Organizational Justice and Job Satisfaction Among Nurses

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A B S T R A C T

Organizations should enhance justice in the workplace to increase the satisfaction among employees. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of organizational justice on job satisfaction among nurses. The study cohort was composed of nurses from 2 public hospitals. A stratified sampling technique was employed to ensure better representation of samples from the 2 hospitals. A total of 184 valid questionnaires from 2 public hospitals were analyzed by structural equation modeling. The results showed that the 3 dimensions of organizational justice, namely distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice, have a positive and significant impact on the nurses' job satisfaction. Distributive justice showed a greater impact on job satisfaction than procedural justice and interactional justice. The supervisors and administrators should be provided with information on how improvement in organizational justice leads to job satisfaction and on-the-job facilitation of employee innovation. The results of this study provide a clear image for hospital administrations about the substantial role of justice in the workplace.

Keywords: Organizational justice, Job satisfaction, Distributive justice, Procedural justice; Nurses

1. INTRODUCTION

To achieve their vision, mission, and objectives, organizations should have sufficient resources such as human resources, finance, and raw materials to accomplish their tasks. Human resources play a vital role in all the sectors. Accordingly, justice in the workplace is a vital factor that can contribute to an increase in the job satisfaction (JS) of the employee.

Organizational justice (OJ), described as the ethical treatment of staff, involves fair allocation of tasks, strategy, and methods to deal with individuals at the workplace (Jameel et al., 2020). Furthermore, OJ consists of 3 main subdivisions, namely distributive justice (DJ), procedural justice (PJ), and interactional justice (IJ), which all serve as vital predictors of JS and work outcomes (Greenberg, 1987). Cases of workplace injustice create negative emotions and have adverse effects on the employees' behavior and, for that reason, the importance of improving OJ in the workplace, as a factor to evoke desirable attitude among staff, should be emphasized (Mensah et al., 2016; Thabit and Raewf, 2017). Meanwhile, organizations with low satisfaction

and low OJ will suffer a high staff turnover rate, and it will therefore not be able to reach its institutional goals, which will lead to the creation of a culture of misunderstanding about the issues within the organization and among its employees (Ghran et al., 2019). A high degree of employee satisfaction is an essential element for the growth and efficiency of an organization. From this perspective, a management structure with members that are satisfied in the workplace will be more efficient than those with unsatisfied employees (Thabit, 2015; Raewf and Thabit, 2018; Jameel and Ahmad, 2019b; Jasim and Raewf, 2020). Most of the previous research agreed that OJ plays a vital role in improving JS and individual results. Therefore, a low level or absence of justice in the workplace will lead to a low level of employee satisfaction. However, employees who are treated equally will contribute positively to the organization in agreement with their satisfaction.

This topic has attracted the attention of many researchers over the past years (Raewf and Thabit, 2015; Bayarçelik and Findikli, 2016; Suifan et al., 2017; Mashi, 2018; Thabit & Raewf, n.d.). However, limited studies have been conducted in the Iraqi context (Ghran et al., 2019). Most of the previous studies were focused on employees of banks (Bayarçelik and Findikli, 2016; Thabit et al., 2016; Thabit and Raewf, 2018; Safdar and Liu, 2019), staff in correctional services (Lambert et al., 2019), and school employees (Thabit and Jasim, 2016, 2019; Ghran et al., 2019), with limited studies conducted among nurses (Faheem and Mahmud, 2015).

The main objective of this study was to determine the effect of the different dimensions of OJ on JS among nurses at 2 hospitals located in Erbil, Iraq.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Organizational Justice

Adams' Equity theory considers the basis of OJ and, according to this theory, the level of success and satisfaction of the employees is highly depended on the equity among individuals in the working environment (Ghran et al., 2019; Jameel et al., 2020). According to this theory, the employees usually compare their achievements in the workplace with those of other colleagues and what they receive in terms of salaries, promotions, work load, and rights in a given situation. In

light of this information, OJ reflects the employees' observation of just and fair behaviors inside the organization and the individuals' reactions to these perceptions (Karem et al., 2019). According to the literature, OJ consists of 3 fundamental dimensions.

