Employees' Perceptions of Justice and Workplace Deviance: A Moderated Mediation Model of Ethical Work Climate and Task Type

Deniz Öztürk, Suna Yüksel Poyraz

Abstract: Despite considerable prior research examining the negative influence of perceptions of organizational justice on workplace deviance across different contexts, little attention has been paid to the underlying mechanisms. This study attempts to fill that void by examining the mediating role of different types of ethical work climates and the moderating role of task type in the relationship between organizational justice perceptions and deviant work behaviour among public sector employees in Turkey. The findings show that organizational justice perceptions are negatively related to workplace deviance and that this relationship is mediated by benevolence and principle climates. We further demonstrate that the nature of the tasks employees performed provided an explanation for the strength of the positive impact of benevolence and principle climates on deviant work behaviour and that the indirect effect of employees' perceptions of justice on deviance (via benevolence and principle climates) was weaker when the task type was technical rather than non-technical.

Keywords: Organizational justice perceptions, deviant work behaviour, ethical work climate, task type.

Çalışanların Adalet Algılamaları ve İş Yeri Sapkın Davranışları: Etik İş İklimi ve Görev Türüne Yönelik Düzenlenmiş Aracılık Modeli

Özet: Örgütsel adalet algılamalarının farklı bağlamlarda işyeri sapkın davranışları üzerindeki olumsuz etkisini inceleyen önemli araştırmalara rağmen, ilgili yazın bu bağlantının altında yatan mekanizmalara görece az ilgi göstermektedir. Bu çalışma, Türkiye'de kamu sektörü çalışanları üzerinden alınan örneklemde, çalışanların örgütsel adalet algılamaları ile işyeri sapkın davranışı arasındaki ilişkide farklı etik iş iklimlerinin aracılık rolünü test ederek bu boşluğu doldurmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bununla birlikte, etik iş iklimleri ile işyeri sapkın davranışı arasındaki ilişkinin farklı görevleri (teknik ve teknik olmayan görevler) yerine getiren kişiler için farklılaşacağı görüşü ile çalışanların görev tiplerinin de düzenleyici rolü incelenmektedir. Bulgular, örgütsel adalet algılarının işyeri sapkınlığı ile olumsuz şekilde ilişkili olduğunu ve bu ilişkiye yardımseverlik ve ilkelilik etik iş ikliminin aracılık ettiğini göstermektedir. Bunun yanı sıra, çalışanların gerçekleştirdikleri görevlerin doğasının, yardımseverlik ve ilkelilik iklimlerini sapkın iş davranışı üzerindeki olumlu etkisinin gücüne açıklama getirdiği ve çalışanların örgütsel adalet algılamalarının işyeri sapkın davranışları üzerindeki dolaylı etkisinin (yardımseverlik ve ilkelilik iklimi aracılığıyla) çalışanların teknik olan görevleri yürüttükleri durumda, teknik olmayan görevleri yapan çalışanlara kıyasla daha zayıf olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Örgütsel adalet algılamaları, işyeri sapkın davranışı, etik iş iklimi, görev türü.

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Introduction

Workplace deviance, or intentional behaviour undertaken to damage an organization or its members, is highly prevalent and bears serious consequences for organizations. As deviant actions in the workplace violate organizational standards, they generate adverse consequences for organizational functioning (Kuo, Su, & Chang, 2014). Relatedly, deviant work behaviour in the public sector is also found to influence organizational outcomes by decreasing the standards of public service delivery (Shaheen, Bashir, & Khan, 2017). To reduce deviant behaviour in organizations, it is necessary to have an in-depth understanding of the dynamics that affect an employee's likelihood of committing deviant acts.

There has been a plethora of research to identify the determinants of deviant behaviour in the workplace (Bennett & Robinson, 2003; Berry, Ones, & Sackett, 2007). In an effort to reveal the underlying causes of deviant behaviour, individuals' justice perceptions are among the constructs that have generated extensive support (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). According to the principles of tit-for-tat and restoration of equity, employees who feel unfairly treated may increasingly engage in different types of deviant work behaviour. Although research has highlighted the role of injustices in leading to deviance, we know relatively less about the dynamics underlying the relationship between perceived injustices and workplace deviance. To date, very few studies have cited self-determined intrinsic motivation (Michel & Hargis, 2017) or social exchange (El Akremi, Vandenberghe, & Camerman, 2010) as mediating mechanisms linking justice perceptions and deviance in organizational settings. This study is intended to add to the nascent body of literature on the ethical work climate as one of the situational mechanisms in which employee perceptions of injustice trigger workplace deviance.

By investigating the relationship between justice and workplace deviance and incorporating ethical work climate and task type as additional variables, the aim of this study is twofold: (i) to analyse the link between the justice perceptions of public sector employees and their propensity to engage in deviant behaviours in the workplace and (ii) to reveal ethical work climate as a mediating and task type as a moderating mechanism to better discern the relationship between justice perceptions and workplace deviance. Thus, the main objective of this study is to enhance the existing research on individual justice perceptions and deviant work behaviour by examining the ethical work climate as an explanatory mechanism through which perceptions of injustice create deviance among employees. We regard different types of ethical climates based on benevolence, principle, and egoism as mediating mechanisms for

