

ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE AS ANTECEDENT OF JOB SATISFACTION: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY AMONG INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS

R. Uma

Department of Business Administration, NIFT-TEA College Of Knitwear Fashion, India

Abstract

Organizational actions involving distribution of resources, procedures involved in decisions concerning the distribution and the nature of communication for conveying the decisions are evaluated by the employees for their fairness. Organizational justice is the employee perception of the fairness of the organizational actions and decisions. The perception of justice (fairness) an employee holds towards organizational actions shapes the employee's attitude and behavior. Organizational justice – outcome relationship has been widely investigated and organizational justice is found to promote job satisfaction, organizational commitment and trust. This research has specifically investigated the impact of the dimensions of organizational justice (distributive, procedural and transactional justice) on job satisfaction among professionals employed in the Information technology industry. A sample of 146 respondents was collected by convenience sampling method. The results have proven the organizational justice as significantly related to job satisfaction. Distributive and procedural justice was found to be strong predictors of job satisfaction.

Keywords:

Organizational Justice, Job Satisfaction, Distributive Justice, Procedural Justice, Transactional Justice

1. INTRODUCTION

The pet milk theory advocates the concept – “happy workers are productive workers.” Job satisfaction is an indicator of employee happiness in the workplace and is strongly linked to employee job performance. The meta-analytic study of Judge et.al. [15], the conceptual review of Duggah [10] and the empirical works of Inuwa [14] and Khan et.al [16] have proven job satisfaction to influence employee job performance. Due to the importance of employee satisfaction for its ability in promoting job performance, it becomes significant to analyze the antecedent impact of variables that leads to employee job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is an attitudinal component and is defined as the amount of happiness and contentment an employee associates with the job. The determinants of job satisfaction constitute - individual factors, the nature of the job and situational factors. Organizational justice is a situational factor which is established as a predictor of job satisfaction. Organizational justice refers to the employee perception of the behavior of the organization, which shapes the attitude of the employees towards the organization. The dimensions of organizational justice include – distributive justice, procedural justice and transactional justice. Employees react to the fair (justice) practices inside the organization and one such reaction is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is the response of the employee for the fair treatment (justice) received by them inside the organization. The need for organizational justice and its importance in forging strong employer-employee relationships and promoting effective team work is underscored by Cropanzano et.al. [9].

Organizations are closely coordinated social systems for the attainment of certain goals with a focus on profit. The relationship that governs the employer-employee is based on “quid pro quo” – giving something in exchange for receiving something. Employees offer their labor (physical/ mental) for compensation/ benefits from the organization. Though the exchange relationship is dominated by socio-economic motive, there exists a common human need for equal treatment inside the organization. Employee job satisfaction is not limited to fulfillment of physiological, safety, security, and social and esteem needs but includes fulfillment of the need for fairness (justice) in the methods they are treated within the organization.

Organizational justice is the aggregate of distributive, procedural and transactional justice. Together the three elements determine the overall fairness perception. But each dimension of justice is distinct in composition and differs in predicting organizational outcomes. Hence from an organizational context each of these dimensions must be individually examined for its antecedent value. The work of Ambrose and Schminke, [4] have established that though distributive justice, procedural justice and transactional justice together constitute organizational justice and are correlated, they must be treated as three different components working together for overall justice. The work of Colquitt, [8] endorsed the four-component conceptualization (distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational justice) of organizational justice and proved that the four components vary in their impact in producing organizational outcomes. The study by Folger and Konovsky, [13] analyzed the consequences of distributive and procedural justice in which distributive justice was proven as significantly related to outcome satisfaction and procedural justice to be significant in relation to organizational commitment and trust. Moorman, [19] have confirmed the distinction between procedural and interactional justice. This research has examined both the aggregate impact of organizational justice in promoting job satisfaction and also the individual impact of each dimension on the elements of job satisfaction.

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To investigate the impact of organizational justice in promoting job satisfaction among professionals employed in the Information technology industry.
- To investigate the impact of the different dimensions of organizational justice towards the various elements of job satisfaction among professionals employed in the Information technology industry.