DJ refers to the fair distribution of rewards, resources, punishment, and promotions according to specified criteria and the reactions of the employees to these distributions among them. According to Greenberg (1990), DJ is focused on equity, not equality. Lambert et al. (2019) defined equality as the equal treatment of all the employees regardless of the efforts they put into the workplace, whereas equity refers to the assessment of employees based on their input into the organizational outcomes, contrasting them to what other employees have earned in similar situations and what is perceived to be just (Jameel et al., 2020) . DJ refers to the fairness of the outcomes in terms of distribution to individuals (Suifan et al., 2017). According to Mensah et al. (2016), the distribution can be monetary or nonmonetary, such as salary payments, promotions, etc., and will be recognized as fair if the results meet the individuals' expectations which, in turn, is related to their inputs (Wang et al., 2010).

PJ refers to the understanding of the justice of the institutional processes applied by the institution during decision making. According to Wang et al. (2010), PJ relates to the fairness of the process, which is related to decision making based on the outcomes.

Many staff members want the procedures used to assess distributive results to be transparent, open, and fair, regardless of the outcome (Lambert et al., 2019; Jameel et al., 2020).

The third dimension was introduced by Bies and Moag (1986) and is referred to as IJ. IJ represents the individual's understanding of the consistency of activities they experience when implementing the organizational procedures. IJ implies that the individuals receive fair treatment during resource allocation and decision making (Wang et al., 2010).

IJ refers to treatment that is honest, respectful, shows integrity, and justice during decisions involving the subordinates (Bies & Moag, 1986). In addition, according

to Bies and Moag (1986), IJ could be broken down into interpersonal justice, which refers to the treatment of individuals and subordinates with respect and dignity, and informational justice, which refers to the provision of information and honest explanations about decision making.

2.2. Job Satisfaction

JS is a positive, emotionally self-reported condition based on the assessment of a job or workplace experiences (Locke, 1976). Locke (1976) found that 7 job challenges are usually related to JS. These include the following: physically challenging environment, authentic interest in the specific job, employment that is not too stressful, equal incentives, favorable working conditions, boasting of employee self-esteem, and support from management in terms of the management of issues, provision of interesting work, and the availability of good salaries and/or promotions. According to Karem et al. (2019), JS is a multidimensional term that involves the employees' job conditions and their level of satisfaction. According to Spector (1985) and Bayarçelik and Findikli, (2016), JS refers to a positive or negative feeling and emotional assessment of the individuals regarding JS. In this regard, JS is an individual assessment of the employee satisfaction. This perception of employees can be enhanced in a positive or negative way by different factors, internal or external, in the workplace such as payment, working environment, and promotions. According to Organ (1988) and Ahmad and Jameel (2020), JS has 2 elements, namely motional and cognitive. The emotional element reflects the individual's current emotional state, whereas the cognitive element analyzes the current situation and evaluates the expectations and standards. JS is the individuals' passion for their work and their positive sense of the job after determining that the work meets their needs (Griffin et al., 2010; Jameel & Ahmad, 2019a; Massoudi et al., 2020). JS is based on the hierarchy of Maslow (1943) who described the needs of the individual and stated that the fulfillment of these needs will lead to JS. The 2-factor theory of Herzberg (1976) states that some organizational variables such as accomplishment, development, progression, appreciation, and obligation can contribute to job satisfaction.

2.3 Hypotheses Development

Organizational Justice and Job Satisfaction

Individual expectations of justice in the activities of the institution reflect different favorable outcomes for staff and forecast several working conditions and behaviors (Irving et al., 2005). Accordingly, JS can be achieved by different means like promotions, payments, supervision, and the actions of peers in the workplace (Ahmad & Jameel, 2018). Moreover, justice could be a key component of the success of the organization and could have an impact on different outcomes in an organization (Irving et al., 2005). According to Colquitt et al. (2001), OJ is one of the most researched topics and is a strong predictor of JS among the employees. In addition, a meta-analysis conducted by Colquitt et al. (2001) determined that positive perceptions about organizational justice improved JS for individual employees. Therefore, we propose that a positive perception of OJ at the workplace contributes positively to JS (Ambrose et al., 2007) and that different forms of OJ improve different aspects of JS (Irving et al., 2005; Ouyang et al., 2015). According to Mashi, (2018), individuals who are treated fairly in the workplace will be more satisfied with their job. The study conducted by McFarlin and Sweeney (1992) showed that DJ has a greater impact on JS than PJ. However, according to Ghran et al. (2019) DJ has a greater impact on JS than IJ, whereas PJ has an insignificant impact on JS. Moreover, Masterson et al. (2000) indicated that PJ has a greater impact on JS than IJ. Bayarçelik and Findikli (2016) and Lambert et al. (2019) reported that DJ and PJ have a positive impact on JS, whereas IJ had an insignificant effect on JS. A study conducted by Mashi (2018) reported that the 3 dimensions of OJ, namely DJ, PJ, and IJ, have a positive relationship with JS. The study conducted among bank employees in Pakistan by Safdar and Liu (2019) found that job satisfaction was positively impacted by DJ and PJ. However, a limited number of studies have been conducted to determine the impact of OJ on JS in Arab countries in general and in Iraq in particular (Ghran et al., 2019). A study conducted by Suifan et al. (2017) in Jordan reported that OJ has a positive and significant effect on JS in the Jordanian context. According to the studies conducted in the field of OJ, a high justice will increase the satisfaction in the organization among the employees. However, a profound understanding of OJ will lead to JS, which in turn will lead to an increased ambition of the employees to achieve the organizational goals. A summary of previous studies

