

## **Organizational Justice and employee work attitudes assessing the mediating role of internal organizational trust in Pakistani Public Sector Universities**

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### **Abstract**

*Organizational justice concept has been extensively evaluated in research literature. This factor contributes to different important organizational outcomes such as commitment, OCB, job satisfaction, turnover and organizational performance. This study aims to examine relationship among these factors i.e. organizational justice, Organizational Trust and employee work attitude in public sectors universities of Pakistan. The author hypothesizes that internal organizational trust mediate between organizational justice and employee work attitude and its further mutual relationships. Total 101 samples were selected using purposive random sampling method. Employees' perception of organizational justice, Organizational Trust and employee work attitude were measured using valid and reliable scales. Regression analysis of the data revealed that there was significantly positive relationship between organizational justice and employee work attitude with R square value 0.321, followed by its significant positive relationship with Organizational Trust. The data also indicated positive relationship between internal organizational trust and employee work attitude. This study suggests that employees of public sector universities perceive organizational justice important factor in the development of internal organizational trust and employee work attitude. This behavior promotes an*

*environment more conducive for pedagogical and research activities and improved organizational performance.*

**Key Words:** Organizational Justice, Organizational Trust, Employee Work Attitude, Perception, Organizational performance

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In today's fast changing environment, it is important to understand the significance of employees' perception in their organizations about human resource management practices. Because, it has been an established fact that such perceptions can lead to both positive and negative employee behavior for organization. Such behavior could directly affect overall performance of the organization. Although, ample research is available at a global level while presence of local research is minimal.

Employees take decisions like compensation, projects management which involves financial and socio-emotional implications, including the reason why the employees are in the organization (Cropanzano & Schminke, 2001). The primary apprehension of an employee is "If they were being treated fair within organization?", or "their perception of fairness or justice". Forret and Love (2008) suggest that there are considerable evidences of linkages between perceptions on outcomes. A number of research suggest that diminished justice and trust deficit negatively affect an employee's set of job satisfaction and commitment with business (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). There are certain evidences that internal organizational trust climate has a subsequent impact on employees' work attitudes. Researchers introduce different facets of organizational justice in their respective work (Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Adams, 1965;

Bies & Moag, 1986). This research analyzes the possible outcome of such facet among the sample employees of public sector academic organizations in Pakistan.

## **Organizational Justice**

The phrase justice indicates ‘righteousness’ and ‘equitableness’. It is an attempt to rationally understand what form of action actually is just. Justice in organizational context is an attempt “what employees believe to be just” than “what is just”. Cropanzano and Greenberg (1997) suggest that act of equitableness is an act identified as “just” rather “recognize to be just” using explanatory procedures which has its basis of fairness in perception (Adam, 1965). It is also called equality theory which has three dimensional construct consisting of distributive, procedural and interactional justice. The theory of inequality says that employees perceive fairness based on the outcomes they attain (the distributive justice) where inputs are what employee contribute to workplace for example experience, education, skills etc while outcomes are benefits people enjoy as compensation like salary, chances of advancement etc comparing their selves with a certain referral group. Such justice has also relation with “procedural justice” according to Thibaut and Walker (1975) it represents the perception about fairness in decision making process and procedures (Greenberg, 1990; Lind & Tyler, 1988). Masterson et al. (2000) explain distinction between procedural and interactional justice. They say that in “interactional injustice” employee blames supervisors while in “procedural injustice” employee reacts towards organizations. (DeConinck and Stilwell 2004). Justice perception also influences employee work attitude, especially in changing environments which include organizational commitment, job satisfaction and internal organizational trust (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Yee Ng, 2001).

Greenberg (1990) refers to different studies suggesting distributive justice and procedural justice a precursor to different

attitudes. mphress et al (2003) hold responsible different types of social ties including individual's coworkers' opinion affect others' justice perceptions particularly when justice is vague and ambiguous.

## **Organizational Commitment**

Decotiis and Summers (1987) define organizational commitment as "the extent to which an individual accepts and internalizes the goals and values of an organization and views her or his organizational role in terms of its contribution to those goals and values". Allen and Meyer (1990) suggest three foci of organizational commitment; affective commitment, continuous commitment, and normative commitment. Affective commitment measures organizational commitment (Byrne, 1999), which implies amount of an employee's attachment, identification, and participation.

