can cause various uncertainties and unpredictability in schools. Teachers experience intense stress with uncertainties and organizational depression can be experienced within the school system.

Literature has been examined. It is seen that there are studies of Ersanlı and Uysal (2015), Polat and Arabacı (2015), Bakioglu and Demiral (2013), Koşar (2020), Tınaztepe (2010), Sarı and Dağ (2009), Helsing (2007) about organizational uncertainty. Research with some variables have been examined in the literature on organizational depression. Organizational depression; hobbytherapy applications (Sezer, 2011), job satisfaction (Bakan, Taşlıyan, Taş and Efe, 2014), occupational burnout (Sağır, 2015), mobbing (Toytok, 2017), Toytok and Uçar (2018) power types were examined together with concepts. No research has been found on the effect of organizational uncertainty in schools on organizational depression. In this research, it is aimed to reveal the psychological states of teachers in situations of uncertainty. It is thought to be important to reveal the extent to which teachers' perceptions of uncertainty affect depression in the organization.

### **Problem statement**

The aim of the research is to determine the effect of organizational uncertainty level on organizational depression in schools according to teacher perceptions.

### **Sub-problems**

- 1.What is the perception level of teachers about organizational uncertainty and organizational depression in schools?
- 2.Do organizational uncertainty and organizational depression levels in schools differ according to marital status, age and professional seniority?
- 3.Is there a significant relationship between organizational uncertainty and organizational depression in schools?
- 4.Do teachers' perceptions of organizational uncertainty in schools predict teacher perceptions of organizational depression?

## **2. Method**

Descriptive relational research aim to determine whether two or more variables change together (Akbay, 2021).In this study, it was aimed to reveal the relationship and levels between organizational uncertainty and organizational depression in schools and the differences in terms of various variables of gender, age, professional seniority and

educational status of the teachers, the level of the school where the task is performed, marital status, branch. For this reason, the research design was determined a descriptive relational survey model.

### Sample

The universe of the research consists of teachers working in public kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools and high schools in Dulkadiroğlu and Onikisubat central districts of Kahramanmaraş. The sample of the study consists of 366 teachers in this universe and selected by convenient sampling method.

**Table 1.** Participants demographic characteristics

Variable	Options	N	%
Gender	Female	197	53.8
	Male	169	46.2
Age	21-30	58	15.8
	31-40	169	46.2
	41 ve üstü	139	38.0
Education Status	Licence	305	83.3
	Master's Degree	61	16.7
The Level of the School where the Task is Performed	Preschool	24	6.6
	Primary School	203	55.5
	Secondary School	91	24.9
	High School	48	13.1
Vocational Seniority	1-10 age	137	37.4
	11-20 age	134	36.6
	21 and above	95	26.0
Marital Status	Single	69	18.9
	Married	297	81.1
	Preschool Teacher	34	9.3
Branch	Class Teacher	171	46.7
	Subject Teacher	161	44.0
Total		<b>366</b>	<b>100</b>

### Data collection tools and process

The data were collected with data collection tools consisting of three parts which aims to determine the effect of the level of organizational uncertainty in schools on organizational depression in this research.

Personal information form: Gender, age, education level, school level, seniority, marital status and branch variables are included.

Organizational uncertainty scale in school: The 4-point likert-type scale consists of 25 items, 15 of which are "Administrative Practices", 5 of which are "Organizational Negativity" and "Individual Negativity". The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be .85 by Toytok and Yavuz.

Organizational depression Scale: The 5-point likert-type scale consists of 42 items. 4th, 5th, 10th, 12th, 13th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 22th, 24th, 28th, 30th, 32th, 36th, 38th, 39th and 41th items are reverse coded. The load values of Single factor scale are between .301 and .816. The variance of this factor is %38.38. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be .94 by Sezer.