the justice-workplace deviance relation. We further explore the moderating influence of task type on the relationship between ethical work climate and deviant work behaviour (Figure 1). This study makes a theoretical contribution to the workplace deviance literature by illustrating employee justice perceptions as antecedents. More specifically, it empirically shows the mediating effect of ethical work climate and the moderating effect of task type on the relationship between organizational justice and workplace deviance by using cross-sectional data from a survey of public sector employees in Turkey. Our research also makes a practical contribution and adds to managerial practice by elaborating the role of justice perceptions and different dimensions of ethical climates in determining deviant behaviour in work settings.
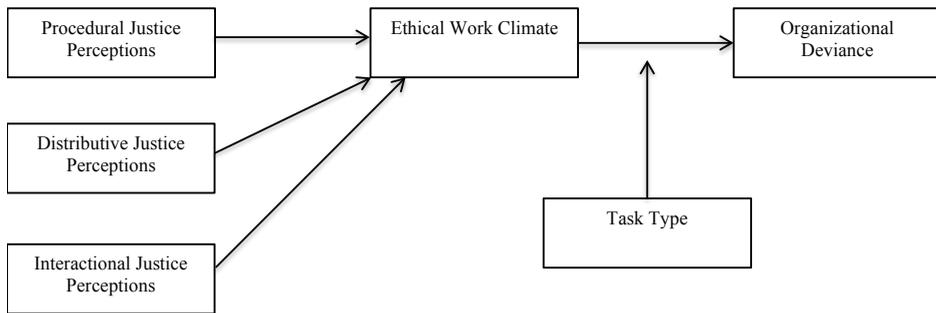
Figure 1. Overview of the hypothesized model

Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

Organizational Justice and Workplace Deviance

Workplace deviance is defined as "voluntary behaviour that violates significant organizational norms and threatens the well-being of the organization, its members or both" (Bennett & Robinson, 2000, p. 556). Deviance among employees comprises certain behaviours that are against organizational policies, procedures, norms, and values. It encompasses a wide range of actions including theft, arriving late to work, failing to conform to instructions, gossiping, or even violence (Ferris, Spence, Brown, & Heller, 2012). Workplace deviance is commonly conceptualized as organizational or interpersonal deviance, categorized according to the two targets of individuals' reactions against the workplace. The former refers to any behaviour directed at the organization that aims to violate organizational norms, whereas the latter is directed at individual members of the organization (i.e., supervisors or co-workers).

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In Turkey, especially in the last decade, research about workplace deviance has attracted scholarly interest among academics. Although the number of studies on this subject still remains limited, work to date has focused on exploring the mechanisms underlying deviant behaviours, including cultural value orientations (Kalemci, Tüzün-Kalemci, & Özkan-Canbolat, 2019), the role of organizational support and self-efficacy (Tüzün, Çetin, & Basım, 2017), the effects of the perceived external prestige of the organization (Tuna et al., 2016), ethical leadership (Yeşiltaş, Çeken, & Sormaz, 2012; Gök et al., 2017), performance appraisal effectiveness (Tüzün & Kalemci, 2018), relationships with authentic leadership (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2013), organizational citizenship behaviour (Apaydın & Şirin, 2016), and abusive supervision (Üçok & Turgut, 2014).

Injustices in the work setting are perceived to be among the most important reasons why employees undertake deviant work behaviour. "Organizational justice" connotes the individual's perception of and reaction to fairness within an organization (Byrne & Cropanzano, 2001) and it involves three dimensions. First, distributive justice refers to the perceived fairness of the outcomes that employees receive. It highlights the extent of fairness in the distribution of resources and the corresponding input provided. Second, procedural justice captures the perceived fairness of the means employed in determining outcomes. It involves perceptions of inequality in the application of rules, regulations, and policies in the organization. Finally, interactional justice points to the perceived fairness of the interpersonal treatment of employees by the organization. Interactional justice perceptions further involve the essence of the interpersonal treatment that employees receive from their supervisors during the enactment of organizational procedures.

Organizational justice is shown to be significantly related to a wide range of deviant behaviours such as theft and sabotage (Wilkin & Connelly, 2015), counterproductive behaviours (Cohen & Diamant, 2019), and workplace aggression and retaliation (Siegel Christian, Christian, Garza, & Ellis, 2012). Some other empirical studies have revealed that employees' positive perceptions of justice mean that they will be less likely to engage in organizational deviance (e.g., Berry et al., 2007; Demir, 2011; Hashish, 2020). There are several theories that provide an explanation for the link between perceived injustice and workplace deviance. According to the foundational equity theory established by Adams (1965), individuals gauge the degree of fairness of outcomes in relation to the inputs they provide. In the case of a perceived imbalance, they engage in acts to restore the balance. Therefore, employees perceiving unfair treatment as a result of comparisons of their percei-

ved outcomes to their perceived contributions may develop feelings of resentment and anger and accompanying behavioural counter-reactions, such as deviant work behaviour, with a view towards restoring equity.

Blau's (1964) social exchange theory also provides useful grounds for explaining deviance by defining social exchanges as "voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and typically do in fact bring from others" (p. 91). As explained in detail by Cohen-Charash and Spector (2001), relationships established in the workplace are relationships of social exchange. In this respect, employees are expected to react to perceived unfairness in the workplace by directing "voluntary" retaliatory behaviours against others or the organization to restore justice.

Folger's (1987) referent cognitions theory also supports the link between perceived justice and deviance by postulating that fairness perceptions are formed by making comparisons with others and that perceived inequalities trigger negative behaviours. Thus, when employees perceive unfairness in the distribution of outcomes, in the development of procedures, or in the way that they are treated, they may direct retaliatory behaviours against others or the organization to restore justice. Studies revealing the relationship between deviant work behaviour and each of the three dimensions of justice have revealed conflicting results. For instance, it was found that unfairness in outcomes, or a low perception of distributive justice, generates higher levels of deviance (Henle, 2005). On the contrary, several other studies failed to find any significant relationship between perceptions of distributive justice and deviant reactions (O'Neill, Lewis, & Carswell, 2011). In other studies, procedural justice and interactional justice were also found to be linked to workplace deviance (Barclay, Skarlicki, & Pugh, 2005). Previous research in the Turkish context revealed a significant relationship between all dimensions of organizational justice and deviant work behaviour (Yeşiltaş et al., 2012). In contrast to these studies that consider all dimensions of organizational justice perceptions (Demir, 2011) as a whole, we take a common stance with other studies (Henle, 2005; El Akremi et al., 2010; Yeşiltaş et al., 2012) that have argued the specific relationships between different dimensions of justice and organizational deviance. Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 1a: Procedural justice perceptions are negatively associated with deviant work behaviour.