Hopkins and Weathington (2006) identify strong positive relationship in perceived justice and commitment. They show higher association of commitment specific to procedural justice rather than other types of justice, although it varies with method applied in justice measurements (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Yee Ng, 2001). Tatum Et al (2002) show relationship of different organizational processes like OCB, job satisfaction, organizational commitment etc with organizational justice. Bateman and Strasser (1984) say that organizational commitment is important due to reasons of "(a) employee behaviors and performance effectiveness; (b) attitudinal, affective and cognitive constructs such as job satisfaction; (c) characteristics of the employee's job and role, such as responsibility; and (d) personal characteristics of the employee such as age, job tenure" (pp. 95-96). Mowday et al (1979) suggest two perspectives to study organizational commitment i.e. attitudinal and behavioral.

Clay-Warner et al (2005) classifies distributive justice and procedural justice differently i.e. distributive justice is predictor of organizational commitment among downsizing victims while procedural justice among downsizing unaffected workers and survivors. In conclusion distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational justices determine employees' perception about fairness in their treatment and also influence their commitment to the organization.

### **Job Satisfaction**

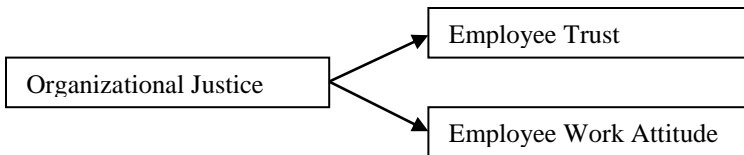
Aryee, Budhwar and Chen (2002) conceptualized job satisfaction as a multi-dimensional construct composed of five factors: "the job on its own, interactions with co-workers, supervisor quality, promotion prospects, and pay", which is according to Kallerberg (1977) a favorable emotions the employee has regarding their work function and predicts job satisfaction. Judge et al. (2002) indicate that job dis-satisfaction has several anticipated outcomes like job performance and withdrawal behavior.

### **Internal Organizational Trust**

Trust indicates willingness of an individual or a party to become vulnerable with respect to another party, while internal trust identifies an inside environment of the organization. Flaherty and Pappas (2000) find that internal organizational trust contribute to employee satisfaction and organizational commitment. It is a favoring anticipation of employees regarding their intentions and behaviors of peers and other organizational members according to the given roles, experiences, relationships, and interdependencies (Shockley-Zalabak et al., 2000). Aryee, Budhwar, and Chen (2002) discover association of organizational justice facets with trust, there is also meditational role of organization trust in association between distributive justice and procedural justice (Hopkins and Weathington, 2006). This study has framed

theoretical approach from these operational relationships between organizational justice, Organizational Trust and employee work attitude (Kalleberg, 1977; Locke, 1976; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Yee Ng, 2001; Shockley-Zalabak et al., 2000).

### **Theoretical Model**



### **Statement of the Problem**

Organizational justice and employee work attitude and employee work trust are the three important factors identified within organization along strong literature support. These factors strongly influence organizational performance in many ways. This study examines the relationship among these factors. This study mapped organizational justice, employee work attitude and organizational trust relationship and found its mutual interaction within organization.

### **Aims and Objectives**

- To study relationship between organizational justice and employee work attitude;
- To find out whether Organizational Trust influences employee work attitude;
- To study the relationship between organizational justice and Organizational Trust.

### **Hypotheses**

**H1:** There is significant and positive effect of organizational justice on employees work attitude.

- H2:** There is significant and positive relationship between organizational justice and organizational trust.
- H3:** There is significant and positive effect of organizational trust on employees work attitude.

### **Research Methodology**

A convenient sampling method was adopted using survey technique for data collection. A questionnaire was developed measuring organizational justice, employee's work attitudes, and Organizational Trust. It was focused to find relationship between organizational justice (independent variables); internal organizational trust (mediating variable), and employee's work attitude (dependent variables).

A written questionnaire with five points Likert scale was used and scored accordingly. It was floated among employees of public sectors universities. The sample size of 101 respondents was selected.