**Table 2.** Cronbach-Alpha confidence coefficients

Variables	Number of Questions	Cronbach Alpha
Organizational Negativity	5	.87
Administrative Practices	15	.95

Individual Negativity	5	.88
Organizational Uncertainty T.	25	.85
Organizational Depression T.	42	.96

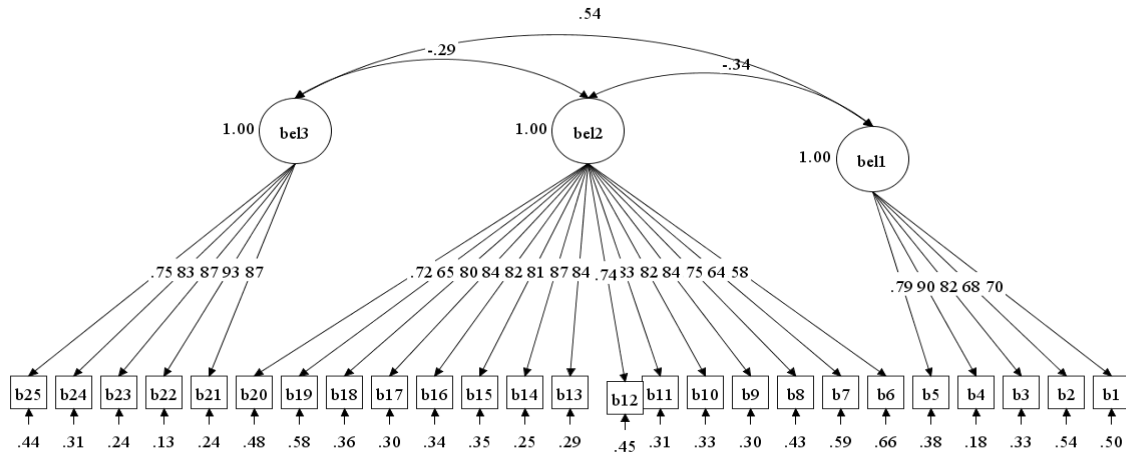


Figure 1. Confirmatory factor analysis model for organizational uncertainty scale

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed using the Mplus7.4. program and the compatibility indices were checked. It is concluded that the model is acceptable when the RMSEA and SRMR values are lower than 0.08 and the CFI and TLI values are greater than .90 (Kline, 2015). Diagram model and item factor loading values are presented in Figure 1.1. The three-dimensional structure of the scale was confirmed. It was seen that the fit indices of the model were as follows ( $\chi^2/sd=2.90$ ; CFI=.91; TLI=.91; RMSEA=.07;SRMR=.10).

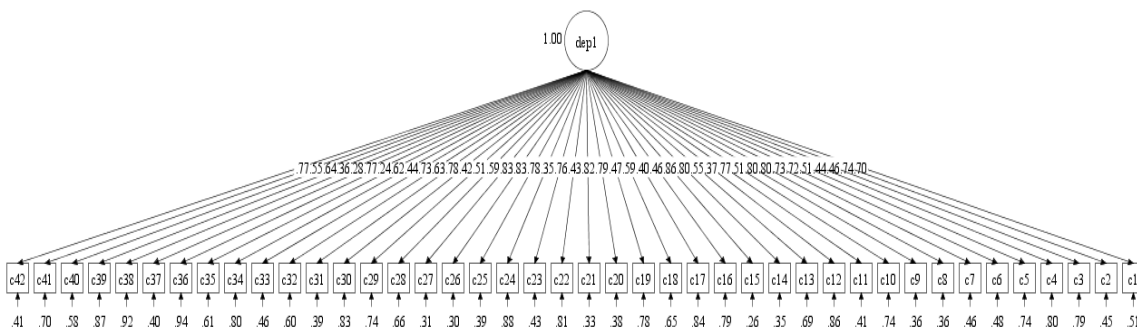


Figure 2. Confirmatory factor analysis model for organizational depression scale

It was aimed to confirm the single-factor structure of the organizational depression scale. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed in this research with the Mplus7.4. program. The compatibility indices of the model were examined. It is concluded that the model is acceptable when the RMSEA and SRMR values are lower than 0.08 and the CFI and TLI values are greater than .90 (Kline, 2015). Diagram model and item factor loading values are presented in Figure 2. The unidimensional structure of the scale was confirmed in confirmatory factor

analysis. It was seen that the fit indices of the model were as follows ( $\chi^2/sd=4.48$ ; CFI=.72; TLI=.71; RMSEA=.09; SRMR=.10).

