

The Effect of Organizational Justice Perception on Organizational Commitment among Healthcare Sector Employees

Ali Çağlar Güllüce^{1*}, Songül ÖZER², & Eren ERKILIÇ³

¹ Assistant Professor, Atatürk University, Turkey

² Instructor, Yüzüncü Yıl University, Turkey

³ Instructor, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan University, Turkey

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational justice perceptions of employees working in private healthcare institutions in Van province. Within this purpose, the data was obtained through a questionnaire administered to 300 employees of four hospitals in Van. To measure the organizational justice perceptions of the employees, the organizational justice scale with three constructs was used, and their organizational commitment was measured with the organizational commitment scale having three constructs as well. According to the results, it was revealed that organizational justice perceptions of the employees influence their organizational commitment perceptions positively.

JEL Classifications: M12, D23

Keywords: organizational justice, organizational commitment, healthcare employees, Van.

1. Introduction

One of the most important components of healthcare institutions which are in a very labour intensive sector is the human factor. In those institutions, in which the human factor is crucially important, commitment of the employees to the management has also considerable effects. Employees with a high commitment to their management internalize the goals and values of the management better, strive for it more and show more enthusiasm to stay there. Such devotion increases their motivational level, affects their performances positively and enhances the performance of the management more. However, satisfaction of employees should firstly be provided to realize all these conditions. Providing employees' satisfaction is closely related to executives' approach to them. At this point, executives' being fair to their employees will increase their motivation and commitment to the management.

In this study, which aims to examine the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational justice perceptions of employees working in healthcare institutions, the terms organizational commitment and organizational justice were touched upon. To measure the organizational justice perceptions of employees, the scale which was developed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993) and adopted by Acar (2011) for employees was used. In addition to this, "Three-

Construct Organizational Commitment Scale” which was developed by Meyer and Allen (1991) and translated into Turkish by Selvi (2011) was used to measure the organizational commitment.

In this study, organizational justice and organizational commitment perceptions of the employees working in healthcare institutions which are in a very labour intensive sector were examined, and the effects of organizational justice on organizational commitment were revealed.

2. Organizational Justice

Greenberg (1987), who introduced the term “organizational justice” to the literature, defines it as individuals’ perception based on the clear and implied features of their organizational roles and duties shaped by their opinions on intra-organizational events, rules and implications with regard to the justice principle (Akyüz, 2012, p.35). In other words, organizational justice includes the personal evaluation levels of employees regarding their own outcomes and following the right processes in the allocation of outcomes, justice and decision-makers in the organization (Taylor, 1989, p.87).

2.1. The Constructs of Organizational Justice

Organizational justice is usually examined in three constructs as distributive, procedural and interactional justice (Greenberg, 1990).

Distributive Justice: It refers to the fairness in the distribution of results such as salaries, social rights and aids to the staff and prizes. Most of the studies on distributive justice were conducted by Adams (1965) and named as the Equity Theory (Graham, 2009). The fundamental principle in distributive justice is that individuals should think that they get a share from the distributed sources fairly (Özdevecioğlu, 2003, p.78).

Procedural Justice: The term was firstly used by Thibaut and Walker (Yıldırım, 2003, p.373). It refers to the fairness degree of policies, procedures and procedural justice methods used for the determination and measurement of the factors such as payments, working conditions, promotions, financial opportunities and performance evaluation (Jahangir, Akbar, & Begum, 2006, p.23; Doğan, 2002, p.72). In other words, procedural justice means the perceived justice of the tools, processes and methods used in the identification of gains. According to this, the term “procedural justice” argues that employees are not only concerned with what the decisions they are making regarding their organizational justice but also they consider the processes which determine these decisions. Organizational justice may also express the situations which cannot be explained by distributive justice in organizations (Çakmak, 2005, p.31).

Interactional Justice: The term was first introduced by Bies and Moag (1986). According to this, the quality of inter-personal relationships that would make employees feel to be treated fairly is described as interactional justice. Interactional justice also refers to executives’ being honest to employees, valuing, respecting and informing them during the management processes. In other words, interactional justice is the perceived justice of how intra-organizational decisions have been or will be informed to employees (Barling & Phillips, 1993).

When the studies on organizational justice are examined, it can be seen that scholars have a consensus on distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice, but there are different opinions on inter-personal justice and informational justice. That means, these constructs can either be addressed in three constructs as distributive justice, interactional justice and procedural justice (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993) or in four constructs as distributive justice, procedural justice, inter-personal justice and informational justice (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). This study addresses the three-construct organizational justice model mentioned above.

2.2. Organizational Commitment

Another term covered throughout this study is organizational commitment. The use of the term “commitment” in the literature in many different ways led to the emergence of many different definitions on organizational commitment.

