

Perception of Organizational Justice among University Teachers: An Empirical Study

Shayista Majeed¹, Sabzar Ahmad Peerzadah²,

Dr. Sabiya Mufti³, Lumat- ul- Noor⁴

^{1,2}Research scholar, Department of Commerce, University of Kashmir, J&K, India.

³Sr. Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, University of Kashmir, J&K, India.

⁴Contractual Lecturer, Department of Higher Education, J&K, India.

Abstract

Organizational justice is considered as a significant factor affecting the behavior of employees at their workplaces. It refers to the perception of fairness that employees hold about their organization. These perceptions, in turn, have a strong bearing on their level of commitment, satisfaction and performance, thereby affecting the overall organizational efficiency. Keeping it in view, the present study empirically examined the perception of Organizational Justice in the University of Kashmir. The focus resided on various dimensions of organizational justice, that is, distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice. The required data were collected from teachers using the validated form of Organizational Justice questionnaire developed by Niehoff & Moorman [1]. The obtained data were analysed using Descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient in SPSS (version 16). The findings revealed that a moderate level of Organizational Justice is prevalent in the University and there exist significant positive relationships among all the three dimensions. The study suggests the University administration to make more efforts to enhance fairness perceptions among its teachers so that the university as a whole will function more efficiently.

Keywords: Organizational justice, Distributive justice, Procedural justice, Interactional justice, University.

1. INTRODUCTION

The construct of justice is regarded as the greatest interest of human beings on this earth. It has been a topic of philosophical research since ages. Any social organization, which is considered as the symbol of civilization, will cease to exist without this construct. It is one of the basic principles of any social association. Apparently in contemporary times where awareness levels have reached new heights, huge emphasis is laid on the employees' perception of justice at the workplace [2] [3]. Organizational justice can simply be understood as the perception of overall fairness with regard to pay, promotional opportunities, responsibilities, methods and interpersonal behaviors [4] [5]. These perceptions are

considered as significant antecedents to several job attitudes and outcomes like satisfaction [6], trust [7], commitment [8], motivation[9], sabotage behavior [10], turnover intentions [3], absenteeism[11] and organizational citizenship behavior [5]. These, in turn, do have a bearing on the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization, thereby affecting its long run success. Hence it has become all the more necessary for organizations to give due cognizance to this concept of justice. Pertinently this holds true for educational institutions wherein dedicated teachers are essential for accomplishing the very basic objective of their existence. These institutions are meant to enlighten the society by way of nurturing the young minds in the best possible manner. And it is only through the efforts of committed and dedicated teachers that these organizations can make a real difference to the world. It is, therefore, necessary to provide teachers with such an environment where they can perceive fairness in all aspects of work. Taking cue from the extant literature, the present study is a humble attempt to explore the perception of justice among university teachers in Kashmir valley.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Historically it was Homans [11] who first proposed the concept of justice in organizations in the form of distributive justice. However, it was Adams Equity theory that popularised this form of justice in organizations. Equity theory states that an employee compares his ratio of input- output with the ratio of other employees. When these ratios are not proportionate, he perceives this situation as unfair [13].

Greenberg [14] coined the term “Organizational Justice” and defined it as the perception of fairness that the employees hold about the workplace. Further, these perceptions are vital for individual satisfaction as well as for better organizational performance; therefore emphasis should be on making more efforts to achieve this goal. Extant literature has broadly identified three dimensions of organizational justice namely Distributive justice, Procedural justice and Interactional justice.

The perceived fairness with regard to the allocation of resources in an organization is referred to as distributive justice [13]. People in organizations are sensitive to know whether distribution of resources match suitable norms [15]. If distribution of resources be it rewards, responsibilities and other outcomes are as per the norms, distributive justice is said to have occurred [16]. Moorman [5] simply defines it as the fairness of outcomes that an employee receives from the organization such as pay, promotion etc.

Procedural justice is the fairness with regard to the processes that are employed while making decisions relating to distribution of the organizational resources [15]. Employees perceive procedures to be fair when they encourage fair rewards and other outcomes. When an employee receives an outcome that is not in consonance to his wishes, but the procedure that was applied to determine such outcomes seems to be fair, this eases his level of discontentment [17] [14].