### Analysis of data

In the study, the normality distribution was examined by the skewness coefficient method. Parametric tests (t test, ANOVA) and descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean, standard deviation) were used because the data obtained showed normal distribution. Cohen-d calculation was used to determine the degree of significant difference. Cohen-d scores. It is taken as 02 (small), .05 (medium), .08 (large). Pearson/Spearman Product Moments Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the relationship between dependent and independent variables. Multiple linear regression analysis was performed to determine the effect of organizational uncertainty in schools on organizational depression.

## 3. Findings

### 3.1. Findings related to the first sub-problem

The arithmetic mean and standard deviation values of organizational uncertainty and organizational depression in schools were shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Descriptive statistical analysis of organizational uncertainty and organizational depression levels in schools

Variables	Sub Dimensions	N	$\bar{X}$	Ss
Organizational Uncertainty	Organizational Negativity	366	2.55	.70
	Administrative Practices	366	2.81	.64
	Individual Negativity	366	2.17	.68
	Organizational Uncertainty	366	2.63	.39
Organizational Depression		366	3.54	.75

It was observed that the organizational uncertainty in schools is "Often" at the level of ( $\bar{X}=2.63$ ). When organizational uncertainty is examined in terms of sub-dimensions, it was observed that the highest average is the managerial practices dimension ( $\bar{X}=2.81$ ) and the lowest average is the individual negative dimension ( $\bar{X}=2.17$ ). The level of organizational depression ( $\bar{X}=3.54$ ) in schools is at the level of "Not Very Appropriate".

### 3.2. Findings related to the second sub-problem

The analysis of the organizational uncertainty and organizational depression levels of the schools according to the marital status variable was shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Analysis of organizational uncertainty and organizational depression levels of schools according to marital status variable

\*p< .05

Variables	Marital Status	N	$\bar{X}$	ss	t	p
Organizational Negativity	Single	69	2.65	.67	1.380	.168
	Married	297	2.52	.71		
	Single	69	2.64	.63		
Administrative Practices	Married	297	2.86	.64	-2.553	<b>.011*</b>
	Single	69	2.25	.57		
Individual Negativity	Married	297	2.15	.70	1.136	.257
	Single	69	3.36	.69		
Organizational Depression	Married	297	3.58	.76	-2.218	<b>.027*</b>

It was seen that there is a significant difference in favor of married people according to the marital status variable in the administrative practices sub-dimension of the "organizational uncertainty scale" in schools. Teachers' level of organizational depression differs significantly according to the marital status variable.

**Table 5.** Analysis of organizational uncertainty and organizational depression levels of schools according to age variable

Variables	Age	N	$\bar{X}$	ss	sd	F	p	Tukey	$\eta^2$
Organizational Uncertainty									
Organizational Negativity	A	58	2.48	.74	2	2.008	.136		
	B	169	2.63	.68	363				
	C	139	2.48	.72	365				
Administrative Practices	A	58	2.75	.66	2	4.871	<b>.008*</b>	C-B	.02
	B	169	2.72	.61	363				
	C	139	2.95	.66	365				
Individual Negativity	A	58	2.10	.59	2	1.019	.362		
	B	169	2.22	.66	363				
	C	139	2.13	.74	365				
Organizational Depression	A	58	3.41	.76	2	7.516	<b>.001*</b>	C-A C-B	.04
	B	169	3.43	.67	363				
	C	139	3.73	.79	365				

\* $p < .05$  A- 21-30 age B- 31-40 age C- 41 and above age

Administrative practices differed significantly according to the age variable in the sub-dimension ( $p < .05$ ). It can be said that the level of organizational uncertainty in the administrative practices sub-dimension of the teachers aged 41 and over is lower than the teachers aged 31-40. Teachers' organizational depression perception levels also differ according to the age variable.

