Role of Perceived Organizational Justice in Job Satisfaction: Evidence from Higher Education Institutions of Pakistan

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Abstract
From the last 35 years, empirical evidence on organizational justice and its impact on work-related outcomes such as in-role performance, extra-role performance, turnover intentions, organizational commitment, trust, motivation and job satisfaction endorsed its significant importance not only for management researchers but also for business organizations. However, limited researches are available on whether or not fairness perceptions can foster the teacher’s job satisfaction employed by higher education institutions of Pakistan. Hence, this study is focused on exploring the relationship between organizational justice (and dimensions) and job satisfaction while taking faculty designation into consideration. For this purpose, data was collected from 463 faculty members serving in public and private HEIs of Pakistan. Regression analyses were employed to address the research question. Implications for academic administrators and future researchers are presented.

Keywords: Organizational Justice, Job Satisfaction, Faculty, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), Pakistan

Introduction:
In today’s competitive world, human resource management played a very crucial role in developing organizations and its sustainability. The intense competition among the competitors and swift escalation of economy entirely changed the rhythm of the employees’ performance, physical and mental development at the workplace. To figure out the current environment of different organizations, it is become inevitable to respond to critical question regarding how workers’ behaviors and attitudes influences psychological, individual and organizational factors (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Van Dick, 2004; Meyer & Allen, 1997). Fairness perceptions holds an important position in the decisions and processes as per human resource aspect (Thurston and McNall, 2010; Jawahar, 2007; Cohen-Charash and Spector, 2001) such as pay, benefits and other compensation facets. In actual fact, fairness in compensation received, decisions regarding the compensation-related process and the way this information is communicated to all the employees hold an integral role in formulating the responses about the compensatory system (Nelson et al., 2008; Milkovich and Newman, 2008).

Greenberg (1990) reviewed the literature pertaining to organizational justice and noted that “social scientists have long recognized the importance of the ideals of justice as a basic requirement for the effective functioning of organizations and the personal satisfaction of the individuals they employ”. He also declared the justice as “first virtue of social institutions”. Organizational justice mainly concentrates on the workplace’s fairness which influences numerous organizational and individual work-related factors like turnover intentions, absenteeism, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, role breadth, job performance, leader-member exchange, trust, leadership and job satisfaction (e.g., Lambert, Hogan, &
Griffin, 2007; Vermunt & Steensma, 2003; Bakhshi & Kumar, 2009; Hubbel & Chory-Assad, 2005; Judge & Colquitt, 2004; Wat and Shaffer, 2005; Byrne, 2005; Greenberg, 2004; Colquitt et al., 2001; Boer et al., 2002).

In the light of above literature, several researches were carried out among the relationship of organizational justice and work related behaviors, but mostly researches were conducted at business context in western countries. Lam et al. (2002) claimed that “studies of the effects of distributive and procedural justice do not provide consistent and mutually supportive conclusions as to generalizability across cultures”. Taking the limited literature into consideration in Asia specifically Pakistan, the objective of this current research is to determine the relationship of organizational justice dimensions with job satisfaction among the faculty members serving in public and private sector institutions of higher learning in Pakistan.

Literature Review:

In the year of 2007 “of Education Administration” published its special issue on “Leadership, Learning and Social Justice” to contribute the literature pertaining to learning and justice in educational context of different countries. Number of articles were published (e.g., Fua, 2007; Normore et al., 2007; Kana and Aitken, 2007; Skrla et al., 2007; McMahon, 2007; Chiu and Walker, 2007; Brooks and Jean-Marie, 2007; Landorf and Nevin, 2007; Stevenson, 2007; Collard, 2007) for enlightening the theme of justice in numerous countries like Hong Kong, Canada, Tonga, New Zealand, UK, United States of America and Australia. In educational scenario especially in higher education, the most important contributor for organization is to nurture the role of organizational justice in educational institutions. Researchers (see Hauenstein et al., 2001, Lind, 2001a; van den Bos & Lind, 2002; Lind, 2001b; Ambrose & Arnaud, 2005; Lind & van den Bos, 2002) also suggested that the paradigm shifting concerning overall fairness may give comprehensive understanding the role of justice in organizational settings.