Bies & Moag [18] introduced a new dimension to the construct of Organizational justice and entitled it as Interactional justice. These researchers acknowledged that along with assessing the outcomes and procedures, employees also observe the fairness of interpersonal treatment at the workplace. Basically, Interactional justice comprises two aspects- interpersonal justice and informational justice. Treating employees with respect, dignity and courtesy comes under interactional part, while sharing relevant information with employees comes under informational part [19].

Organizational justice is considered as an elemental necessity for the effective functioning of an organization [20]. These perceptions have been associated to many critical outcomes for the organization [2]. In their meta-analytic study, Cohen- Charash & Spector [3] found both procedural and distributive justice as important determinants of turnover intentions, while interactional justice was comparatively weaker predictor. The study further revealed distributive and procedural justice as significant predictors of OCB. Colquitt et al [2] also found workplace justice as an important determinant of job performance. Procedural and distributive justice is also found to impact the commitment level of employees [8]. It can, therefore, be said that justice is a key determinant for the survival and growth of any organization.

III.OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To explore the perception of organizational justice among the sample respondents.
- To identify the relationships among various dimensions of Organizational justice.
- To identify the relationships of its various dimensions with overall organizational justice among the sample respondents.
- To provide suggestions on the basis of findings to the management of universities in general and to the management of University of Kashmir in particular.

IV.RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample

The data for the present study were collected from eight faculties of the University of Kashmir viz., Faculty of Biological Sciences, Faculty of Physical & Material Sciences, Faculty of Applied Sciences & Technology, Faculty of Business Studies, Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Social Science. Using simple random sampling technique, 115 questionnaires were distributed. Out of these only 100 were received back in which 10 were discarded due to insufficient information. Hence, the total sample under study comprised only 90 teachers, representing a response rate of 78.26%.

Measuring Instrument

In order to assess the perception of organizational justice among the sample respondents, the validated form of organizational justice scale developed by Niehoff & Moorman [1] was used. The scale consists of three dimensions viz. Distributive justice (five items), Procedural justice (six items) and Interactional justice (nine items). A seven point Likert scale was used to record the responses. To assess the reliability of the scale, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated, which came out to be 0.942. Generally, an Alpha coefficient of more than 0.7 is considered as highly reliable. Hence, it is clear that the instrument for the present study is highly reliable.

Data analysis tools

The collected data were carefully scrutinized and coded, so that the information could be brought to proximity. Using SPSS (version 16), the data were analysed by employing tests like mean, standard deviation and Pearson's correlation coefficient.

V.DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

- **Descriptive Analysis**

Table1: Descriptive Statistics of Organizational justice

S. No.	Dimensions	Mean score	Standard deviation	Rank
1.	Distributive justice	5.38	0.98	1
2.	Procedural justice	4.60	1.31	3
3.	Interactional justice	4.99	1.33	2
	Organizational justice	4.99	1.20	

From the above table, it can be comprehended that the sample respondents perceive a moderate level of organizational justice which is evident with mean score of 4.99 and a standard deviation of 1.20 on

a seven point Likert scale. Further, Dimension wise analysis reveals that the perception of Distributive justice among the sample respondents is quite high as is evident by its mean score of 5.38 followed by interactional justice with a mean score of 4.99. While as, only a moderate level of procedural justice is perceived by the sample respondents which is indicated by its mean value of 4.60 and standard deviation of 1.31.

- **Correlational Analysis**

Table 2: Showing the Correlation amongst the dimensions of Organizational Justice

	Organizational justice	Distributive justice	Procedural justice	Interactional justice
Organizational justice	1			
Distributive justice	0.548**	1		
Procedural justice	0.614**	0.261*	1	
Interactional justice	0.668*	0.208*	0.638**	1

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

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

In order to examine the relationships among various dimensions of Organizational justice, Pearson's correlation coefficient test was employed. Table 2 clearly shows that all these dimensions are significantly positively correlated to each other. This indicates that an increase in the perception of one dimension of justice will lead to an increase in other dimensions and vice versa. Further, it is also revealed that amongst these dimensions, there exists strong positive correlation between procedural justice and interactional justice ($r = 0.638$, $p < 0.01$) followed by distributive justice and procedural justice ($r = 0.261$, $p < 0.05$). In addition, there exists a significant positive but weak correlation between the dimensions of distributive and Interactional justice ($r = 0.208$, $p < 0.05$) among the sample respondents.