are illustrated in Table 1. Based on these studies, the following hypotheses were developed for this study:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): DJ positively affects JS among nurses.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): IJ positively affects JS among nurses.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): PJ positively affects JS among nurses.

Table 1: Summary of previous studies

Year	Author(s)	Type of data and research method	Theory	Method of estimation	Key findings
2007	Ambrose, Hess & Ganesan	Primary data—quantitative	None	Correlation and regression	OJ at the workplace has a positive impact on JS
2018	Mashi	Primary data—quantitative	Equity theory	Regression	individuals who are treated fairly in the workplace will be more satisfied with their job and the 3 dimensions of OJ, namely DJ, PJ and IJ have a positive impact on JS
1992	McFarlin and Sweeney	Primary data—quantitative	Contingency theory	Regression and correlation	DJ has a greater impact on JS than PJ
2019	Ghran et al.	Primary data—quantitative	Adams' Equity theory and 2-factor theory of Herzberg	Regression	DJ has a greater impact on JS than IJ, whereas PJ had an insignificant effect on JS
2000	Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, and Taylor	Primary data—quantitative	Social exchange theory	Correlation and regression	PJ has a more substantial impact on JS than IJ
2016	Bayarçelik and Findikli	Primary data—quantitative	Adams' Equity theory	Regression	DJ and PJ have a positive impact on JS, whereas IJ had an insignificant effect on JS
2019	Lambert et al.	Primary data—Quantitative	None	Ordinary least squares regression	DJ and PJ have a positive impact on JS, whereas IJ had an insignificant effect on JS
2019	Safdar and Liu	Primary data—quantitative	Social exchange theory this	Correlation and regression	JS was positively impacted by DJ and PJ
2017	Suifan et al.	Primary data—quantitative	None	Multiple regression analysis	OJ has a positive and significant effect on JS in the Jordanian context
2001	Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, and Ng	Secondary data—qualitative	None	Systematic review	OJ strongly predictor of job satisfaction and improve Job satisfaction
2019	Jameel, Ahmad and Karem	Secondary data	Adams' Equity theory	Review	Proposed that the 3 dimensions of OJ have a positive and significant impact on JS

DJ: distributive justice, IJ: interactional justice, JS: job satisfaction, OJ: organizational justice, PJ: procedural justice

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Sampling

A total of 148 nurses who work at 2 hospitals in Erbil, Kurdistan Region, Iraq, participated in this study. A stratified sampling technique was employed in this study to ensure an equal distribution of the participants among the 2 hospitals. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed; only 151 were returned for a 76% response rate, and 148 of these were used for the analysis. The data collected were analyzed using SPSS Statistics software (version 25) for outliers, missing values, and Cronbach's alpha. However, the main analysis was conducted using analysis of a moment structures (AMOS) software (version 21) to examine the model fit, model validation, reliability, measurement model, and structural model.

3.2. Questionnaire

The questionnaires consisted of 2 sections. The first section represented the demographic questions and the second section consisted of 3 independent variables (IVs) and /1 dependent variable (DV) that was adopted from previous studies. All the questions were translated from English into the Kurdish language to increase the understandability for the respondents using a "translation-back translation" process (Brislin, 1970). The questionnaire used a 5-point Likert scale to measure the outcomes, which ranged from 1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree. In this research tool that was adapted from previous studies, JS was determined by 4 items and OJ was determined by 11 items as presented in Table 2.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Analysis Process

To verify that the questioners are normally distributed, the skewness and kurtosis were tested, and, according to Byrne (2013), if the values ranged between 2 and –2, the standard error of the mean (SEM) can be used for analysis. The results met the criteria for normal distribution. Generally, the SEM is determined in 2 main steps. The first step is to evaluate the convergent validity and reliability, which is called the measurement model. The second step is to assess the analysis path, which is called the structural model (Hair et al., 2010).

