

# Studying the relation between organizational justice and organizational commitment among the librarians of Khuzestan province ministry of science academic libraries

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## Abstract

This research is designed to study the relation between organizational justice and organizational commitment among the librarians working in the academic libraries of Khuzestan province universities of ministry of science. The statistic population includes all the managers and librarian employees working in the selected libraries in the year 2013 (160 persons), among whom 133 persons have been asked to fill the 1993 Moorman's survey of organizational justice and 1990 Meyer's survey of organizational commitment. This is a correlational type study, carried out with a descriptive method. To analyze the relation between the variables, Pearson's correlation coefficient and multiple-regression tests were used. In the end, among different factors of organizational justice, only the obtained mean of procedural justice was measured less than the average. And, the overall mean of organizational justice was measured just a little short of the average. Among different factors and elements of organizational commitment (affective, normative, continuance) the obtained results of continuance commitment is quite low. Yet, the overall mean of organizational commitment is higher than the average. There is a significant and positive relation between organizational justice and organizational commitment. Finally, among different factors of organizational justice, interactional justice can be more relied upon to assess the organizational commitment of the staff working in the studied libraries.

**Keywords:** organizational commitment, Khuzestan province governmental universities, organizational justice, academic libraries

## Introduction

Organization is a social system whose viability and endurance rely upon the strong bond between its consisting elements. Perception of injustice by the personnel can damage the spirit of good working among them for it overwhelms their will and motivation. Injustice and unfair distribution of organization's wealth and assets lowers their morale and high spirit of hard-working. In the process of developing a just organizational behavior and creating a sense of justice in the staff, it is of utmost importance to understand how actions based on justice influence different aspects of the employees' professional career.

For the staff, the observation of justice, especially when it comes to their relation with the management (distribution of rewards, supervision, promotions and appointments) is very important. According to Lambert, the idea of justice, which in the organizational environment is referred to as organizational justice, is the most prominent subject in the field of human resource management and organizational behavior throughout the last decades.

Organizational justice is the realm where processes, actions and reactions are placed fairly in their in their correct positions. As Niehoff and Moorman (1991) proposed, speaking of organizational justice, the way the employees re treated is taken very seriously, so that they feel being treated fair. According to them organizational justice is consisted of three elemental factors, that are, distributive justice, interactional justice and procedural justice.

Most of the employees expect an appropriate reward in exchange for their work (distributive jus-

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tice). Moreover they expect a fair procedure through which they receive this reward (procedural justice). They also expect to experience a fair treatment from and a just interaction with their superiors and supervisors (interactional justice)

Greenberg (1990) proposed that the researches in the area of organizational justice may define many variables related to organizational behavior. Lately, researches have focused on how presence and absence of a justice system can influence organizational interactions and their consequences. One of the subjects that is worth looking into is the appraisal of the effect organizational justice has on organizational commitment, since this commitment is another concept crucial for human resources to flourish.

Organizational commitment is in fact the acceptance of organizational values by the staff and their active involvement in organizational affairs. It has become clear in recent years that organizational commitment is a powerful motive towards an organization's success. According to studies carried out by Allen and Meyer (1990) organizational commitment is a state of mind in which the individual desire to remain in an organization, and itself has three elemental factors: affective commitment (one's emotional bond with the organization), normative commitment (sensing a duty to remain as a member of the organization) and continuance commitment (the desire to remain in an organization because of the privileges it has to offer or the losses one would have to suffer if he decided to leave the organization)

Employees' organization commitment helps the manager in programming, improving job performances and in decreasing the frequency of absences and delays. On the other hand, having a committed staff provides a background for improvement and expansion of the organization, while the personnel with little or no commitment to the organization remain indifferent towards the goals and overall success on the organization.

Since library is an organization, establishment of justice can be a significant action to improve job performance, efficiency, job satisfaction and organizational commitment in librarians. These actions which improve different aspect of librarians' performance must be taken seriously by their managers.