Hypothesis 1b: Distributive justice perceptions are negatively associated with deviant work behaviour.

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Hypothesis 1c: Interactional justice perceptions are negatively associated with deviant work behaviour.

The Mediating Role of Ethical Work Climate in the Relationship between Organizational Justice Perceptions and Workplace Deviance

In order to explain the negative relationship between perceptions of justice and employees' deviant behaviour, previous studies have examined trust (Aryee, Budhwar, & Chen, 2002), fear of formal punishment (Zoghbi Manrique de Lara, 2006), organization-based self-esteem levels (Ferris et al., 2012), and negative affectivity (Chen, Chen, & Liu, 2013) as mediating variables. In this study, we postulate that an ethical work climate may mediate the effect of justice perceptions on employees' workplace deviance. Perceptions of unfairness give employees an understanding of how ethical issues are dealt with in implementing policies and procedures (Sabiu, Kura, Mei, Raihan Joarder, & Umrani, 2019). This relationship can be explained by social information processing theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), which indicates an explicit link between the social environment and information processing in the development of job attitudes. It argues that individual attitudes are the results of processing information about behaviours in a social context; hence, individuals "adapt attitudes, behaviour, and beliefs to their social context and to the reality of their own past and present behaviour and situation" (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978, p. 226).

This theory further suggests that employees search for cues in their environment to characterize their work context and to make sense of how to act (Mayer, Kuenzi, & Greenbaum, 2010, p. 9). That is to say, the type of ethical climate provides signals for employees about behavioural appropriateness in the organizational setting. Work climates give individuals hints about group norms regarding acceptable or unacceptable behaviours. If the organization is primarily characterized by climates of benevolence and principle, where the former prioritizes the well-being of others in resolving ethical problems and the latter focuses on the application of rules and law and universal moral values as the dominant form of reasoning, then we might expect employees to be less inclined to adopt deviant behaviours. On the contrary, in an egoistic climate, the consideration of self-interest might trigger greater workplace deviance (Victor & Cullen, 1988, p. 105).

Although there is plentiful evidence on the negative link between justice perceptions and workplace deviance, the role of the ethical climate as a mediator between individual justice perceptions and deviant behaviour has not received scholarly attention. Ethical climates in general have been regarded as mediating mechanisms

in several studies on the relationships between ethical leadership and employee misconduct (Mayer et al., 2010), performance appraisal and organizational performance (Sabiu et al., 2019), and ethical leadership and firm performance (Shin, Sung, Choi, & Kim, 2015). In Turkish context, studies have also found the mediating effect of ethical climate on the relationship between justice perceptions and burnout (Elçi, Karabay, & Akyüz, 2015); ethical leadership behaviour and affective commitment (Demirtaş & Akdoğan, 2015), and organizational silence behaviour and trust in the leader (Karabay, Şener, & Tezergil, 2018).

We presuppose the ethical work climate to be a mediator between individuals' justice perceptions and workplace deviance. Ethical work climates may aid in illustrating the processes that employees use to make sense of their work environments. An employee's perception of the ethical climate is very critical because the ethical climate generates and imbues ethical beliefs among employees that subsequently shape their behavioural decisions. Perceptions of unfair treatment by superiors or perceptions of injustice with respect to the distribution of rewards or the ways in which procedures are set by management may influence perceptions of the ethical work climate among employees who experience organizational injustice. This study posits that perceptions of organizational injustice may not directly lead to deviant workplace behaviour; rather, the ethical work climate perceptions of employees mediate the relationship between these constructs. Hence, we propose the following:

Hypothesis 2a: A benevolence climate mediates the relationship between employee procedural justice perceptions and deviant work behaviour.

Hypothesis 2b: A benevolence climate mediates the relationship between employee distributive justice perceptions and deviant work behaviour.

Hypothesis 2c: A benevolence climate mediates the relationship between employee interactional justice perceptions and deviant work behaviour.

Hypothesis 3a: A principle climate mediates the relationship between employee procedural justice perceptions and deviant work behaviour.

Hypothesis 3b: A principle climate mediates the relationship between employee distributive justice perceptions and deviant work behaviour.

Hypothesis 3c: A principle climate mediates the relationship between employee interactional justice perceptions and deviant work behaviour.

Hypothesis 4a: An egoism climate mediates the relationship between employee procedural justice perceptions and deviant work behaviour.

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Hypothesis 4b: An egoism climate mediates the relationship between employee distributive justice perceptions and deviant work behaviour.

Hypothesis 4c: An egoism climate mediates the relationship between employee interactional justice perceptions and deviant work behaviour.

The Moderating Role of Task Type in the Relationship between Ethical Climate and Workplace Deviance

Task type has been considered to have a moderating effect among diverse types of conflict and organizational outcomes (Puck & Pregernig, 2014; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). The structural aspects of a task might also have a negative influence on deviant behaviour. In line with the formulation of behavioural versus conceptual tasks in the study of Stewart and Barrick (2000), we also take technical and non-technical tasks as two task types for our empirical setting.