**Table 6.** Analysis of organizational uncertainty and organizational depression levels of schools according to vocational seniority variable

Variables		N	$\bar{X}$	ss	sd	F	p	Tukey	$\eta^2$
Organizational Negativity	1	137	2.50	.71	2	.586	.557		
	2	134	2.59	.70	363				
	3	95	2.55	.71	365				
	1	137	2.75	.61	2	2.777	.064		

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	ss	sd	F	p	Tukey	$\eta^2$
Administrative	2	134	2.78	.67	363			
Practices	3	95	2.95	.64	365			
Individual	1	137	2.14	.58	2			
Negativity	2	134	2.17	.73	363	.151	.860	
	3	95	2.19	.75	365			
Organizational	1	137	2.58	.39	2			
Uncertainty	2	134	2.62	.40	363	3.439	<b>.033*</b>	3-1 .04
	3	95	2.72	.36	365			
Organizational	1	137	3.45	.69	2			
Depression	2	134	3.48	.75	363	5.809	<b>.003*</b>	3-1 .01
	3	95	3.76	.79	365			3-2

\*p< .05    1- 1-10 between years    2- 11-20 between years    3-21 above years

Organizational depression levels of teachers differed significantly according to professional seniority variable ( $p < .05$ ). It can be said that the organizational depression perception levels of teachers with a professional seniority of 21 and above are lower.

### 3.3. Findings regarding the third sub-problem

**Table 7.** The correlation relationship between organizational uncertainty and organizational depression in schools

	1	2	3	4	5
1- Organizational uncertainty	1				
2- Organizational negativity	.240**	1			
3- Administrative practices	.819**	-.272	1		
4- Individual negativity	.294**	.426**	-.211	1	
5- Organizational Depression	.552**	-.342	.803**	-.346	1

It is observed that there is a moderately significant positive correlation between organizational uncertainty in schools and organizational depression ( $r = .552$ ,  $p < .05$ ). It was determined that there is a moderately significant negative relationship between organizational negativities ( $r = -.342$ ) and individual negativities ( $r = -.346$ ) and organizational depression. It was determined that there is a highly significant relationship between managerial practices ( $r = .803$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and organizational depression.

### 3.4. Findings related to the fourth sub-problem

**Table 8.** Multiple regression analysis on the prediction of teacher perceptions of the level of organizational uncertainty in schools on teachers' perceptions of organizational depression

Variables	B	Standard E.	$\beta$	t	p
	1.662	.158	-	10.509	<b>.000***</b>
Organizational Negativity	-.075	.035	-.071	-2.106	<b>.036*</b>
Administrative Practices	.869	.036	.751	24.230	<b>.000***</b>
Individual Negativity	-.172	.036	-.157	-4.771	<b>.000***</b>
R= .826	R <sup>2</sup> = .679				
F= 258.686	p= .000				

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001

Organizational negativities, administrative practices and individual negativities sub-dimensions predicted organizational depression (F= 258. 686 p<.05). The scale for determining the level of organizational uncertainty in schools explained 67% of organizational depression with all its dimensions. When teachers' organizational depression perception levels increased by 1 point, administrative practices increased by .86 points.