One of the first definitions of organizational commitment was made by Grusky (1966). According to him, organizational justice is the power of an individual’s commitment to the organization (İnce & Gül, 2005, p.3). Organizational commitment, being the psychological dependence felt by an individual for the organization, refers to the individual’s acceptance and adaptation level of the organization’s perspective and features (O’Reilly & Chatman, 1986, p.493). Among the ones proposed on organizational commitment, the most influential model has been the one developed by Meyer and Allen (1991). According to their model, organizational commitment expresses the individual’s psychological approach to the organization and it is a psychological situation that reflects the relationship between the individual and the organization and influences the decision of his/her maintaining the organizational membership.

In 1984, Meyer and Allen studied the issue of commitment in two constructs as “emotional commitment” and “continuance commitment” based on the previous studies on organizational commitment. However, another third construct “normative commitment” was added to the topic in 1990 (Meyer & Allen, 1991). This classification is still valid and forms the basis of research studies on commitment (Doğan & Kılıç, 2007, p.44).

2.2.1. The Constructs of Organizational Commitment

Emotional Commitment: The most widely studies type of commitment in the literature is emotional commitment. Meyer and Allen pays a special attention on this type since it originates from an individual’s perceiving him/herself as a part of the organization (İnce & Gül, 2005, p.40). This type of commitment reflects the individual’s emotional commitment to the organization and his/her integration with it. Individuals, who stay in the organization with a strong emotional commitment, keep on staying there not because they have to, but they want to do so (Balay, 2000, p.21). In other words, the term includes the individuals’ accepting the goals and values of the organization and their extraordinary efforts for the benefits of it (McGee & Ford, 1987, p.638-639).

Continuance Commitment: It is the type of commitment that is based on outside factors (Erkmen & Bozkurt, 2011, p.206). According to Yıldırım (2003, p.399), continuance commitment refers to the situation in which the individual feels a necessity to stay in the organization due to the thoughts that he/she will not be able to bare the high costs if he/she leaves the organization. The costs, here, appear in two conditions. In the first one, the longer individuals spend a period in an organization, the more individual investments (seniority prizes, incentive awards, etc.) they will abandon if they leave the organization. The second condition, on the other hand, is related with the inability to find alternative job opportunities. According to this, when employees believe that there are very few job opportunities appropriate for them, their commitment to the current organization will increase (Meyer & Allen, 1991) and the individual will keep on staying there.

Normative Commitment: It shows the individuals’ beliefs about the responsibility they feel for the organization they are working in (Çırpan, 1999, p.71). Since it develops as a result of the fact that the individual perceives his/her commitment to the organization as a duty and thinks this is the right thing to do, the term stands for a different construct compared to others. This commitment construct reflects the obligatory feelings of the individuals on staying in the current organization. Commitment of individuals to the organization originates from their feelings regarding their maintenance of organizational membership (Gül, 2002, p.45).

3. Methodology

The main purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment perceptions of the employees working in private hospitals in Van province and to reveal the effect of their organizational justice perceptions on organizational commitment.

In this study, with an applied feature, the literature on organizational justice and organizational commitment was reviewed and, to determine the levels of these constructs for the employees working in the managements forming the population, a questionnaire was administered to the employees of the aforementioned healthcare institutions. The employees of four private hospitals in Van formed the population of this study. According to the information obtained from the human resources executives of these institutions, the total number of employees working in these private hospitals in the centre of Van is 1100. However, a sampling method was used due to the intensive workload of the employees, executives and managements, and the time limitation regarding their participation to the study. While determining the sample size for the study, the table developed by Ural and Kılıç (2006, p.49) was benefited. According to this, in a population which has the number of 1100 employees, the sample size is 285. In total, 480 questionnaires were distributed, but 300 of them were included as valid for this study.

The questionnaire used to collect data consisted of three parts. The first part included questions on participants' demographic features. In the second part of it, the organizational justice scale, which was developed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993), adapted by Acar (2011) for employees and included 20 close-ended 5-graded Likert items, was used. The third part of the questionnaire included 26 close-ended and 5-graded Likert items which were developed by Meyer and Allen (1991) to measure organizational commitment and adapted to Turkish by Selvi (2011).

For the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were calculated for each of the scales. It is a well-known fact that the values over 0.70 are satisfactory. However, some scholars also believe that the values till 0.50 are also acceptable in investigative studies (Altunışık, Coşkun, Bayraktaroğlu, & Yıldırım, 2010). In this study, reliability coefficients were found to be 0.933 for the organizational justice scale, and 0.70 for the organizational commitment.