Peculiar to our context, employees in vertical units are engaged predominantly in technical and routine tasks, and there is a clear division of labour among unit members. The nature of the work necessitates technical knowledge and skills, while planning, deciding, or negotiating with managers or colleagues is seldom necessary. Hence, work in these units does not usually require interaction or coordination with co-workers. In the event that interaction is required, it is mostly mundane and non-problematic, such that it does not lead to any interpersonal problems. Moreover, the ends and means of production and tasks are very clear and unit members do not interact in novel ways to decide how to proceed (Stewart & Barrick, 2000, p. 137).

On the contrary, in horizontal units there is less clarity about which behavioural tasks are to be completed, so organizational members spend more time on coordination and interaction. What is more, since these tasks are non-technical, non-routine, and more behaviourally oriented, the ways in which procedures are chosen and implemented or interactions are managed may create perceptions of (in)justice among employees more so than in vertical units. Issues regarding the quality of interpersonal treatment and informal social interactions or altruistic behaviour are more significant for employees working in horizontal units where their tasks are more defined by a lack of clarity and a need for more coordination skills and non-technical knowledge. Task type may moderate this relationship, as employees' tasks are expected to influence the link between different dimensions of ethical climate and deviant work behaviour. Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 5a: The relation between a benevolence climate and deviant work behaviour will be moderated by task type. For employees performing technical tasks, the negative

relationship between benevolence climate and deviant work behaviour will be less prominent than for employees who perform non-technical tasks.

Hypothesis 5b: The relation between a principle climate and deviant work behaviour will be moderated by task type. For employees performing technical tasks, the negative relationship between principle climate and deviant work behaviour will be less prominent than for employees who perform non-technical tasks.

Hypothesis 5c: The relation between an egoism climate and deviant work behaviour will be moderated by task type. For employees performing technical tasks, the positive relationship between egoism climate and deviant work behaviour will be less prominent than for employees who perform non-technical tasks.

As we hypothesize that task type moderates the effects of ethical climate perceptions on workplace deviance, we might expect that task type will conditionally influence the strength of the indirect relationship between organizational justice perceptions and workplace deviance, showing a pattern of moderated mediation between the variables in our study as displayed in Figure 1. Since we propose a weak (strong) relation between benevolence climate and workplace deviance for employees performing technical (non-technical) tasks, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 6a: The strength of the mediated relation between procedural justice perceptions and deviant work behaviour (through benevolence, principle, and egoism) will depend on task type; the indirect effect of justice perceptions on deviant behaviour will be weaker when the task type is technical.

Hypothesis 6b: The strength of the mediated relation between distributive justice perceptions and deviant work behaviour (through benevolence, principle, and egoism) will depend on task type; the indirect effect of justice perceptions on deviant behaviour will be weaker when the task type is technical.

Hypothesis 6c: The strength of the mediated relation between interactional justice perceptions and deviant work behaviour (through benevolence, principle, and egoism) will depend on task type; the indirect effect of justice perceptions on deviant behaviour will be weaker when the task type is technical.

Method

Participants and Procedure

In order to test our hypotheses, we conducted a survey in a public institution in Turkey in March 2011. The survey included all employees of the institution regardless of

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their positions. At the time of the research, the institution had 247 employees. Data were collected via a paper-and-pencil questionnaire in Turkish, which was self-administered by employees during office hours. The second author visited all offices in the institution and distributed surveys to 219 people who were available in their offices and agreed to participate in the study. The questionnaires were collected one week after delivery in a ballot-like box sealed all around the corners. In order to ensure anonymity, participants were asked to personally put their responses into the box in sealed envelopes. Of the 219 distributed questionnaires, 171 were returned, representing a response rate of 78%. Upon checking for missing responses, 5 questionnaires having more than 10% missing items were excluded from the analyses. The total remaining sample included 166 respondents. The demographic data of the participants were as follows: 60% were female and the majority of the respondents (86%) were between 25 and 44 years of age. Regarding education level, only 12% of the participants held less than a university degree, while 88% of them had either undergraduate or graduate degrees. The average tenure of the participants was 26 months.

Measures

Workplace deviance. Workplace deviance was measured using the scale developed by Bennett and Robinson (2000). Permission was received from the original authors to use the scale and to adapt certain items if required. The scale was first translated into Turkish by the researchers and then back-translated with the help of an English language instructor. The questionnaire was pilot-tested with a small sample from the institution to check for the applicability of the statements. Some items were adjusted to the setting, such as changing "Worked slowly to get overtime payment" to "Worked slowly to make use of the overtime benefits". Before finalization of the translation, the English and Turkish versions were assessed comparatively by a fluent speaker of English. The scale comprises 19 items; 12 items assess deviant behaviour aimed at the organization (i.e., organizational deviance) and 7 items address acts targeting members of the organization (i.e., interpersonal deviance). We used items that measure organizational deviance (e.g., Neves & Story, 2015; Sayed-Mostafa & Shen, 2020; Tüzün & Kalemci, 2018). These items measure the frequency with which the respondents engage in specific behaviours that are harmful to the organization or to other employees on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 ("never") to 5 ("daily"). The scale's alpha reliability coefficient was computed as 0.78.

Organizational justice. Justice perceptions were measured with the 20-item scale developed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993). The Turkish version of the

scale was directly adopted from Pirali's (2007) master's thesis with the author's permission. The first six items of the scale refer to the extent of fair procedures in managerial decisions about the respondent's job to assess procedural justice perceptions (e.g., "My general manager makes sure that all employee concerns are heard before job decisions are made"). The following nine items measure interactional justice perceptions concerned with the perceived quality of supervision and communication (e.g., "When decisions are made about my job, the general manager shows concern for my rights as an employee"). The final five items detect perceptions of fairness of employees' compensation, salary, and benefits, namely distributive justice (e.g., "Overall the rewards I receive here are quite fair"). Each item was assessed on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") with higher scores revealing higher levels of perceived justice. The scale's procedural, distributive, and interactional alpha reliability coefficients were computed as 0.94, 0.97, and 0.89, respectively.