Numerous studies used organizational justice with its other three dimensions in organizational research as explanatory variables (e.g., Sweeney and McFarlin, 1993; Leventhal, 1976; Alexander and Ruderman, 1987; McFarlin and Sweeney, 1992; Folger and Konovsky, 1989; Lind and Tyler, 1988; Lam et al., 2002; Greenberg, 1990). Organizational justice can be defined as the employee’s perception regarding their treatment in the organization fairly and honestly (Elovainio et al., 2005) and the outcomes of these processes are fair or not (Hubbel & Chory-Assad, 2005). Cremer (2005) depicted organizational justice as the dominating factor in organizational life. In existing literature, organizational justice characterized into three broad categories named “distributive”, “procedural”, and “interactional” justice (Martinez-tur et al., 2006).

Distributive justice, recognized as first sub-dimension of organization justice, mainly considered with the workers’ perception in the fairness of outcomes (Greenberg, 1987) such as monetary rewards obtained by the workers from the organization (Colquitt et al., 2006; Elovainio et al., 2004; Ramamooorthy & Flood, 2004; Greenberg, 2006; Aryee, Budhwar, & Chen, 2002). The first notion came out from the literature was distributive justice which is defined as by Moorman (1991) as “the fairness of outcomes an employee receives such as pay and promotions”. This type of justice based on equity theory which emphasized on the judgments made by the employees about the outcomes (for example promotion, pay) offered
by the organization against their effort by which they work or in accordance with given criteria (Cropanzano and Greenberg, 1997; Hubbel & Chory-Assad, 2005; Blakely et al., 2005; Colquitt et al., 2006; Alder & Ambrose, 2005). Distributive justice also considered as the leading factor toward organizational effectiveness (Tang and Sarsfield-Baldwin, 1996).

Procedural justice introduced by Thibaut and Walker (1975) during their research on dispute resolution procedures. Colquitt et al. (2001) claimed that distributive and procedural justice is distinct constructs in nature. It refers to the fairness in the process of decision making about resource allocation (Korsgaard et al., 1995; Farmer et al., 2003; Alexander and Ruderman, 1987). Procedural justice is the employees’ observations about fairness in rules and regulation which are used to make a decision that will lead to the ultimate outcome (Elovainio et al., 2004; Greenberg, 2004; Aryee et al. 2002; Byrne, 2005; Greenberg, 2001). Moorman (1991) defined it as “the fairness of the procedures used in determining employee outcomes”.

Interactional justice is considered as key aspect in workplace settings because of its relationship with unfair and fair treatment (Martinez-Tur et al., 2006; Cohen-Charash and Spector, 2001). Greenberg (1990) defined it as “the interpersonal treatment employees receive from decision makers and the adequacy with which the formal decision-making procedures are explained”. Afterward, literature proved two subcategory of interactional justice known as interpersonal and informational justice and should considered as separately (Colquitt, 2001). Greenberg (1990) proposed two specific type of interpersonal treatment; (1) informational justice who primarily focuses why the specific outcome of an activity had come in certain fashion, and (2) interpersonal justice provides the degree of which employees were treated with dignity, politeness and respect by people.

In organizational studies, Currivan (2000) claimed that job satisfaction is widely studied as work outcomes in organizational settings. Numerous researchers (for instance Goris et al., 2000; Smith et al., 1969) conceptualized job satisfaction as multifaceted instrument consisted of “work itself”, “quality of supervision”, “relationships with coworkers”, “promotion opportunities”; and “pay” whereas some researchers (Currivan, 2000) taken is as global instrument for measuring job satisfaction of the employees. Spector (1996) defined it as “the extent to which people like their jobs”, while Cranny, Smith and Stone (1992) referred it as the employee’s emotional or effective response towards the job. Role ambiguity, dangerousness, role conflict and role overload associated with lower satisfaction regarding the job (Lambert et. al., 2005, 2004; Lambert & Paoline, 2005). Job autonomy, satisfaction with pay, integration, quality of supervision, training, equitable treatment and incentive program boast the employees’ satisfaction in the organization (Griffin, 2001; Lambert, 2004; K. Wright et al., 1997; Lambert et al. 2006; Lambert et al., 2002; Stohr et al., 1994; Dennis, 1998; Hepburn & Knepper, 1993; Griffin et al., 2005; Hepburn, 1987; Lambert & Paoline, 2005; Whitehead & Lindquist, 1986; Lambert et al., 2004). Though the fairness perceptions is important to all decision pertaining to human resource and its processes (Jawahar, 2007; Thurston and McNall, 2010) but, it particularly important to the employees’ satisfaction with the job as well.