### **The scales and their reliability**

Table 1 shows Cronbach's Alpha is 0.851 for the scale of Employee Work Attitude and reliability of second scale Organizational Trust is 0.778. Reliability of last subscale Organizational Justice is 0.932, all these scales show high level of internal consistency. The table suggests that the responses given in the survey are reliable.

**Table 1. Scale Reliability**

<b>Subscale</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>N of Items</b>
Employee Work Attitude	0.851	15

Organizational Trust	0.778	4
Organizational Justice	0.932	21

### Results and Discussions

After setting linear regressions with SPSS software; following results were concluded and discussed in the following sections.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is significant and positive effect of organizational justice on employees work attitude.

*Table 2. Model Summary*

Model	R	Adjusted R Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.572 <sup>a</sup>	.327	.30111

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Justice

Table 2 shows that organizational justice (independent variable) influences employee work attitude (dependent variable) by 32%.

*Table 3. ANOVA*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.415	1	4.415	48.697	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	9.067	100	.091		
	Total	13.482	101			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Justice

b. Dependent Variable: Employees Work Attitude



ANOVA table 3 explains that overall the model is significant since the significance value is less than 0.05 which indicates that the model is statistically significant showing significant relationship between independent and dependent variable.

*Table 4. Coefficients*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.242	.167		13.432	.000
	Organizational Justice	.402	.058	.572	6.978	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employees Work Attitude

Table 4 of coefficients shows the significant relationship between organizational justice and employee work attitude as significance value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Furthermore, the standardized coefficient beta value is 0.572 which means that employee work attitude can make change 57% in dependent factor. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is accepted.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is significant and positive relationship between organizational justice and organizational trust.

*Table 5. Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.357 <sup>a</sup>	.128	.119	.52007

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Justice

Table 5 shows that organizational justice (independent variable) influences Organizational trust (dependent variable) by 11.9%.

**Table 6. ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.958	1	3.958	14.634	.000 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	27.047	100	.270		
	Total	31.005	101			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organizational Justice

b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Trust

ANOVA table 6 explains that overall model is significant since the significance value is less than 0.05 which indicates that the model is statistically significant showing relationship between independent and dependent variable.

**Table 7. Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.881	.288		6.525	.000
	Organizational Justice	.381	.100	.357	3.825	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Trust

Table 7 of coefficients reveals the significant relationship between organizational justice and Organizational Trust as significance value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Furthermore, the standardized coefficient beta value is 0.357 which means that

employee work attitude can make change 35.7% in dependent factor. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is accepted.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is significant and positive effect of organizational trust on employees work attitude.

*Table 8 Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.322 <sup>a</sup>	.103	.094	.34769

Table 8 shows that organizational justices (independent variable) influences Organizational Trust (dependent variable) by 9.4%.

*Table 9. ANOVA*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.205	1	3.205	11.528	.001 <sup>a</sup>
	Residual	27.800	100	.278		
	Total	31.005	101			

ANOVA table 9 explains that overall model is significant since the significance value is less than 0.05 which indicates that the model is statistically significant showing significant relationship between the independent and dependent variable.

*Table 10. Coefficients*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.759	.188		14.647	.000
	Organizational Trust	.212	.062	.322	3.395	.001

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Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		
		Coefficients	Coefficients	Coefficients	Coefficients	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.759	.188		14.647	.000
	Organizational Trust	.212	.062	.322	3.395	.001

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a. Dependent Variable: Employees Work Attitude

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Table 10 of coefficients shows significant relationship between organizational justice and Organizational trust as significance value is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Furthermore, the standardized coefficient beta value is 0.322 which means that employee work attitude can make change 32.2% in dependent factor. Therefore, hypothesis 3 is accepted.

### **Discussion**

The study has found positive relationship between organizational justice and employee work attitude and Organizational Trust. It indicates that such relationship contributes to organizational performance in long run. In Pakistani context, especially in public sector universities, quality of higher education is a major concern for students, parents, governments and also donors who are financing different research project within universities. For enhancing overall performance of teaching and research within organization it is important to focus on organizational justice with all its facets which would lead in improvement of employee work attitude and performance of the universities.

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