Ethical work climate. The ethical climate was measured with the 26-item scale developed by Victor and Cullen (1988). The Turkish version of the scale was directly taken from Aşcıgil and Parlakgümüş's study (2012) after receiving their consent. The respondents rated their perceptions on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("completely disagree") to 6 ("completely agree"). The questionnaire included five dimensions: caring, instrumental, independence, law and code, and rules climates. The caring climate was assessed with seven statements (e.g., "The most important concern is the good of all the people in the company as a whole"). There were seven items for the instrumental climate (e.g., "In this institution, people protect their own interests above all else") and four items for the independence climate (e.g., "Each person in this institution decides for themselves what is right and wrong"). For the law and code climate, four statements were included to address adherence to laws and regulations (e.g., "In this institution, people are expected to strictly follow legal or professional standards"). Similarly, four statements depicted a rules climate (e.g., "Everyone is expected to stick to the organization's rules and procedures"). To test the mediation effects, in line with the extant literature (Bulutlar & Öz, 2009), three categories of ethical criteria of ethical work climates were separately considered. These dimensions were egoism, referring to the maximization of one's own interest; benevolence, or the maximization of the interests of as many people as possible; and principle, highlighting adherence to universal standards and rules. The internal reliability of the benevolence, principle, and egoism climate scales were 0.87, 0.88, and 0.65, respectively.

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Task type. Employees indicated whether they worked in a horizontal or vertical department. The task type in vertical departments is technical, requiring technical knowledge and expertise. In contrast, employees in horizontal departments perform non-routine and more behavioural tasks that do not necessitate technical knowledge, involving coordination of the work of other departments. Task type was dummy-coded as non-technical = 1 and technical = 0.

Control Variables

Prior studies suggested a significant relationship between several demographic variables and workplace deviance. For instance, males were found to be more likely to engage in deviant behaviour in the workplace (Henle, 2005; Marasi, Bennett, & Budden, 2018). Tenure and education level were also found to be significantly related to workplace deviance (Robinson & O'Leary-Kelly, 1998). Therefore, we controlled for gender, age, level of education, and tenure in this study. We controlled for individual employees' gender with two response categories (1 = male; 2 = female) and education levels with seven response categories (1 = elementary school; 2 = middle school; 3 = high school; 4 = 2-year degree; 5 = bachelors; 6 = masters; 7 = doctorate). Tenure was self-reported in months.

Analytic Strategy

The statistical analyses of this study were performed using the IBM SPSS Statistics 24.0 and AMOS 24.0 software packages. We conducted confirmatory factor analysis with maximum likelihood estimation using AMOS 24.0 to examine whether employees' scores on self-report measures captured our distinctive constructs.

The hypothesized mediation and moderation models were tested by following a two-stage procedure (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). First, a measurement model was fit to the data, and second, the structural model was tested. In line with the literature (Hu & Bentler, 1999), the fit of the measurement model and alternative models to the data was assessed examining the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA), and comparative fit index (CFI). A good fit is indicated by TLI and CFI values of greater than 0.90 and RMSEA values no higher than 0.08. The results in Table 2 indicate that the fit of the seven-factor measurement model was good (CFI = 0.85, TLI = 0.84, and RMSEA = 0.06), and this model fit the data better than the one-factor model that loaded all the indicators to one latent factor (CFI = 0.57, TLI = 0.86, and RMSEA = 0.11).

The hypothesized mediation model was first tested following Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedures. As some studies (Preacher & Hayes, 2004; Hayes & Preacher,

2010) have suggested a bootstrapping approach to attain confidence intervals, we also tested the mediation effect using a bootstrapping test by the PROCESS macro. Nonparametric bootstrapping procedures make no assumptions about the sampling distribution, eliminating this problem (Shrout & Bolger, 2002). The indirect effects were tested using bias-corrected bootstrap 95% confidence intervals based on 5,000 samples by the PROCESS macro developed for SPSS. The moderation model was assessed by hierarchical regression by creating an interaction term.

Results

Regression Analyses

Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and correlations are presented in Table 1. Hierarchical regression was performed to test all hypotheses of the present study. The results in Table 3 show that Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c are supported (Table 3, Model 3: β_{PJ} = -.36, p < .001; β_{DJ} = -.17, p < .05; β_{IJ} = -.29, p < .001).

Descriptive Statistics, Reliabilities, and Zero-Order Correlations

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. PJ	3.45	1.37	(0.94)							
2. IJ	3.91	1.35	.84**	(0.89)						
3. DJ	3.68	1.37	.62**	.61**	(0.97)					
4. DWB-O	1.36	0.30	-.28**	-.18*	-.06	(0.78)				
5. Benevolence	3.88	0.98	.66**	.62**	.54**	-.27*	(0.87)			
6. Principle	3.93	0.82	.61*	.58**	.54**	-.26*	.65**	(0.88)		
7. Egoism	3.29	0.72	-37**	-.28**	-.35**	.09	-.39**	-.13	(0.65)	
8. Task Type	1.34	0.47	.26*	.29**	.14	-.05	.16	.07	-17*	-

Note. DWB-O= organizational deviance; PJ= procedural justice; IJ= interactional justice; DJ= distributive justice. Reliability (Cronbach's alpha) scores are reported in parentheses on the diagonal. *p < .05. **p < .01.