Organizational justice which primarily focuses on the fairness at workplace put stronger impact on different attitudes of the employees like turnover intentions, absenteeism, role breadth, job satisfaction, job performance, leader-member exchange, trust, leadership and organizational commitment (e.g. Bakhshi & Kumar, 2009; Lambert, Hogan, & Griffin, 2007;
Hubbel & Chory-Assad, 2005; Byrne, 2005; Wat and Shaffer, 2005; Greenberg, 2004; Judge & Colquitt, 2004; Vermunt & Steensma, 2003; Boer et al., 2002; Lam et al., 2002; Colquitt et al., 2001). Folger and Konovsky (1989) found positive association among the dimensions of organizational justice with organizational commitment and job satisfaction. The studies of Colquitt et al., (2001), Folger and Cropanzano (1998), Cohen-Charash and Spector (2001) also found that justice dimensions have positive and significant impact of job satisfaction. Lambert (2003) observed positive relationship of procedural and distributive justice on satisfaction of Midwestern prisons. In educational contexts, Zaman, Ali and Ali (2010) conducted a research on the dimensions of organizational justice, job satisfaction and organizational commitment and found that justice dimensions foster the job satisfaction and commitment of the employees. In another study, Bakhshi, Kumar and Rani (2009) reported the positive and significant association of distributive justice and procedural justice with organizational commitment and job satisfaction of medical college employees in India. Consistent with the prior findings, Najafi et al. (2011) also concluded that educational experts of different universities reported higher job satisfaction the provision of organizational justice. Fatt et al. (2010) reported that “the higher level of employee’s perception towards procedural justice and distributive justice tended to increase the level of employees’ job satisfaction and organizational commitment”.

Research Methods:
To answer the following research questions, self-administered questionnaires were to gather the data.

Research Question: Do the dimensions of organizational justice (distributive, procedural and interactional justice) effect the job satisfaction of the faculty members having diverse faculty positions in higher education institutions of Pakistan?

Data was collected from the five universities / degree awarding institutes accredited by Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) operating in Lahore, Pakistan. Four universities and institutes were operating in private sector whereas one public sector university considered as one of the largest institution of higher learning in Pakistan. The study participants were the faculty members who were either having the regular or contract employment status in these academic institutions. Seven hundred and fifty questionnaires were distributed in December 2009 to February, 2010 among faculty members and after multiple follow ups resulted in 467 (63 %) statistically usable questionnaires.

Organizational justice and its three dimensions such as distributive, procedural and interactional justice were measured by using the scale developed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993). Six items of Schriesheim and Tsui (1980) used to measure overall job satisfaction of the faculty members. Five point Likert scale was used to measure the responses where 5 refers to strongly agree and 1 refers to strongly disagree. The inter-item consistency scores of distributive justice (α=0.84), procedural justice (α=0.90), interactional justice (α=0.93) and job satisfaction (α=0.79) were found to be adequate for the analysis purpose. Regression analyses were employed separately for Lecturer, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professor in public and private higher education institutions to testify the research question.
Results:

The demographic characteristics of the faculty members working in public and private sector institutions were as follows:

- Male respondents were in majority (66%).
- 202 faculty members having age between 31-44 years followed by 148 were between 25-30 years and 72 respondents were more than 44 years old.
- 31% faculty members were unmarried.
- Master degree holder respondents were in majority (187) followed by M. Phil (172) and PhD (105).
- 53% had job experience up to 5 years, 26% between 6 to 10 years, 09% between 11 to 15 years and 11% more than 15 years.
- 63% of the faculty (292) was working as Lecturer, 27% (124) as Assistant Professor, 9% as Associate Professor and Professor.
- 288 faculty members serving in public sector institutions whereas 166 were in private sector universities / degree awarding institutes accredited by HEC.