1.2 THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The antecedent ability of organizational justice with respect to job satisfaction rests on the foundation of the motivational theory of needs and equity theory. Needs relate to satisfaction.

Satisfaction is the contentment, which an individual experiences when a need is fulfilled. Needs arise out of the physiological or psychological imbalance experienced by the individual. Fulfillment of needs makes an individual satisfied and non-fulfillment leads to frustration. Organization is a place which offers the employees a platform for satisfying the physiological, security, social, esteem needs. Along with these needs, employees also feel the need for organizational justice. Inside an organization, an employee's need for justice is said to be fulfilled, when the employee perceives fairness in the organizational policies, procedures and practices (degree of fairness in the distribution of rewards, the procedure used in determining the distribution and the method of interpersonal communication determines job satisfaction). Distributive justice satisfies the economic need of employees through a system of fair compensation. Procedural justice satisfies the social need of employees through a system of procedural fairness which creates trust among employees towards organization and superiors, thereby offering a platform for harmonious interpersonal relationship. Transactional justice satisfies the status and esteem needs of employees through maintaining dignity and politeness in the communication process, as dignity and polite treatment is a symbol of respect an employee garners inside the organization. When the employees perceive the organizational environment as fair, their need for justice is fulfilled and leads to development of favorable attitude among them. Job satisfaction being attitudinal is a consequence of the fair perception associated with employee experience of the treatment meted out to him in the organization. When the justice perception is high, it enhances job satisfaction Choudhary et.al. [7].

According to the equity theory of motivation, employees are motivated to fulfill the need for maintaining fairness in the exchange relationship between their efforts (inputs) and rewards (outcomes). Labor is exchanged for benefits. When the employee perceives the outcome – input ratio as fair, his need for fairness in the exchange relation is fulfilled and makes him satisfied with the job. The above theories offer credibility for the antecedent power of organizational justice with respect to job satisfaction.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE

Organizational justice has evolved in three phases. The first phase began with the equity theory of Adam's which was concerned with the maintenance of balance in the relationship between employee effort (input) and benefit (outcome). Imbalance in the relation affects employee behavior. The equity theory emphasized equality in the distribution of resources/rewards and the notion of organizational justice in the initial period was limited only to the "distributive" aspect. The second phase began with the work of Levanthal who underscored the need for fairness in the decision making procedures that dealt with the distribution of resources. Procedures that are followed in resource allocation must be fair and fairness in the decision making process and procedures was termed as "procedural justice". The third phase was about the fairness in the interaction/communication process between superiors and subordinates involved in the distribution of resources and decision making process in organization. Bies and Moag pioneered the importance

of fairness in communication process. The need for fairness in the communication process refers to the dignity and respect in the interaction process involving superiors and subordinates and the need for information accuracy in communication. "Transactional justice" was the term given for fairness in communication process. Justice in organizational context was studied from three different perspectives until 1987, when Greenberg coined the term "Organizational Justice" and defined as the employee evaluation of the behavior of the organization, bringing under its fold distributive, procedural and transactional dimensions.

