

## The Relationship Between Organizational Justice and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: The Case of Department of Physical Education of Tehran

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**Abstract:** In order to thrive, an organization needs to apply its resources to their full potential and develop its extra-role and voluntary behaviors. Employees' perception of fair compensation and behaviors and equality in procedures, i.e., organizational justice, play significant roles in this matter. The present study attempts to examine the relationship between different components of perceived organizational justice and organizational citizenship behaviors at the Department of Physical Education of Tehran. This is a descriptive study of the participants (N = 85) at the Department of Physical Education of Tehran. The data collection instruments included questionnaires and the collected data were analyzed using SPSS and LISREL.

**Key words:** Organizational justice, distributive justice, procedural justice, interactional justice, organizational citizenship behavior

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### INTRODUCTION

The competitive and changing atmosphere in the organizations and the increased demand for efficiency warrants a valuable generation of employees more than before, a generation which is duly dubbed as organizational soldiers. It goes without saying that these employees will be the distinguishing factor between effective and ineffective organizations in as much as they have a patriotic sense of belonging to their organization and they perform their best without any expectation of return to achieve their organizational goals beyond their formally defined roles. Behaviors beyond the expectation, voluntary and beneficial are called organizational citizenship behaviors. Such behaviors are shaped through perception of the reality and the reality perse. Therefore, if the employees perceive justice in the organization, extra-role or organizational citizenship behaviors will manifest. In the last decade of the twentieth century, organizational justice had occupied the center of attention among thinkers and researchers. Justice is an inherent need of humans which when delivered has always created a fertile ground for human development. Organizational justice implies equality and ethical behavior in an organization. Because of its relationship with the vital organizational processes such as organizational commitment, citizenship, job satisfaction and performance, organizational justice has gained considerable significance. Employees' perception of justice facilitates performance.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is desirable for every organization as it is correlated with variables such as job satisfaction, system maintenance

and organizational productivity. Studies show that managers may cultivate organizational citizenship behavior through promoting a positive workplace atmosphere instead of applying force or relying on selection or recruitment measures (Turnispeed and Gene, 1996).

Since, organizational citizenship behavior is a rather uncharted concept in management, influenced by factors such as organizational justice, job satisfaction, employee personality and organizational commitment, a study exploring their relationships is duly needed.

In the present study, organizational justice is the independent variable and OCB is the dependent variable. This study aims to explain any likely correlation between organizational justice and different components of OCB. The main research question is: is there any relationship between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior?

**Organizational justice:** Justice is the highest human value and a precious factor in realizing human rights and a cause all humans endeavor to achieve (Katouzian, 2008).

Justice is the most beautiful and sacred concept in human civilization which every good-natured human believes in and values even if he is an oppressive individual.

The earliest definitions of justice are attributed to Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Aristotle was obsessed with the nature of justice. Plato, in Republic, discussed justice as an ancient concept in the political philosophy. In the organization and management literature, the term justice was first used by Greenberg in 1987 (Seyed *et al.*, 2008).

A problem in understanding the concept of justice is the multiplicity of definitions and semantic senses. In some languages such as Arabic, this term is defined in more than ten senses. Dehkhoda Persian Dictionary defines justice as perseverance and the Islamic Sharia defines it as persistence on the truth and avoidance of whatever is verboten in the faith. Oxford Dictionary characterizes justice with the observance of legal, social and ethical principles through authority or power rewarded by prize or punishment.

**Organizational justice:** Individuals spend most of their lives in or in connection with organizations which shows the significance of organizations in today's world. What studies have been conducted about organizational justice? Organizational justice has widely been studied in management, psychology and organizational behavior researches (Parker and Kohlmeyer, 2005).

Studies show that organizational justice processes play significant roles in an organization and influences the way organizations may affect employees' beliefs, feelings, attitudes and behaviors. Fair treatment of employees increases their commitment to the organization and extra-role citizenship behaviors. In addition, individuals who feel that they are treated unfairly are more likely to leave organizations or may show lower commitment to their organization or may even engage in destructive behaviors such as revenge.