Table # 1 shows the descriptive statistics of independent and dependent variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distributive Justice (DJ)</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedural Justice (PJ)</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive Justice (IJ)</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table # 2 showed the regression analysis for the post of lecturers. Overall job satisfaction was regressed on three dimensions of organizational justice (distributive, procedural and interactive). Distributive justice contributed 47% unique variance whereas interactional justice explained 12% variability in overall job satisfaction. The results showed that distributive justice had relatively stronger positive impact ($\beta = .47$, $t = 10.42$, $p<0.001$) on lecturers’ overall job satisfaction than interactional justice ($\beta = .41$, $t = 9.22$, $p<0.001$) whereas procedural justice was excluded from the regression model.

Table # 2: Regression (Overall Job Satisfaction) for Lecturers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$R^2$ Change</th>
<th>$\beta \ (t$-statistic)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distributive Justice (DJ)</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.47* (10.42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactional Justice (IJ)</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.41* (9.22)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 0.001 level: One-tailed

Results of regression analysis (table # 03) showed that distributive justice explained 42% variance whereas interactional justice explained 5% variance in the overall job satisfaction of the faulty members serving in public and private sector universities of Pakistan for the post of Assistant Professors. No significant impact was observed of procedural justice on overall job satisfaction. The results showed that distributive justice had relatively stronger positive...
impact ($\beta = .54, t = 7.32, p<0.001$) on Assistant Professors overall job satisfaction than interactional justice ($\beta = .26, t = 3.48, p<0.001$).

### Table 03: Regression (Overall Job Satisfaction) for Assistant Professors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distributive Justice (DJ)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$ change</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta$ (t-statistic)</td>
<td>0.54* (7.32)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interactional Justice (IJ)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$ Change</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta$ (t-statistic)</td>
<td>0.26* (3.48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model F–statistic</td>
<td>53.61*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 0.001 level: One-tailed

Table # 04 depicts that only one dimension of organizational justice explained variance (48%) in the overall job satisfaction of the faculty members working as Associate Professors and Professors. Interestingly neither procedural justice nor interactive justice had significant impact on overall job satisfaction of the senior faculty (Associate Professors and Professors).

### Table 04: Regression (Overall Job Satisfaction) for Associate Professors & Professors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distributive Justice (DJ)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$ change</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\beta$ (t-statistic)</td>
<td>0.69* (6.17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model F–statistic</td>
<td>36.07*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at 0.001 level: One-tailed

Distributive justice had relatively stronger impact ($\beta = .69$) on overall job satisfaction of senior faculty members followed by Assistant Professors ($\beta = .54$) and then Lecturers ($\beta = .47$). Procedural justice did not moderate the relationship of organizational justice dimensions and overall job satisfaction for any faculty positions. As far as the impact of interactional justice is concerned, it had relatively stronger influence on overall job satisfaction for Lecturers ($\beta = .41$) as compared with Assistant Professors ($\beta = .26$).

**Conclusion and Recommendation:**
The main purpose of this research was to determine the relationship of organizational justice dimensions and job satisfaction across faculty members’ positions working in public and private sector institutions of higher learning. The study findings showed that the positive relationship of distributive justice with overall job satisfaction moderated by all faculty positions whereas interactional justice and overall job satisfaction positive association was only influenced by faculty positions (Lecturers and Assistant Professors). Procedural justice was found to have no effect on overall job satisfaction of faculty members serving in public and private sector institutions of higher learning. Job satisfaction considered as extensively studied topic in organizational behavior literature (Malik et al., 2010; Park et al, 2005; Najafi et al., 2011). The study findings were consistent with the prior researchers that the organizational justice dimensions foster the overall job satisfaction of the employees (Bakhshi et al. 2009; Robbins et al., 2000; Zaman et al. 2010; Ponnu & Chuah, 2010; Lambert et al. 2007; Ramamoorthy & Flood, 2004; Aryee, et al. 2002; Najafi et al. 2011).

As regards implications of this research, the top management and policy makers could boost the overall job satisfaction by promoting distributive and interactional justice practices in their respective institutions for their faculty members. This research also had some
limitations. Future researchers should take into consideration that this research is exploratory in nature and did not provide any conclusive evidence. Numerous work related outcomes like job involvement, turnover, organizational citizenship behavior, organizational commitment, job performance and workplace spirituality should also be incorporated in the research models.
References