Without a doubt –as in any other organization– achievement of goals for a library would be impossible without professional and committed personnel. Since organizational justice is expected to play an important role in librarians' commitment to the organization, the researcher intends to analyze the

organizational justice and its aspects in libraries and study their relation with librarians' organizational commitment.

## Literature Review

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As far as the researcher has looked for sources both inside and outside the country, it turns out Sayyar (2008), Yadegari (2010), Yaghoubi *et al* (2009), Ghafouri and Golparvar (2009), Bidgoli (2011), Shekari *et al* (2011), Rego and Cunha (2006), Camerman *et al* (2007), Panggabean (2008) and Manville (2008) have carried out researches studying the relation between organizational justice and organizational commitment in different organizations in several countries. These researchers have found the relation to be positive and significant. Only Fatholahi (2011) in his study of Tehran's municipality didn't find the relation significant.

In recent years many researchers have studied the relation between organizational justice and its behavioral and attitudinal consequences such as organizational commitment and organization's public relations.

However, despite the significant effect organizational justice has on librarians' organizational commitment, no comprehensive study has been carried out in this area. There are only some studies on the relation of organizational commitment with other variables in public and academic libraries of different countries. Among which the following are worth mentioning:

Shi'a (2003), Haghirossadat (2010) Tella, Ayeni & Popoola (2010), Awan & Mahmood (2010), Owolabi & Salaam (2010). Results of their studies showed that organizational commitment plays a strong role in a library's success. In light of the fact that no study on the relation between organizational justice and organizational commitment in libraries has been carried out, the present research studies the academic libraries of Khouzestan province governmental universities for clues leading to such relations.

## Research Questions

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The present study seeks an important matter, that is, whether there is a relation between organizational justice and organizational commitment or not? And if there is, which aspect of organizational justice –distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice– anticipates organizational commitment? And also among these prognostic aspects of organizational justice, which one has a more powerful and significant correlation with organizational commitment?

## Research Hypothesis

1. Organizational justice and its elements have significant relation with organizational commitment among librarians working in academic libraries of Khouzeestan province universities of ministry of science.

2. Organizational justice and its elements have significant relation with affective commitment

3. Organizational justice and its elements have significant relation with continuance commitment

4. Organizational justice and its elements have a significant relation with normative commitment.

5. Between different aspects of organizational justice and organizational commitment there are multiple correlations.

## Methodology

By purpose, the present research is an applied study, and it uses a correlation method. The data has been gathered through field study and has been analyzed by SPSS software

### 1) Research tools

To gather the required data two surveys have been used that are as follows:

#### 1-1) Organizational justice survey

Niehoff and Moorman's organizational justice survey (1993) that includes 20 items to measure the three elements:

Distributive justice (5 items, questions 1-5), procedural justice (6 items, questions 6-11) and interactional justice (9 items, questions 12-20)

#### 2-1) Organizational commitment survey

Meyer and Allen's organizational commitment survey (1990) that includes 24 items to measure the three elements:

Affective commitment (8 items, questions 21-28), continuance commitment (7 items, questions 29-35) and normative commitment (8 items, questions 36-43)

#### 2) Survey's Reliability

Niehoff and Moorman's survey of organizational justice and Meyer and Allen's survey of organizational commitment are standardized items

used in several studies and have a fine record of reliability. Hasanzade (2008) in his study in "Iran's company of engineering and development" has reported the two surveys' reliability to be respectively 83% and 82%, while Amin ShayanJahromi *et al* in their study of Bandarabbas schools for special children have reported them to be 92% and 84% respectively. Also in Ghafouri and Golparvar's study of Isfahan's municipality these two surveys have a record of 92% and 84% reliability. In this study, the Cronbach's Alpha for organizational justice and organizational commitment survey are measured respectively 91% and 84%.