Organization is a social system whose survival depends on a strong connection between its constituent parts. Perceived injustice has very adverse effects on team work as it reduces human energy and motivation. Injustice and the unfair distribution of organizational achievements lower employees' spirit and their motivation for hard work. Therefore, justice is the key to survival and guarantee for the sustained development of the organization and the employees (Seyed *et al.*, 2008).

One may assert that the perception of individuals of the concept of justice can be influenced by their knowledge and honesty of character. In fact, for a correct perception of the absolute reality of justice the perceiver needs to be clear from any character impurity both in thought and in action.

Numerous studies show that organizational justice is related to employees' health, their mental health in particular, at workplace. Research on justice was initiated by Adams (1963) on his theory of equality.

Another research thread in organizational justice is the study of different types of organizational justice, its requirements and its outcomes. Organizational justice which includes distributive justice, interactional justice and procedural justice has been researched for >40 years.

**Distributive justice:** The first established type of organizational justice is distributive justice which refers to justice in the acquisition of the results of decision making at the workplace (Hosseini *et al.*, 2010). Adams proposed his theory of equality four decades ago and in that he proposed that individuals tend to receive equal reward for their performed tasks. In other words, they require equal reward for the same amount of work done by other colleagues. According to Adams, equality is achieved when employees feel that their inputs (efforts) are equal to their outputs (rewards) as in other employees.

Employees who feel inequality react negatively as in the forms of avoiding work and poor organizational citizenship behavior and worst of all, resignation from work. Historically, equality theory has focused on perceived justice of the amount of rewards distributed among individuals. Distributive justice has wide implications in organizational environment and researchers have explored its relationship with many other variables such as the quality and quantity of work. Since distributive justice focuses on outcomes it is predicted that this kind of justice is mainly related to cognitive, affective and behavioral reactions. Therefore, when a given outcome is perceived as unjust, this type of injustice must have affected the individual's feelings (e.g., anger, content, feeling of guilt or pride) understanding (e.g., slanted understanding of self or others' inputs and outputs) and finally their behaviors such as performance or turnover (Hosseini *et al.*, 2010).

**Procedural justice:** Procedural justice refers to perceived justice of a procedure which is used to determine the distribution of rewards (Hosseini *et al.*, 2010). Similar to equality principle in discussing procedural justice individuals' perceptions play important roles and the reactions of individuals depend on their perception of the procedures and not on their real nature because psychologically individuals act upon their perceptions and not on the basis of the reality. Employees with increased perception of procedural justice look up positively at the superiors and organizations even if they express dissatisfaction with compensations, promotions and other personal outcomes (Robbins, 2001).

**Interactional justice:** Interactional justice is the manner through which organizational justice is transferred from supervisors to subordinate employees and it includes components of the process of communication such as manners, honesty and courtesy between the source and the recipient.

Since, interactional justice is determined by the management, this type of justice is related to cognitive, affective and behavioral reactions to the management or the supervisor. Therefore, when an employee feels

interactional injustice, they will show a negative reaction to the organization instead of the supervisor. Therefore, one may predict that the employee is in general dissatisfied with their direct supervisors rather than the organization and the employee will have a lesser sense of commitment to the supervisor than to the organization. In addition, most of their negative attitudes are leveled at the supervisor rather than at the organization.

**Organizational citizenship behavior:** Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) was first put forth by Bateman and Organ in the early 1980's (Biestock *et al.*, 2003). They assert that organizational citizenship behavior includes cooperation between individuals in the workplace beyond and above their role requirements which may not necessarily lead to rewards. Korkmaz and Arpachi define such behaviors at the workplace as a set of voluntary behaviors that is not part of the formal responsibilities of the individual yet improves the effective performance of the organization (Korkmaz and Arpachi, 2009). Organ believes that organizational citizenship behavior is an individualistic and voluntary behavior which is not directly designed by formal reward systems in the organization yet promotes the effectiveness and performance of the organization (Cohen and Kol, 2004). This definition emphasizes three main characteristics of organizational citizenship behavior:

- The behavior is voluntary and not part of the pre-defined responsibilities of the employee
- This behavior has organizational benefits, i.e., this behavior develops the effective performance of the organization
- It is not explicitly or directly appreciated in the reward system of the organization