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Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Models	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
1 factor model (all latent constructs loaded on one factor)	0.57	0.56	0.11
2 factor model (loading PJ, DJ, IJ, benevolence, principle and egoism on one factor, DWB-O loaded on another factor)	0.61	0.60	0.10
3 factor model (PJ, DJ, IJ loaded one factor; benevolence, principle and egoism on another factor, DWB loaded on another factor)	0.72	0.81	0.09
5 factor model (PJ, DJ, IJ loaded on one factor; benevolence, principle, egoism and DWB-O as separate factors)	0.77	0.76	0.08
7 factor model (PJ, DJ, IJ, benevolence, principle, egoism and DWB-O as separate factors)	0.90	0.84	0.06

Note. CFI= comparative fit Index; TLI= Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA= root-mean-square error of approximation; DWB-O= organizational deviance; PJ= procedural justice; IJ= interactional justice; DJ= distributive justice.

Hypotheses 2, 3, and 4 proposed that i) benevolence, ii) principle, and iii) egoism climates mediate the relationship between separate dimensions of organizational justice perceptions and organizational deviance. The hypothesized mediated models provided a good fit to the data with i) CFI = 0.91, TLI = 0.90, and RMSEA = 0.06; ii) CFI = 0.88, TLI = 0.88, and RMSEA= 0.07; and iii) CFI = 0.91, TLI = 0.90, and RMSEA= 0.06. The mediation hypothesis was first tested by hierarchical regression analysis following the procedures of Baron and Kenny (1986). Four conditions need to be satisfied in order to support the mediation effect. First, organizational justice perceptions (procedural, distributive, and interactional) were found to be negatively related to organizational deviance (Table 3, Model 3: β_{PJ} = -.36, p < .001; β_{DJ} = -.17, p < .05; β_{IJ} = -.29, p < .001). Second, organizational justice perceptions (procedural, distributive, and interactional) were found to be significantly associated with each dimension of ethical work climate (Table 3, Model 2:

$\beta_{PJ\text{-}benevolence}$ = .64, p < .001; Table 4, Model 2: $\beta_{PJ\text{-}principle}$ = .58, p < .001; Table 5, Model 2: $\beta_{PJ\text{-}egoism}$ = -.40, p < .001) (Table 3, Model 2: $\beta_{DJ\text{-}benevolence}$ = .53, p < .001; Table 4, Model 2: $\beta_{DJ\text{-}principle}$ = .52, p < .001; Table 5, Model 2: $\beta_{DJ\text{-}egoism}$ = -.36, p < .001) (Table 3, Model 2: $\beta_{IJ\text{-}benevolence}$ = .60, p < .001; Table 4, Model 2: $\beta_{IJ\text{-}principle}$ = .55, p < .001; Table 5, Model 2: $\beta_{IJ\text{-}egoism}$ = -.31, p < .001). Third, benevolence, principle, and egoism work climates were significantly related to organizational deviance (Table 3, Model 4: β = -.33, p < .001; Table 4, Model 4: β = -.30, p < .01; Table 5, Model 4: β = .23, p < .05). Finally, when organizational deviance is regressed on each dimension of both organizational justice perceptions and ethical work climate separately, the latter should be significantly related to workplace deviance but the previously significant relationship between organizational justice perceptions and workplace deviance should become statistically insignificant. The statistical results are shown in Table 3 for benevolence climate (Table 3, Model 5: β_{PJ} = -.24, p > .05, $\beta_{benevolence}$ = -.17, p > .05; β_{DJ} = .00, p > .05, $\beta_{benevolence}$ = -.33, p <.001; β_{IJ} = -.15, p >.05, $\beta_{benevolence}$ = -.24, p <.05), in Table 4 for principle climate (Table 4, Model 5: β_{PJ} = -.27, p < .001, $\beta_{principle}$ = -.14, p > .05; Table 4, Model 5: β_{DJ} = -.02, p > .05, $\beta_{principle}$ = -.29, p <.001; Table 4, Model 5: β_{IJ} = -.18, p > .05, $\beta_{principle}$ = -.20, p < .05), and in Table 5 for egoism climate (Table 5, Model 5: β_{PJ} = -.31 , p < .001, β_{egoism} = -.11, p > .05; Table 5, Model 5: β_{DJ} = -.10, p > .05, β_{egoism} = -.19, p > .05; Table 4, Model 5: β_{IJ} = -.24, p < .05, β_{egoism} = -.15, p > .05). These results indicate that benevolence and principle climates fully mediated the relation between distributive and interactional justice perceptions and organizational deviance. However, for egoism climate, the regression results indicated no mediating effect.

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Regression Results for Testing H1a, H1b, H1c, H2a, H3a, H4a, H5a, H6a

Variable	Benevolence Climate		Organizational Deviance				
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Independent variables							
PJ		.64***	-.36***		-.24		
DJ		.53***	-.17*		.00		
IJ		.60***	-.29***		-.15		
Mediator							
Benevolence				-.33***	(-.17,	-.30***	-.14
climate					-.33***,		
					-.24*		
Moderator							
Task-type						-.05	.93**
Cross-level interaction							
Benevolence							-1.05**
x Task type							

Indirect effects of PJ and DWB-O *LL* 95% CI, *UL* 95% CI	[-.280, .021]
Indirect effects of DJ and DWB-O *LL* 95% CI, *UL* 95% CI	[-.275, -.073]
Indirect effects of IJ and DWB-O *LL* 95% CI, *UL* 95% CI	[-.319, -.012]
Moderated mediation effect coefficients (Boot *SE*)	-.065 (.036)
LL 95% CI, *UL* 95% CI	[-.141, -.004]

Note. OJ= organizational justice; DWB-O = organizational deviance. Bootstrap sample size = 5,000. CI= confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL*= upper limit. $*p < .05$. $**p < .01$. $***p < .001$.