2.2 ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE AND JOB SATISFACTION

The study by Ajala [1], Mahboob [17] and Ali and Omran [2] have confirmed all the three dimensions of organizational justice as having significant relation with job satisfaction. The work of Alzubi [3] has proven employee perception of organizational justice as an antecedent of job satisfaction. Employee perception of fairness in the reward system (distributive justice) inside the organization as a cause for job satisfaction is established by Bakhshi et.al. [5] and Sethi et.al. [21]. The work of Choudhary et.al. [6] offers a theoretical reason behind the antecedent ability of organizational justice in promoting job satisfaction. According to the authors employee perception of fairness in outcomes, procedures and interpersonal exchanges shapes their attitudes. Choudhary et.al. [7] have established that higher the perception of justice, higher the level of job satisfaction. Job satisfaction being an attitudinal component is determined by organizational justice. This theoretical underpinning have been empirically proven by Dunder and Tabancali [11] in their study and have concluded that whenever employee perception of organizational justice rises, there is a corresponding rise in job satisfaction. Fatt et.al. [12] have underscored a weak relation between distributive justice and job satisfaction and a strong relation between procedural justice and job satisfaction. The predictive power of distributive and interactional justice in promoting job satisfaction is proven by Menon and Wadke [18]. The work of Nurak and Riana [20] found interactional justice and informational justice as valid predictors of job satisfaction, whereas distributive and procedural justice was found non-significant. Sia and Tan [22] confirmed the role of distributive justice and interactional justice as positively affecting job satisfaction but not procedural justice. The work of Usmani and Jamal [23] is significant as it involved the elements of temporal justice (time) and spatial justice (resource distribution) besides the three components of organizational justice for their impact on job satisfaction and concluded that distributive, interactional and temporal justice as significantly related to job satisfaction. The work of Yaghoubi et.al. [24] have confirmed the positive relation between all the three components of organizational justice with job satisfaction. The effect of all the three dimensions of organizational justice on the determinants of job satisfaction (supervision, coworkers, pay, promotion and nature of job) was analyzed and it was established that procedural justice was positively correlated with all the elements of job satisfaction whereas distributive justice and interactional justice positively related with all the elements of job satisfaction excepting the nature of the job Zainlalipour et.al. [25].

2.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Independent variable		Dependent variable
Organizational justice	→	Job satisfaction
Distributive justice	→	Job Content
	→	Work environment
Procedural justice	→	Leadership style
	→	Equal pay for equal work
Transactional justice	→	Promotion chances
	→	Interpersonal relation
	→	Job security

2.4 HYPOTHESIS

- H₁: There is a significant relation between the dimensions of organizational justice and job content.
- H₂: There is a significant relation between the dimensions of organizational justice and work environment.
- H₃: There is a significant relation between the dimensions of organizational justice and leadership style.
- H₄: There is a significant relation between the dimensions of organizational justice and equal pay for equal work.
- H₅: There is a significant relation between the dimensions of organizational justice and promotion chances.
- H₆: There is a significant relation between the dimensions of organizational justice and interpersonal relation.
- H₇: There is a significant relation between the dimensions of organizational justice job security.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The type of research is descriptive. The samples for the study are employees in the information technology industry. Convenience sampling was used in this work and the sample size is 146. Electronic survey method was used to collect the data from the respondents.

Questionnaire was constructed to tap the respondents' opinion towards the attributes of organizational justice and job satisfaction. The collected data was examined for its statistical significance by correlation and multiple regression analysis using SPSS version 23.

3.1 ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE QUESTIONNAIRE

The three dimensions of Organizational justice were measured involving 10 attributes.

- Components of distributive justice – fairness in outcome distribution, fairness in work load, fairness in promotion, fairness in resource allocation.
- Components of Procedural justice – unbiased decision making, decision based on accurate information, freedom in sharing opinion.

- Components of Transactional justice – dignity in communication, accuracy and appropriateness of information, politeness during interpersonal communication

3.2 JOB SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire on job satisfaction involved 7 elements – job content, work environment, leadership style, equal pay for equal work, chances for promotion, interpersonal relation and job security.

Table.1. Reliability analysis

Variable	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Job satisfaction	7	.981
Organizational justice	10	.990

The Cronbach's alpha values are indicative of the reliability of the measuring scale.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table.2. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient between the dimensions of organizational justice and job satisfaction.

Variables	1	2	3	4
Job Satisfaction	1			
Distributive Justice	.952*	1		
Procedural Justice	.979*	.980*	1	
Transactional Justice	.952*	.916*	.938*	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The values of correlation coefficient indicate a strong and positive relation between the dimensions of organizational justice and job satisfaction.