A review of the related literature shows that two approaches are considered in defining OCB. Organ and other previous researchers have discussed this behavior as an extra-role behavior. In this respect, individuals' contributions at the workplace are beyond their defined responsibilities which are not directly or explicitly appreciated by the formal reward system of the organization. A different breed of researchers, like Graham, suggests that organizational citizenship behavior needs to be considered separate from performance. In this way, the problem to distinguish role and extra-role performances is resolved. In this view, organizational citizenship behavior should be regarded as a global concept that includes all positive behaviors of individuals in the organization (Castro *et al.*, 2004). Nevertheless,

there is not a consensus yet over the measurement of organizational citizenship behavior as these behaviors are not directed necessarily by the supervisors.

**Citizenship behaviors in organization:** Graham believes that citizenship behavior is represented in organizational obedience, organizational loyalty and organizational participation:

**Organizational obedience:** This term characterizes behaviors that their acceptability and need are recognized in a rational structure of order and regulations. Organizational obedience includes measures such as respecting organizational regulations, full performance of task and performance of tasks in line with organizational resources.

**Organizational loyalty:** Loyalty to an organization is different from loyalty to the self or others or different parts of the organization; it means the extent to which employees can sacrifice for the interests and support of their organization.

**Organizational participation:** This concept realizes through the active participation of employees in different affairs of the organization such as attending the meetings, sharing their ideas with others and awareness of current affairs of the organization.

**Components of organizational citizenship behavior:** Organ provides the most established classification of components of organizational citizenship behavior as follows:

- Altruism
- Conscientiousness
- Sportsmanship
- Civic virtue
- Courtesy

Civic virtue, conscientiousness and altruism are regarded as active and positive contributing factors. Civic virtue is a behavior that reflects attention to participation in the social life of the organization (Fig. 1).

Conscientiousness is a behavior that is beyond the requirements determined by the organization for the workplace. Altruism means helping others in relation to their own responsibilities (Castro *et al.*, 2004).

Sportsmanship and considerateness mean avoiding any harm to the organization. Sportsmanship is the tendency to be patient against inevitable disturbances and workplace grievances without expressing any complaint. Considerateness means thinking about how one's actions may affect others (Markoczy and Xin, 2004).

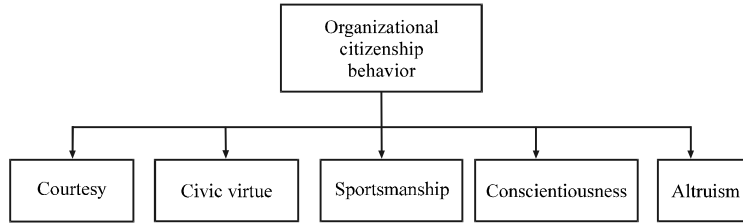


Fig. 1: Components of organizational citizenship behavior

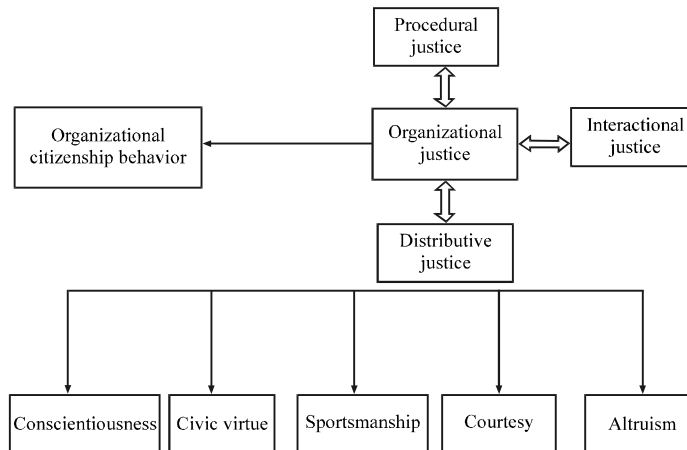


Fig. 2: Theoretical model of the research illustrating the relationship between organizational justice and OCB

**Organizational citizenship behavior promotion policies:**

Similar to other types of behaviors, motivation and incentives are required to support citizenship behavior. Organizational policies can have a significant influence in promoting citizenship behavior. Organizational managers need to develop appropriate policies and approaches in order to cultivate citizenship behaviors in the organization. Through the following actions, citizenship behavior can be promoted and enhanced:

- Recruitment
- Training
- Performance evaluation and service compensation
- Informal systems (Eslami and Sayar, 2007)

**Theoretical model of the research:** Organizational citizenship behavior is based on value reasoning and the individual’s values contributing to the achievement of organizational goals. This behavior is not utilitarian.