Regression Results for Testing H1b, H2b, H3b, H4b, H5b, H6b

Variable	Principle Climate		Organizational Deviance				
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Independent variables							
PJ		.58***	-.36***		-.27***		
DJ		.52***	-.17*		-.02		
IJ		.55***	-.29***		-.18		
Mediator							
Principle climate				-.30**	-.14, -.29***, -.20)	-.21**	-.06
Moderator							
Task-type						-.08	1.13**
Cross-level interaction							
Principle x Task type							-1.27***

Indirect effects of PJ and DWB-O *LL* 95% CI, *UL* 95% CI	[-.200, .025]
Indirect effects of DJ and DWB-O *LL* 95% CI, *UL* 95% CI	[-.246, -.063]
Indirect effects of IJ and DWB-O *LL* 95% CI, *UL* 95% CI	[-.227, -.008]
Moderated mediation effect coefficients (Boot *SE*)	-.050 (.026)
LL 95% CI, *UL* 95% CI	[-.103, -.004]

Note. OJ= organizational justice; DWB-O = organizational deviance. Bootstrap sample size = 5,000. CI= confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL*= upper limit. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

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Regression Results for Testing H1c, H2c, H3c, H4c, H5c, H6c

Variable	Egoism Climate		Organizational Deviance				
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
Independent variables							
PJ		-.40***	-.36***		-.31***		
DJ		-.36***	-.17**		-.10		
IJ		-.31***	-.29***		-.24*		
Mediator							
Egoism				.23*	-.11	.23**	.12
climate					-.19		
					-.15		
Moderator							
Task-type						-.07	-.70
Cross-level interaction							
Egoism x							.15
Task type							
Indirect effects of PJ and DWB-O *LL* 95% CI, *UI* 95% CI			[-.022, .003]				
Indirect effects of DJ and DWB-O *LL* 95% CI, *UI* 95% CI			[-.137, .008]				
Indirect effects of IJ and DWB-O *LL* 95% CI, *UI* 95% CI			[-.110, .001]				

Note. OJ= organizational justice; DWB-O = organizational deviance. Bootstrap sample size = 5,000. *LL* = lower

limit; *UL*= upper limit. *p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

In line with the procedures of Hayes and Preacher (2010), we further tested the significance of indirect tests by bootstrapping. We estimated bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals for indirect effects by bootstrapping 5,000 samples. As argued by Shrout and Bolger (2002), if zero is not in the bootstrap bias-corrected 95% confidence interval then it can be concluded that the indirect effect is not zero. As illustrated in Table 3, the confidence intervals are found to be between [-.275, -.073] and [-.319, -.012] for benevolence climate, which ultimately suggests that the indirect path of distributive and interactional justice via benevolence climate to organizational deviance is statistically different from zero and significant. Thus, only Hypothesis 2b and 2c are fully supported. The confidence intervals of principle climate, being [-.246, -.063] and [-.227, -.008], also suggest the full mediation of the principle climate between distributive and interactional justice perceptions and organizational deviance (Table 4). Hypotheses 3b and 3c are fully supported. The confidence intervals of the egoism climate suggest no mediation between different dimensions of organizational justice perceptions and deviance (Table 5). Thus, Hypotheses 4a, 4b, and 4c are not supported.

To test Hypotheses 5a, 5b, and 5c, moderated regression analyses were performed to examine the moderating effects of task type on the relationships between different dimensions of ethical climate and workplace deviance. The moderation results in Tables 3, 4, and 5 separately show that task type moderated the proposed relationship between both benevolence and principle climates and organizational deviance (Table 3, Model 7: $\beta_{IntBenevolence}$ = -.1,05, $p < .001$; Table 4, Model 7: $\beta_{IntPrinciple}$ = -1.27, $p < .001$). Employees performing non-technical tasks and perceiving benevolence and principle climates are less likely to engage in deviant behaviour than other employees performing technical tasks. The results did not generate significant support for the moderating effect of egoism climate (Table 5, Model 7: $\beta_{IntEgoism}$ = .15, $p > .05$). Thus, only Hypotheses 5a and 5b are supported.

To test Hypothesis 6, we used the PROCESS macro to calculate normal distribution-based 95% confidence intervals for the indirect effects of organizational justice perceptions on workplace deviance via benevolence climate with "technical" and "non-technical" values of task type, as well as the difference between conditional indirect effects. The indirect effect of interactional justice via benevolence climate on workplace deviance is stronger when the task type is non-technical, with b = -.078, SE = .039, and CI [-.162 -.020], than when the task type is technical, with b = -.013, SE = .016, and CI [-.048, .015]. The indirect effects of interactional justice perceptions via benevolence climate on workplace deviance differ significantly when the task type is technical versus non-technical (difference between conditional indirect effects: b = -.065, SE = .036, and CI [-.141, -.004]).

The indirect effects of distributive justice perceptions on workplace deviance via principle climate differ significantly when the task type is technical versus non-technical (difference between conditional indirect effects: b = -.050, SE = .026, and CI [-.103, -.004]). Similarly, the indirect effects of interactional justice perceptions via principle climate on workplace deviance differ significantly when the task type is technical versus non-technical (difference between conditional indirect effects: b = -.051, SE = .030, and CI [-.121, -.006]).

Across workplace deviance measures, the 95% confidence intervals of the indirect effects of organizational justice via benevolence climate included zero when the moderator (task type) was technical but excluded zero and became statistically significant when the moderator signified non-technical tasks. In other words, the indirect effect of distributive and interactional justice perceptions on organizational deviance became stronger for non-technical tasks.