Table.3. Multiple regression between the job satisfaction element of job content and the dimensions of organizational justice

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error Estimate
1	.956 ^a	.913	.910	.66328

Predictors: transactional justice, distributive justice, procedural justice; Dependent variable: Job content

Table.4. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	4.029	.380		10.617	.001
Distributive Justice	-.199	.094	-.381	-2.116	.038
Procedural Justice	.667	.112	1.239	5.954	.001
Transactional Justice	.074	.082	.093	.910	.366

Dependent Variable: Job content

Level of significance @5%

The R square value from Table.4 for job content is.913 (91.3%), which indicates that the dimensions of organizational justice (distributive, procedural and transactional) together account for 91.3% variation in the job satisfaction element of job content.

The significance value from Table.5 for distributive and procedural justice ($p < .05$), indicates a significant relation with job content, whereas transactional justice with ($p > .05$), indicates a non-significant relation with job content. The overall model is proven to be significant leading to acceptance of H_1 .

Table.5. Multiple regression between the job satisfaction element of work environment and the dimensions of organizational justice

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error Estimate
1	.953 ^a	.908	.904	.29750

Predictors: transactional justice, distributive justice, procedural justice; Dependent variable: Work environment

Table.6. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	.123	.170		.722	.473
Distributive Justice	-.077	.042	-.340	-1.834	.071
Procedural Justice	.176	.050	.751	3.505	.001
Transactional Justice	.191	.037	.547	5.211	.001

Dependent Variable: Work environment; Level of significance @5%

The R square value from Table.6 for work environment being .908 (90.8%), which means that dimensions of organizational justice (distributive, procedural and transactional) together account for 90.8% variation in the job satisfaction element of work environment.

The significance value from Table.7 for procedural and transactional justice ($p < .05$), indicates a significant relation with work environment, whereas distributive justice with ($p > .05$), indicates a non-significant relation with work environment.

The overall model is not significant leading to the rejection of H_2 .

Table.7. Multiple regression between the job satisfaction element of leadership style and the dimensions of organizational justice

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error Estimate
1	.952 ^a	.906	.902	.31316

Predictors: transactional justice, distributive justice, procedural justice

Dependent variable: Leadership style

Table.8. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	.263	.179		1.470	.146
Distributive Justice	-.132	.044	-.556	-2.964	.004
Procedural Justice	.323	.053	1.325	6.114	.001
Transactional Justice	.063	.039	.174	1.638	.106

Dependent Variable: Leadership style

Level of significance @5%

The R square value from Table.7 for leadership style being .906 (90.6%), indicating that the dimensions of organizational justice (distributive, procedural and transactional) together account for 90.6% variation in the job satisfaction element of leadership style.

The significance value from Table.8 for distributive and procedural justice ($p < .05$), indicates a significant relation with leadership style, whereas transactional justice with ($p > .05$), indicates a non-significant relation with leadership style. The overall model is not significant leading to the rejection of H_3 .

Table.9. Multiple regression between the job satisfaction element of equal pay for equal work and the dimensions of organizational justice

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error Estimate
1	.942 ^a	.887	.882	.37053

Predictors: transactional justice, distributive justice, procedural justice

Dependent variable: Equal pay for equal work

Table.10. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	-.055	.212		-.258	.797
Distributive Justice	.113	.053	.443	2.147	.035
Procedural Justice	.165	.063	.628	2.637	.010
Transactional Justice	-.053	.046	-.134	-1.150	.254

Dependent Variable: Equal pay for equal work

Level of significance @5%

The R square value from Table.9 for equality in pay being .887 (88.7%), indicating that the dimensions of organizational justice (distributive, procedural and transactional) together account for 88.7% variation in the job satisfaction element of equality in pay.

The significance value from Table.10 for distributive and procedural justice ($p < .05$), indicates a significant relation with equality in pay, whereas transactional justice with ($p > .05$), indicates a non-significant relation with equality in pay. The overall model is not significant leading to the rejection of H_4 .