In general, organizational goals, policies and personality and organizational orientation strongly influence the formation of organizational citizenship behavior. In case the organizational pursues unethical and unpopular goals and when organizational justice is not exercised, OCB will not develop and individuals will not

devote themselves to the goals they do not endorse. In the present study, organizational justice and its components are considered as the independent variable and OCB is taken as the dependent variable. The following theoretical model illustrates the relationship between organizational justice and OCB (Fig. 2).

**Research hypotheses:**

- There is a significant and positive relationship between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior at Physical Education Department of Tehran
- There is a significant and positive relationship between distributive justice and organizational citizenship behavior at Physical Education Department of Tehran
- There is a significant and positive relationship between procedural justice and organizational citizenship behavior at Physical Education Department of Tehran
- There is a significant and positive relationship between interactional justice and organizational citizenship behavior at Physical Education Department of Tehran

- There is a significant and positive relationship between distributive justice and procedural justice at Physical Education Department of Tehran
- There is a significant and positive relationship between distributive justice and interactional justice at Physical Education Department of Tehran
- There is a significant and positive relationship between procedural justice and interactional justice at Physical Education Department of Tehran

**Significance of the study:** Like other cultural, social, economic and political arenas, physical education in Iran underwent tremendous changes after the 1979 Islamic revolution whereby Islamic mores and ethics became a yardstick in all areas of physical education. The Physical Education Department of Tehran was established to monitor all sporting events and practices to be in line with the regulations set by Physical Education Organization. This department consists of sports development, human resources and capital, women's sports, provinces affairs and various sports councils and deputies.

Since, the effectiveness and performance of this department is function of the extent to which the public embrace physical education in general and athletics in particular, the present study aims to examine the relationship between organizational justice and OCB at this department and suggest performance enhancement solutions.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The present study uses a descriptive-correlation research design. The data were collected through a survey which is generalizable. Research variables include organizational justice (independent variable) and OCB (dependent variable).

The population included the staff at the Physical Education Department of Tehran from which 85 individuals were randomly sampled. Goldman's questionnaire was used to measure organizational justice and Podsakof and McKenzie's scale was used to measure OCB. OCB was measured in Organ's framework including five components (responsibility, altruism, civic virtue, sportsmanship and courtesy) on a 5-point Likert scale. Organizational justice and its components were measured on a 5-point Likert scale. LISREL was used to perform a structural equation modeling to compute the standard coefficient and significance for the relationship between organizational justice and OCB based on which the hypotheses were tested. Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the reliability of the questionnaires. The Cronbach's alpha values for the OCB and the organizational justice questionnaires were 0.86 and 0.71, respectively both of which stand at an

acceptable level. The validity of questionnaires was verified by experts and university professors in the field.

**RESULTS**

The sample included 85 respondents of which 35 were male and 50 were female. The education of the sample included high school diploma (34), associate's degree (20), bachelor's (30) and master's (1). There were 26 participants below age 30, 43 between 30 and 40, 11 between 40 and 50 and five participants who were over 50. In terms of work experience, 13 had worked for <5 years, 32 between 6 and 10 years, 32 between 10 and 20 years and 8 between 20 and 30 years.

**Structural equation modeling:** LISREL program was used to perform a structural equation modeling in this study. Table 1 shows the output from LISREL:

- $Z_1$ : responsibility
- $Z_2$ : altruism
- $Z_3$ : civic virtue
- $Z_4$ : sportsmanship
- $Z_5$ : courtesy
- $q_1$ : distributive justice
- $q_2$ : procedural justice
- $q_3$ : interactional justice

There are two latent variables in this study: organizational justice ( $F_1$ ) and OCB ( $F_2$ ). LISREL output shows structural coefficient estimates on the basis of population data. The results show that organization justice ( $F_1$ ) has positive and significant relationship with distributive justice ( $q_1$ ) and procedural justice ( $q_2$ ) with respective coefficients of 0.51 and 0.73. In addition, there is a significant correlation of 0.39 between  $q_1$  and  $q_2$  and -0.24 between  $q_2$  and  $q_3$ .