According to the results of factor analysis, it is seen that the organizational justice scale which explains the 0.68874 (68.874%) of the total variance has three constructs. While distributive justice, the first construct of the scale, explains the 49.190% of the total variance, procedural justice (the second construct) explains the 13.529%, and the third construct, interactional justice, explains the 6.155% of the total variance. The result of Barlett Test shows that factor analysis can be applied ($X^2=4925.779$; $p=0.000<0.001$). In addition to this, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value, that is 94.8%, (KMO=0.948) shows that the sample size is enough. Besides, the items on organizational commitment are grouped under three constructs which explain the 0.67478 (67.478%) of the total variance according to the factor analysis results of the organizational commitment scale. Emotional commitment, the first construct of the organizational commitment scale, explains the 35.499% of the total variance; continuance commitment, the second construct, explains the 19.445%; and normative commitment, the third one, explains the 12.553% of the total variance. The result of Barlett's Test reveals that the factor analysis can be applied ($X^2=3049.263$; $p=0.000<0.001$) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value, 79.4%, (KMO=0.794) shows that the sample size is enough.

The data obtained from questionnaire were analyzed via the SPSS program. The results were evaluated in 95% confidence interval and the significance level of $p<0.05$. The hypotheses below were developed in accordance with the aims of the study.

H₁: There is a positive relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment perceptions of employees working in hospitals.

- H₂: There is a significant relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment perceptions of employees working in hospitals.
- H₃: There is a significant positive relationship between distributive justice and organizational commitment perceptions of employees working in hospitals.
- H₄: There is a significant positive relationship between procedural justice and organizational commitment perceptions of employees working in hospitals.
- H₅: There is a significant positive relationship between interactional justice and organizational commitment perceptions of employees working in hospitals.

3.1. Findings

Table 1 shows the information regarding the participants' gender, marital status and educational background. According to this, while 53.7% of the participants are female, 46.3% of them are male. It is also seen that 64.3% of the participants are single whereas 35.7% of them are currently married. In terms of their educational background, the table shows that 52% of the participants are high school graduates, 25.7% of them have associate degrees, 14% have bachelor degrees and just 8.3% of the participants are primary school graduates.

Table 1. Socio-demographic features of the participants (N=300)

Variables		n	%
Gender	Female	161	53.7
	Male	139	46.3
Marital Status	Single	193	64.3
	Married	107	35.7
Educational Background	Primary School	25	8.3
	High School	156	52.0
	Associate degree	77	25.7
	Bachelor degree	42	14.0

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics on the constructs of organizational justice. The values over 2.50 in the table mean that the participants expressed their opinions on the existence of organizational justice in their institution. The participants who thought that interactional justice (3.74) existed more, also expressed that procedural justice (3.68) and distributive justice (2.57) existed in their institution as well. However, they believed that distributive justice was less than the others. In general, it can be said that organizational justice (3.43) existed in these managements.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics on the constructs of organizational justice

VARIABLES	MEAN
Distributive Justice	2.57
Procedural Justice	3.68
Interactional Justice	3.74
ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE	3.43

Descriptive statistics on the constructs of organizational commitment are presented in Table 3. According to the table, though the mean score of normative commitment (3.74) is a bit higher than emotional commitment (3.29) and continuance commitment (3.16), it can be seen that mean scores of the constructs, in general, are close to each other. In addition to this, the general mean score of organizational commitment (3.26) over 2.50 shows that their commitment to the organization was over the moderate level.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics on the constructs of organizational commitment

VARIABLES	MEAN
Emotional Commitment	3.29
Continuance Commitment	3.16
Normative Commitment	3.74
ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT	3.26

According to the findings in Table 4, there is a positive ($r= 0.368$; $r>0$) and statistically significant ($p=0.000$) relationship between organizational commitment and organizational justice. In other words, if the organizational justice perception of employees increases, their commitment to the organization increases as well. At this point, H_1 hypothesis “*There is a positive relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment perceptions of employees working in hospitals*” is accepted.

Table 4. Correlation coefficients on the relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment

The Scale		Organizational Commitment
Organizational Justice	r	0.368
	p	0.000
	n	300

r = Correlation coefficient

p = Alpha value ($p<0.05$)

n = Number of participants

When the findings in Table 5 are examined, it can be seen that distributive justice has a statistically significant correlation with emotional commitment ($r=0.373$), continuance commitment ($r=0.315$) and normative commitment ($r=0.303$). It is also seen that procedural justice is significantly correlated with emotional commitment ($r=0.220$), continuance commitment ($r=0.214$) and normative commitment ($r=0.812$). In the same vein, interactional commitment is found to be significantly correlated with emotional commitment ($r=0.139$), continuance commitment ($r=0.143$) and normative commitment ($r=1.000$). In general, it can be said that there is a positive correlation among the constructs of organizational justice and organizational commitment. Besides, the “p” values above (0.05) show that the correlations among these constructs are significant.