Table 2 also clearly indicates that there exist significant strong positive correlations between overall organizational justice and its various dimensions among the sample respondents, with the strongest correlation between interactional justice and overall organizational justice perceptions ($r = 0.668$, $p > 0.05$). This is followed by the correlation between procedural and overall organizational justice ($r =$

0.614, $p < 0.01$) and correlation between distributive justice and overall organizational justice ($r = 0.548$, $p < 0.01$).

VI.RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The present study's main objective was to explore the perception of organizational justice among teaching faculty in the University of Kashmir. An in-depth analysis of the data collected revealed that the sample respondents perceive a moderate level of justice in the University (Mean = 4.99 & Std Deviation = 1.20). This indicates that the faculty perceives University administration as moderately fair with regard to different aspects of the work. Since justice is a subjective concept, it therefore tries to capture an individual's beliefs with regard to fair and unfair. It does not give regard to objective reality [21]. Although the University Administration may be objectively fair in its actions, but it is the perception of Faculty that ultimately matters. Hence, it can be concluded that there prevails a moderate level of justice in the University.

The findings further revealed that the sample respondents perceive high level of distributive justice in comparison to other two dimensions. This indicates that the faculty is more confident about fairness with regard to the distribution of rewards like salary and perks, responsibilities and workload. The study also found moderate level of interactional justice perceived by the sample respondents, indicating that the faculty feels moderate level of fairness with regard to the treatment from higher authorities and explanations provided for making decisions regarded to their job. However, the faculty perceives the methods and processes used to determine their rewards moderately fair. This indicates slight lack of consistency in making decisions and less regard to their voices before and after decisions are made.

The present study also found strong positive correlations among the dimensions of organizational justice among the sample respondents. This implies any increase in fairness perception of Faculty on any of these dimensions is likely to increase their perception of fairness on other dimensions as well. This goes in line with previous researchers' studies who have stated that these three dimensions are interrelated but distinct [21][22]. Apparently the correlation between interactional justice and procedural justice is the strongest one ($r = 0.638$, $p < 0.01$). This delineates that when the Faculty is treated fairly by the higher authorities and are provided adequate explanations for taking certain decisions regarding their jobs, they tend to perceive the procedures adopted for such decisions to be fair and vice versa. The results also found significant positive correlations between its various dimensions with overall organizational justice involving the highest correlation between interactional justice and overall organizational justice ($r = 0.668$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates than when the faculty perceives more fairness in interactions with the higher authorities of University and fairness in

providing adequate information regarding their job related decisions, they tend to perceive more of organizational fairness and vice versa.

VII.CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Experts in the field of management and Organizational behavior are less interested in knowing what is fair but bother about employees' perception of what is fair [19]. These behavioural experts are keenly interested in knowing why people view certain actions as fair, and the reciprocal behavior that follows from these judgements. Since the present study explored that the teaching faculty of university perceives a moderate level of fairness with regard to overall working of the University; it is all the more necessary for the University administration to take serious efforts towards this end. The university may be fair in its own place, but it is the perception of its teaching faculty that matters. So the university administration should try to provide such work environment wherein teachers feel more fairness with regard to the procedures used to determine the outcomes. There should be more consistency with regard to the processes and methods employed in determining the outcomes. As indicated by results that interactional justice perceptions are strongly correlated with overall justice perceptions, it is therefore suggested to enhance and maintain good interpersonal relationships at the university. The teachers should perceive fair treatment in every aspect of work, which in turn will lead to positive work outcomes like commitment, job satisfaction, trust, organizational citizenship behavior and the like. This will eventually lead to the betterment of the institution in general and add to its effectiveness and overall efficiency.

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