There is also a significant positive correlation between OCB and responsibility (0.32), altruism (0.4), civic virtue (0.34), sportsmanship (0.37) and courtesy (0.35). The  $\chi^2$  for the model was 21.1 with  $p = 0.14$  which means that the model is supported. In addition, a RAMSEA value of 0.058 also supports the model (Fig. 3).

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics for the research variables**

Variables	Number	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Organizational justice	85	1.27	4.36	2.8901	0.63454
OCB	85	2.93	5.00	3.9961	0.42893
Responsibility	85	3.00	5.00	4.4294	0.55717
Altruism	85	2.50	5.00	4.1176	0.74261
Civic virtue	85	2.33	5.00	3.9098	0.47249
Sportsmanship	85	1.67	5.00	3.5647	0.71690
Courtesy	85	1.00	5.00	3.9588	0.79137
Distributive justice	85	1.00	5.00	2.8353	0.82516
Procedural justice	85	1.00	4.00	2.6098	0.81874
Interactional justice	85	1.80	4.40	3.2251	0.56071

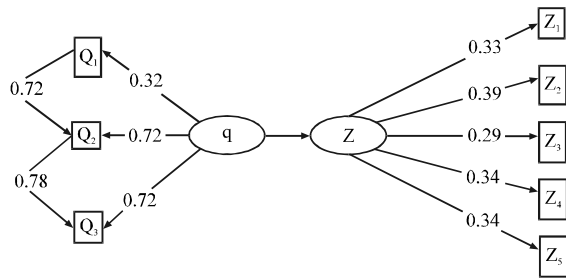


Fig. 3: Correlations between various variables in the study

**DISCUSSION**

Identifying factors such as organizational justice that contribute to organizational citizenship behavior enables us to understand employees' attitudes toward organizational justice and its implementation so that OCB can be reinforced in them. In addition, the development of OCB in an organization facilitates the achievement of organizational goals.

The present study attempted to examine the effect of perceived organizational justice on organizational citizenship behavior at the Physical Education Department of Tehran.

We tested seven hypotheses in this study. The results of SPSS analysis produced the following conclusions on the hypotheses:

There is not a significant positive relationship between organizational justice and OCB at the Physical Education Department of Tehran. Therefore,  $H_0$  is accepted at 5%. This means that the correlation between organizational justice and OCB is not statistically significant (Table 2).

There is not a significant positive relationship between distributive justice and OCB at the Physical Education Department of Tehran. Therefore,  $H_0$  is accepted at 5%. This means that the correlation between distributive justice and OCB is not statistically significant. (Table 3).

There is not a significant positive relationship between procedural justice and OCB at the Physical Education Department of Tehran. Therefore,  $H_0$  is accepted at 5%. This means that the correlation between procedural justice and OCB is not statistically significant (Table 4).

There is not a significant positive relationship between interactional justice and OCB at the Physical Education Department of Tehran. Therefore,  $H_0$  is accepted at 5%. This means that the correlation between interactional justice and OCB is not statistically significant (Table 5). There is a significant positive

Table 2: Relationship between organizational justice and OCB

Relationships	Mean	SD	Count
OCB	3.9961	0.42893	85
Organizational justice	2.8901	0.63454	85

Sig. = 0.526; correlation  $\gamma = 0.070$

Table 3: Relationship between distributive justice and OCB

Relationships	Mean	SD	Count
OCB	3.9961	0.42893	85
Distributive justice	2.8353	0.82516	85

Sig. = 0.571; correlation  $\gamma = 0.062$

Table 4: Relationship between procedural justice and OCB

Relationships	Mean	SD	Count
OCB	3.9961	0.42893	85
Distributive justice	2.6098	0.81874	85