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Discussion

In this paper, we have analysed the linking mechanism between organizational justice perceptions and workplace deviance in a sample of Turkish public sector employees. Grounded in social exchange theory, we have focused on the mediating effect of ethical work climate and the moderating effect of employee task type. We conclude that organizational justice perceptions positively affect benevolence and principle climates and negatively affect egoism climates. The mediation effect has been found to be significant only for benevolence and principle climates, entailing the decreasing possibility of engaging in deviant behaviour in the work setting. Moreover, the nature of the tasks that respondents performed provided a significant explanation for the strength of the positive impact of benevolence and principle climates on deviant behaviour, and the indirect effect of justice perceptions on deviance (via benevolence climate and principle climate) was stronger when the task type was non-technical rather than technical.

By taking a sample of public sector employees in Turkey as a case study, this work has examined workplace deviance as a behavioural outcome of employees' perceptions of unfairness. Responding to the question of why employees harm their organizations, we first suggested that employees often engage in such behaviour to restore equity in their organizations (Adams, 1965). We have supported this claim further by showing how perceptions of justice (injustice) lead to the generation of benevolence and principle work climates and how these ethical (unethical) contexts are less (more) likely to promote such harmful acts by individuals.

This research has several theoretical implications. First, this study contributes to the literature on workplace deviance by showing that the tendency of public sector employees in a collectivist country to engage in deviant work behaviour is negatively influenced by their justice perceptions in the work setting. Although previous research on workplace deviance (Holtz & Harold, 2013) empirically examined the association between organizational justice perceptions and workplace deviance, our study has shown that only interactional and distributive justice perceptions of public sector employees were significant in the mediation relationship. This finding is critical for public sector settings defined by high degrees of formalization and bureaucracy. In the public sector, rules and procedures are clearly established through strictly defined processes. Therefore, in the present research context, employees are largely subject to uniform procedures that are generally backed by official documents with a legal basis. For this reason, it is probable that perceptions about the fairness of procedures may not be a major concern and may not have explanatory power.

As our study highlights the importance of justice perceptions of employees in the determination of workplace deviance, it differs from the extant literature by introducing the ethical work climate as a mediator in the relationship between organizational justice and deviant work behaviour. Workplace deviance has generally been addressed by research on social psychological factors (i.e., justice and social exchange perceptions) aimed at explaining why employees engage in such acts. Despite the recent proliferation of such research, we do not know much about the process behind such behaviour (Michel & Hargis, 2017). Therefore, the present study has expanded this literature by integrating such factors with contextual determinants to provide a fuller understanding of why workplace deviance occurs.

The results of our analyses have revealed that with the incorporation of a benevolence climate, the effects of both interactional and distributive justice perceptions on workplace deviance became insignificant in comparison to the case in which a benevolence climate was not included in the model. This supported the hypothesis that a benevolence climate in an organization would play a mediating role between employees' interactional and distributive justice perceptions and deviant behaviours. Perceptions of justice in the work context contributed to the formation of a climate of social accord encouraging stereotypical good behaviour, in turn impacting employees' deviant work behaviour.

Another point to note is that, in contrast to the findings of Chen et al. (2013) and Vardi (2001), whereby both of those studies found no significant relationship between the benevolence dimension of ethical work climate and workplace deviance, we have revealed that all dimensions of the ethical climate may predict employees' deviant behaviour. Victor and Cullen's (1987) conceptualization of ethical work climates as egoism, benevolence, and principle were largely built upon Kohlberg's (1984) stages of moral development. In each climate, the ethical standard used by the employees to determine the "right" behaviour is different. Whereas in egoism and benevolence climates the reference point is self-interest and the well-being of the group, respectively, in principle climates adherence to universal values is the major factor in making decisions. In a benevolence climate, management fulfils employees' needs, values their contributions, and considers their best interests. Furthermore, this type of climate encourages employees to show concern for their co-workers' well-being (Victor & Cullen, 1988). In a work context emphasizing friendship and team interests, employees are expected to be less engaged in negative behaviours. In a benevolence climate, both employees and employers look beyond their self-interest while making decisions. According to

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Hofstede's (1984) classification of national cultures, Turkey is listed among the collectivist cultures, which refers to the importance attached to social bonds and an emotional connection to a larger group. In the same vein, in a study of public employees' values in Turkey, it was concluded that the most important values in Turkish bureaucracy are "collectivism, solidarity and harmony" in "community" or "groups" (Ömürgönülşen & Öktem, 2009). Parallel to these findings, it is highly probable that the "benevolence climates" in Turkey that prioritize socially constructed norms over individually constructed ones (Leung, 2008, p. 47), especially in the public sector, discourage deviance by emphasizing group cohesiveness over self-interest. Furthermore, our study is unique in the sense that it showed that for employees perceiving benevolence and principle climates and performing non-technical tasks, which require more interaction and coordination, the tendency to engage in deviant behaviour is less than that of other employees with more technical tasks.

Conclusion

This study has extended our understanding of the relationships among organizational justice perceptions, ethical work climate, and workplace deviance among public sector employees. Our primary findings are that (i) procedural, distributive and interactional justice perceptions are negatively related to workplace deviance; (ii) benevolence and principle climates are negatively related while an egoism climate is positively related to workplace deviance; (iii) the relationship between interactional justice perceptions and workplace deviance is fully mediated by benevolence and principle climates; (iv) the relationship between distributive justice perceptions and workplace deviance is fully mediated by benevolence and principle climates; (iv) task type moderates the relationship between benevolence and principle climates and workplace deviance; (v) task type also moderates the indirect effect of interactional justice perceptions on workplace deviance through benevolence and principle climates among public sector employees; and (vi) task type also moderates the indirect effect of distributive justice perceptions on deviance through principle climates. We believe that our findings provide a deeper understanding of the underlying dynamics that trigger workplace deviance.

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