Table.11. Multiple regression between job satisfaction element of chances for promotion and the dimensions of organizational justice

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error Estimate
1	.949 ^a	.900	.896	.31231

Predictors: transactional justice, distributive justice, procedural justice

Dependent variable: Chances for Promotion

Table.12. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	.355	.179		1.987	.051
Distributive Justice	.059	.044	.257	1.332	.187
Procedural Justice	.164	.053	.696	3.118	.003
Transactional Justice	.000	.039	.000	-.003	.997

Dependent Variable: Chances for Promotion

Level of significance @5%

The R square value from Table.11 for chances of promotion being .900 (90.0%), indicating that the dimensions of organizational justice (distributive, procedural and transactional) together account for 90% variation in the job satisfaction element of chances for promotion.

The significance value from Table.12 for procedural justice ($p < .05$), indicates a significant relation with chances for promotion, whereas distributive and transactional justice with ($p > .05$), indicates a non-significant relation with chances for promotion. The overall model is not significant leading to the rejection of H_5 .

Table.13. Multiple regression between the job satisfaction element of interpersonal relation and the dimensions of organizational justice

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error Estimate
1	.932 ^a	.869	.863	.26879

Predictors: transactional justice, distributive justice, procedural justice

Dependent variable: Interpersonal relation

Table.14. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	1.085	.154		7.055	.001
Distributive Justice	-.089	.038	-.518	-2.336	.022
Procedural Justice	.066	.045	.374	1.458	.149
Transactional Justice	.277	.033	1.049	8.357	.001

Dependent Variable: Interpersonal relation

Level of significance @5%

The R square value from Table.13 for interpersonal relation being .869 (86.9%), indicating that the dimensions of organizational justice (distributive, procedural and transactional) together account for 86.9% variation in the job satisfaction element of interpersonal relation.

The significance value from Table.14 for distributive and transactional justice ($p < .05$), indicates a significant relation with interpersonal relation, whereas procedural justice with ($p > .05$), indicates a non-significant relation with interpersonal relation. The overall model is significant leading to the acceptance of H_6 .

Table.15. Multiple regression between the job satisfaction element of job security and the dimensions of organizational justice

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error Estimate
1	.914 ^a	.835	.828	.36511

Predictors: transactional justice, distributive justice, procedural justice

Dependent variable: Job security

Table.16. Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	.742	.209		3.553	.001
Distributive Justice	-.025	.052	-.122	-.491	.625
Procedural Justice	.101	.062	.470	1.640	.106
Transactional Justice	.185	.045	.576	4.101	.001

Dependent Variable: Job security

Level of significance @5%

The R square value from Table.15 for job security being .835 (83.5%), indicating that the dimensions of organizational justice

(distributive, procedural and transactional) together account for 83.5% variation in the job satisfaction element of job security.

The significance value from Table.16 for transactional justice ($p < .05$), indicates a significant relation with job security, whereas distributive and procedural justice with ($p > .05$), indicates a non-significant relation with job security. The overall model is significant leading to the acceptance of H₇.

5. CONCLUSION

Multiple regression analysis used for hypothesis testing has measured the interacting and combined effect of the three dimensions of justice on dimensions of job satisfaction. As regards the overall combined impact of the dimensions of organizational justice on the elements of job satisfaction, the results support H₁, H₆ and H₇ and the following hypothesis - H₂, H₃, H₄ and H₅ are rejected. Though the combined effect is not significant in certain cases, the impact of individual dimension of organizational justice on the dimensions of job satisfaction is found to be significant. Distributive justice is significant in relation with the job satisfaction elements of job content, leadership style, equal pay for equal work and interpersonal relationship and non-significant with work environment, promotion and job security. Procedural justice is significant in relation with job content, work environment, leadership style, equal pay for equal work and chances for promotion and non-significant with interpersonal relationship and job security. Transactional justice is significant in relation with only three elements of job satisfaction – work environment, interpersonal relationship and job security. The findings are in sync with the works of Colquitt, [8] and Folger and Konovsky, [13] who underscored the differential impact created by distributive, procedural and transactional justice. Due to the significant relation of procedural and distributive justice with most of the elements of job satisfaction, procedural and distributive justice are proven as strong predictors of job satisfaction among information technology professionals. The predictive ability of transactional justice is weak as it is found to be significant only with three elements of job satisfaction.

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