Sig. = 0.817; correlation  $\gamma = -0.026$

Table 5: Relationship between interactional justice and OCB

Relationships	Mean	SD	Count
OCB	3.9961	0.42893	85
Distributive justice	2.2251	0.56071	85

Sig. = 0.571; correlation  $\gamma = 0.182$

Table 6: Relationship between distributive justice and procedural justice

Relationships	Mean	SD	Count
Distributive justice	2.8353	0.82516	85
Procedural justice	2.6095	0.81874	85

Sig. = 0.0; correlation  $\gamma = 0.718$

Table 7: Relationship between distributive justice and interactional justice

Relationships	Mean	SD	Count
Distributive justice	2.8353	0.82516	85
Interactional justice	3.2251	0.56071	85

Sig. = 0.0; correlation  $\gamma = 0.501$

Table 8: Relationship between procedural justice and interactional justice

Relationships	Mean	SD	Count
Procedural justice	2.6098	0.81874	85
Interactional justice	3.2251	0.56071	85

Sig. = 0.0; correlation  $\gamma = 0.570$

relationship between distributive justice and procedural justice at the Physical Education Department of Tehran. Therefore,  $H_0$  is rejected at 5%. This means that the correlation (71%) between distributive justice and procedural justice is statistically significant t (Table 6).

There is a significant positive relationship between distributive justice and interactional justice at the Physical Education Department of Tehran. Therefore,  $H_0$  is rejected at 5%. This means that the correlation (50%) between distributive justice and interactional justice is statistically significant (Table 7).

There is a significant positive relationship between procedural justice and interactional justice at the Physical Education Department of Tehran. Therefore,  $H_0$  is rejected at 5%. This means that the correlation (57%) between procedural justice and interactional justice is statistically significant (Table 8). The hypotheses for the first hypothesis were as follows:

Table 9: Correlation matrix

Matrix	Organizational justice	OCB	Responsibility	Altruism	Civic virtue	Sportsmanship	Courtesy	Distributive justice	Procedural justice	Interactional justice
Organizational justice	1	0.070	-0.014	0.072	-0.150	0.119	0.113	0.890	0.909	0.757
OCB	0.070	1	0.609	0.679	0.608	0.689	0.657	0.062	-0.026	0.182
Responsibility	-0.014	0.609	1	0.243	0.398	0.255	0.250	0.061	-0.146	0.076
Altruism	0.072	0.679	0.243	1	0.330	0.373	0.196	0.017	0.021	0.189
Civic virtue	-0.150	0.608	0.398	0.330	1	0.228	0.255	-0.069	-0.249	-0.044
Sportsmanship	0.119	0.689	0.255	0.373	0.228	1	0.295	0.076	0.109	0.133
Courtesy	0.113	0.657	0.250	0.196	0.255	0.295	1	0.082	0.064	0.169
Distributive justice	0.890	0.062	0.061	0.017	-0.069	0.076	0.082	1	0.718	0.501
Procedural justice	0.909	-0.026	-0.146	0.021	-0.249	0.109	0.064	0.718	1	0.570
Interactional justice	0.757	0.182	0.076	0.189	-0.044	0.133	0.169	0.501	0.570	1

$$H_0 : p_{z, q_1} \leq 0$$

$$H_1 : p_{z, q_1} > 0$$

Where:

Z = OCB

q<sub>1</sub> = Distributive justice

- H<sub>0</sub>: there is not a relationship between OCB and distributive justice or the relationship is negative
- H<sub>1</sub>: there is a positive relationship between OCB and distributive justice. As shown above, H<sub>0</sub> was accepted

In the light of the obtained results, we recommend that through identifying the factors influencing organizational citizenship behavior among employees, managers will be able to take effective steps in achieving organizational goals and protecting the organization against likely harms. Creating a fair atmosphere in the organization remains the main responsibility of managers as it is highly related to organizational effectiveness (Table 9).

In addition, an emphasis on organizational justice makes employees embrace organizational structure, respect the regulations, put their efforts in protecting organizational interests and participate in organizational affairs.

### CONCLUSION

The results show that there is not a significant relationship between perceived organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior in the target population.

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