Table 5. Pearson correlation coefficients on the constructs of organizational justice and organizational commitment

CONSTRUCTS		Emotional Commitment	Continuance Commitment	Normative Commitment
Distributive Justice	r	0.373**	0.315**	0.303**
	p	0.000	0.000	0.000
	n	300	300	300
Procedural Justice	r	0.220**	0.214**	0.812**
	p	0.000	0.000	0.000
	n	300	300	300
Interactional Justice	r	0.139*	0.143*	1.000**
	p	0.016	0.013	0.000
	n	300	300	300

**The correlation is significant on 1% level

* The correlation is significant on 5% level

r = Correlation Coefficient

p = Alpha value (p<0.05)

n = Number of participants

In Table 6, organizational justice is taken as the independent variable and organizational commitment as the dependent one. When the findings of the regression analysis are examined, it is seen that organizational justice is a significant determiner on organizational commitment (p=0.000<0.05). The Beta value (β) shows that organizational justice has a positive significant effect (0.368) on organizational commitment. That means, organizational justice perception of employees increases their commitment to the organization. At this point, the H₂ hypothesis “There is a significant relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment perceptions of employees working in hospitals” is accepted.

Table 6. The regression analysis regarding the effect of organizational justice on organizational commitment

Independent Variable	B Value	Standard Error	β Value	t Value	p Significance Level
Stable	2.502	0.115		21.755	0.000
Organizational Justice	0.222	0.032	0.368	6.826	0.000

Whether each of the constructs of organizational justice has an effect of organizational commitment is analysed and shown in Table 7 through Multiple Regression. In the analysis, the constructs of organization justice are taken as independent variable, and organizational commitment as the dependent one. When the β value is examined, it can be seen that the effect of distributive justice on organizational commitment is 46.8%, and the effect of procedural justice is 19.8%. The positive values here refer to a positive relationship among variables. Besides, the significance values, p=0.000<0.05 for distributive justice and p=0.025<0.05 for procedural justice, mean that these variables are significant determiners on organizational commitment. However, interactional justice does not have any effects on organizational commitment (p=0.222>0.05).

Table 7. Multiple regression analysis regarding the effect of the constructs of organizational justice on organizational commitment

Independent Variable	B Value	Standard Error	β Value	t Value	p Significance Level
Stable	2.523	0.106		23.693	0.000
Distributive Justice	0.227	0.026	0.469	8.736	0.000
Procedural Justice	0.098	0.044	0.198	2.259	0.025
Interactional Justice	-0.054	0.045	-0.103	-1.223	0.222

The variables that have determinant effects on organizational commitment are distributive justice and procedural justice. According to this, H₃ hypothesis “*There is a significant positive relationship between distributive justice and organizational commitment perceptions of employees working in hospitals*” and H₄ hypothesis “*There is a significant positive relationship between distributive justice and organizational commitment perceptions of employees working in hospitals*” are accepted whereas H₅ hypothesis “*There is a significant positive relationship between interactional justice and organizational commitment perceptions of employees working in hospitals*” is rejected.

4. Conclusion and Suggestions

One of the most important factors for managements is employees. Their commitment to their managements not only increases the service quality of the management but also increases the competitive power. One of the most important ways to increase the commitment of employees is executives’ being fair to them. For this reason, it is possible to increase their commitment through the development of their justice perceptions towards the management. Attitudes and perceptions of healthcare employees, working in a labour intensive sector, regarding their institutions are effective in their decisions for leaving the institution or staying there.

According to the results of the study, distributive justice has a statistically significant correlation with emotional commitment ($r=0.373$), continuance commitment ($r=0.315$) and normative commitment ($r=0.303$). Besides, procedural justice is significantly correlated with emotional commitment ($r=0.220$), continuance commitment ($r=0.214$) and normative commitment ($r=0.812$). Parallel to this, interactional commitment is found to be significantly correlated with emotional commitment ($r=0.139$), continuance commitment ($r=0.143$) and normative commitment ($r=1.000$).

In general, organizational justice perceptions of employees working in healthcare institutions have positive effects on their organizational commitment. The more their organizational justice perceptions increase, the more commitment they feel to their organization. Accordingly, increasing the organizational justice perceptions of employees working in healthcare institutions will increase their commitment and good intentions to the managements, and will decrease the personnel turnover rate. At this point, executives have important duties in approaching their employees fairly and equally.

To conclude, this study has several limitations. Firstly, general limitations that are valid for social sciences are also valid for this study. Secondly, the results of the study are limited to its scope and population. It is possible to reach better results with broader samples. In this sense, it can be thought that organizational justice perception may differ in different departments such as support services, polyclinics and due to that reason; the study might be applied to these departments separately.

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