#### 4. Results, conclusions and recommendations

In the first sub-problem of the study, when the level of organizational uncertainty in schools was examined in terms of sub-dimensions according to teacher perceptions, it was concluded that the sub-dimension of organizational negativities was at the level of "often". The level of organizational uncertainty in schools was examined in terms of sub-dimensions. It was determined that the managerial practices dimension ( $\bar{X}$ =2.81), organizational negativities ( $\bar{X}$ =2.55) and individual negativities dimension ( $\bar{X}$ =2.17). Koşar (2020) examined the consequences of organizational uncertainty. The organizational consequences of uncertainty were the opportunity for change, managerial competencies, and collectivism. Individual results were motivation, intolerance to uncertainty, decrease in organizational commitment, and future anxiety. Demiral (2014) found that the consequences of uncertainty cause pressure and stress, creating concerns about the future in administrators, teachers, students and parents. It was determined that the perceptions of organizational depression were at the "Not Very Appropriate" level. Sağır (2015) determined that teachers experienced moderate organizational depression in schools, while Toytok and Uçar (2018) determined that organizational depression in schools was below moderate level. Çağlar, Bektaş, and Altun (2013) concluded that depressive symptoms are high in teachers who cannot cope with stress effectively.

In the second sub-problem of the study, it was determined that teachers' organizational uncertainty and organizational depression perception levels differed significantly according to marital status, age and Professional seniority variables. It was concluded that the organizational uncertainty perception levels of single teachers were higher than those of married teachers. Keleş (2016) determined that single teachers experience higher levels of organizational depression than married teachers. Taytaş and Ayaz (2019) examined the depression levels of teachers using the chaid analysis method. They found that teachers who are single or divorced become depressed compared to married teachers. Izgis (2019) found that the depression level of divorced teachers was higher than married ones. It supports the findings of these researches. It has been determined that the levels of organizational depression are lower for teachers who are 21 years and over professionally senior compared to less senior teachers. Sağır, Göksoy, and Aslan (2017) determined that there was a significant difference between the views of teachers according to the age variable. Bakan, Taşlıyan, Taş, and Aka (2014) determined that the organizational depression levels of academic staff decrease when they get older. Akman and Abaslı (2016) did not find a statistically significant difference in teachers' depressive perceptions according to the age variable. Karadağ (2019) examined the relationship between primary school teachers' depression levels and their attitudes towards seeking psychological help. In this study, it was determined that there was no significant difference according to age groups. Aktürk (2019) determined that there was no significant difference in the level of perception of organizational depression according to the variable of professional seniority of teachers. These results do not support the research findings.



It was concluded that there is a moderately significant positive relationship between the level of organizational uncertainty in schools and the level of organizational depression. Yazgan and Topaloğlu (2020) determined that there is a moderately positive relationship between organizational uncertainty and organizational stress. This result coincides with the research findings. Karakuş and Yardım (2014) found that uncertainty was negatively related to job satisfaction and positively related to turnover intention. It can also be interpreted that organizational uncertainty negatively affects job motivation and job satisfaction. Organizational uncertainty is an important variable that predicts organizational depression. Karataş and Uzun (2018) also found that university students' positive and negative beliefs about anxiety significantly predicted intolerance to uncertainty.

Based on the results of the research, the following recommendations can be made:

In the first sub-problem of the research, the level of organizational uncertainty in schools was examined in terms of sub-dimensions. It was concluded that the sub-dimension of organizational negativities was at the "often" level. Conflict and confusion may occur in situations of uncertainty in schools. Quick information can be provided to prevent this.

In the second sub-problem of the study, teachers' organizational uncertainty and organizational depression perception levels differ significantly according to marital status, age and professional seniority variables. The organizational uncertainty perception levels of single teachers are higher than those of married teachers. School administrators can teach single teachers to cope with organizational uncertainty. Teachers with more professional seniority and school administrators can mentor teachers who are in the first years of their profession. Innovations can be made to improve working conditions in schools. Activities can be organized for teachers to socialize. Thus, organizational depression levels of young teachers can be reduced.

It has been determined that there is a moderately significant negative relationship between organizational negativities and individual negativities sub-dimensions and organizational depression. This research was carried out with teachers working in official kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools and high schools. Similar studies can be conducted in private schools. In the fourth sub-problem of the study, it was determined that organizational uncertainty predicted organizational depression. Research can be done with other variables that predict organizational uncertainty. A significant contribution is made to the field of educational management.

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