4.1.1. Measurement model

4.1.1.1. Confirmatory factor analysis

According to Hair et al. (2010), the validity and reliability should be assessed by 3 factors, namely loadings, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). Table 2 illustrates that the factor loadings for all the items exceeded the recommended level, namely 0.5, as proposed by Hair et al. (2010). The lowest loading was 0.60 for JS1 and the highest was 0.88 for PJ1. However, all the CR and Cronbach alpha values were higher than the cutoff value of 0.7, which was recommended by Hair et al. (2010). Nonetheless, according to Hair et al. (2010), the minimum AVE level should be 0.6. Therefore, all the AVE values exceeded the recommended level as can be seen in Table 2 and Figure 1. Accordingly, the validity and reliability of this study were achieved.

Table 2: Validity and reliability

Construct	Items	Item-total correlation	AVE >0.5	Standardized loading	CR >0.7	Cronbach's alpha >0.7	Source
Job satisfaction	JS1	.36	0.543	.60	0.826	.825	(Faheem & Mahmud, 2015; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010)
	JS2	.60		.77			
	JS3	.74		.86			
	JS4	.48		.69			
Distributive justice	DJ1	.70	0.649	.84	0.852	.878	(Faheem & Mahmud, 2015; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010)
	DJ2	.71		.84			
	DJ3	.70		.84			
	DJ4	.48		.69			
Procedural justice	PJ1	.77	0.705	.88	0.862	.905	(Faheem & Mahmud, 2015; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010)
	PJ2	.65		.80			
	PJ3	.71		.84			
	PJ4	.69		.83			

Table 3: Goodness-of-fit indices for the measurement model

Fit index		Acceptable level			Sources		Results
x2/df		≤5			(Hair et al., 2010)		1.41
RMSEA		<.08					.053
					(B. M. (2001) Byrne, 2001)		
NNFI (TLI)		≥.90			(Hair et al., 2009)		.962
AGFI		≥.80			(Hair et al., 2010)		.870
CFI		≥.90			(Chau, 1997)		.969
GFI		≥.90			(Hu & Bentler, 1999)		.905
NFI		≥.90			(Chau, 1997)		.902
Interactional	IJ1	.66	0.624	.81	0.829	.825	(Faheem & Mahmud,
justice	IJ2	.76		.87			2015; Nadiri & Tanova,
	IJ3	.45		.67			2010)

AVE: average variance extracted, CR: composite reliability, DJ: distributive justice, IJ: interactional justice, JS: job satisfaction, PJ: procedural justice

4.1.1.2. Model fit

By assessing the absolute fit, the results have shown that all the criteria of the model were acceptable as shown below:

Root mean square error (RMSE)=.053, comparative fit index (CFI)=.969, goodness-of-fit indices (GFI)=.905, and non-normed fit index (NNFI)=.962, which indicate that the model is a good fit. According to Hu and Bentler (1999), if the GFI is greater than 0.90 and the RMSE value is less than 0.08, the fit model meets the acceptability criteria. However, other GFI criteria also achieved the required levels as detailed in Table 3 and Figure 1.

AGFI: adjusted goodness-of-fit index, CFI: comparative fit index, GFI: goodness-of-fit indices, NFI: normed fit index, NNFI: non-normed fit index

4.1.2. Structural model

4.1.2.1. Path analysis

After achieving the model fit as mentioned, the next step was to examine the hypotheses of the study. Regression weights were used to find the impact of the IVs on the DVs as hypothesized from the literature review. Table 4 below illustrates the regression results.

Table 4: Hypotheses test

H	DV	Path	IV	Estimate	SE	CR	p	Status
H1	JS	<---	DJ	.436	.107	4.077	***	Supported
H2	JS	<---	IJ	.247	.109	2.261	.023	Supported
H3	JS	<---	PJ	.220	.104	2.123	.001	Supported

CR: composite reliability, DJ: DJ: distributive justice, DV: dependent variable, H1: Hypothesis 1, H2: Hypothesis 2, H3: Hypothesis 3, IJ: interactional justice, IV: independent variables, PJ: procedural justice, SE:

The first hypothesis indicated that DJ had a positive and significant effect on JS among nurses at a level of β = 0.436; p = .000. Thus, H1 was supported. This result is supported by previous studies (Lambert et al., 2019; Ghran et al., 2019). Similarly, we predicated that IJ has a positive effect on JS with β=0.247, p=.023) Thus, H2 was supported. These results are in line with the study by Ghran et al. (2019). The third hypothesis was to determine the effect of PJ on JS and, according to the result (β=0.220, p=0.001), H3 was supported. Similar findings were reported by Lambert et al. (2019).
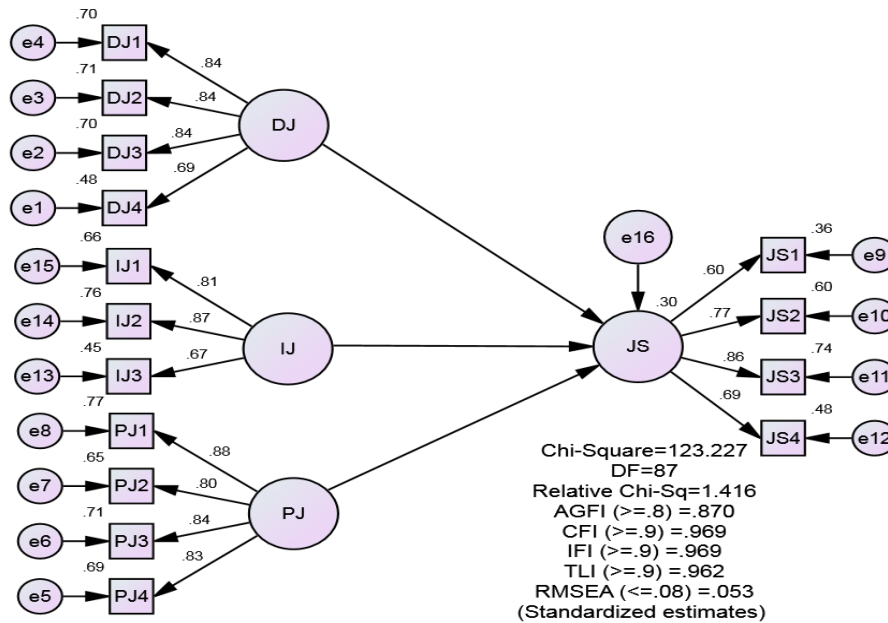

Figure 1. Structural model

5. DISCUSSION

The importance of justice in organizations has been debated for decades (e.g., Greenberg, 1987). However, it is necessary to systematically investigate its effect in developing countries, and in particular in Iraq. The current study fills this gap and empirically enriched the body of knowledge about OJ in the Iraqi setting. This study found that OJ has an effect on JS and this result is supported by previous studies (Mashi, 2018; Suifan et al., 2017).

Likewise, believing that the processes in the workplace is fair will aid in perceiving a task in a more favorable light. The sense of inequality that is experienced in hospitals leads to feelings of anger and mistrust among the nurses. If an individual feels that his/her managers or supervisors in the organization or hospital treats him/her fairly, the

Once individuals realize that both the processes and results are equal and fair, JS will be high in the workplace. Feeling appreciated for job achievements generally meets the needs of being treated equally, leading to positive feelings.

level of confidence among the individuals or nurses regarding the organization or hospital will be high. When justice exists in the hospital, nurses will feel that they are essential in the workplace. Under these circumstances, the individuals will be more committed to the workplace and this will lead to an increase in JS and efficiency among them. Conditions that contribute to JS is transparency and

equality of the payment system and in the development of a labor system. JS will be achieved if the salary is equal and fair on the basis of the type of work and personal skills. Most individuals will consciously want to earn less income if they could work anywhere they want or experience less discrimination. The key to linking what the individuals receive, in terms of wages, to job satisfaction is not determined by the total amount earned by an employee but is dependent on the employee's sense of fairness and justice within the organization. Clearly, employees who feel satisfied with the equity practices and policies of the institution will actually have more job satisfaction in the workplace. Organizations or hospitals can achieve their goals and objectives more readily with effective and efficient staff, which can be achieved with a productive and successful human resources department in the organization or hospitals. The main task of the organization or hospital is to take steps toward fairness and JS in the workplace, because it is of utmost importance to the success of the organization or hospital.

6. CONCLUSION

Sufficient training should be provided to supervisors to familiarize them with the values and pillars of justice in the workplace so that these can be implemented by the organization or hospital. At the same time, supervisors and administrators must be encouraged to communicate with the workers or nurses and to use the values and outcomes of the theory of OJ. The results of this study provide supervisors and administrators with information about how improvement in OJ can lead to an increase JS and on-the-job facilitation of employee innovation.

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