## Statistical population

The statistical population in this research includes all the librarians working in academic libraries of Khouzeestan province universities of ministry of science in the year 2012. They have been selected regardless of their academic degree and the only criterion of selection was being an employee of the afore-mentioned libraries. The whole population is consisted of 160 persons, and concerning the thinness of this population all of them have been asked to fill out surveys. Among them 133 persons have participated in the survey.

## Results

### Descriptive results

The subjects in this research included all the employees of Khouzeestan province academic libraries of the ministry of science (regardless of their academic degree). Concerning the year this study has been conducted (2012), most of the subjects were young, aging less than 36 (men 52.8%, women 63.9%) and with academic education (73.7% bachelor degree or higher, among whom 61.7% had studied library and information science). With less than 10 years of job experience (57.9%) and employed in non-managerial positions (84.3%) and working behind the loan desks (41.1%)

Table 1 demonstrates Mean and Standard deviation for different factors of organizational justice and organizational commitment separately.

**Table 1. Variables Mean and standard deviation**

variable	Mean	Standard deviation	variable	mean	Standard deviation
Distributive justice	16.2	4.05	Affective commitment	29	5.8
Procedural justice	15.6	5.7	Continuance commitment	19.3	6.1
Interactional justice	22.7	7.6	Normative commitment	25.2	5.1
Organizational justice	59.5	14.1	Organizational commitment	73.6	15.6

**Analytical results**

As is demonstrated in table 2, there is a significant and positive correlation between organizational justice and organizational commitment ( $r=0.69$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). There is a positive and significant correlation between distributive justice and organization-

al commitment ( $r= 0.42$ ,  $p=0.00$ ). Between procedural justice and organizational commitment there is a significant and positive correlation ( $r=0.58$ ,  $p=0.00$ ) Also interactional justice and organizational commitment correlate positively and significantly ( $r=0.66$ ,  $p=0,00$ )

**Table 2. Pearson's correlation between the variables**

Variable	Correlation coefficient (r)	Level of significance (P)	N
Organizational justice	69/ 0	000/ 0	125
Distributive justice	42/ 0	000/ 0	126
Procedural justice	58/ 0	000/ 0	125
Interactional justice	66/ 0	000/ 0	124

According to table 3, the results of Pearson's test demonstrate a positive and significant correlation between organizational justice and affective commitment. ( $r=0.50$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Between distributive justice and affective commitment there is positive and signifi-

cant correlation ( $r=0.34$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Procedural justice and affective commitment correlate positively and significantly ( $r=0.38$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Also there is a positive and significant correlation between interactional justice and affective commitment ( $r= 0.49$ ,  $p<0.001$ )

**Table 3. Pearson's correlation between variables**

Variable	Correlation coefficient (r)	Level of significance (P)	N
Organizational justice	50/ 0	001/ 0	125
Distributive justice	34/ 0	001/ 0	129
Procedural justice	38/ 0	001/ 0	128
Interactional justice	49/ 0	001/ 0	127

According to table 4, the results the test demonstrate a positive and significant correlation between organizational justice and continuance commitment. ( $r=0.39$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). Between distributive justice and continuance commitment there is positive and signifi-

cant correlation ( $r=0.26$ ,  $p<0.003$ ). Procedural justice and continuance commitment correlate positively and significantly ( $r=0.42$ ,  $p=0.00$ ). Also there is a positive and significant correlation between interactional justice and continuance commitment ( $r= 0.34$ ,  $p<0.001$ )

**Table 4. Correlation between continuance commitment and aspects of organizational justice**

Variable	Correlation coefficient (r)	Level of significance (P)	N
Organizational justice	39/ 0	001/ 0	123
Distributive justice	26/ 0	003/ 0	125
Procedural justice	42/ 0	000/ 0	124
Interactional justice	34/ 0	006/ 0	123

According to table 5, the results of the test demonstrate a positive and significant correlation between organizational justice and normative commitment. ( $r=0.46$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). Between distributive justice and normative commitment there is positive and signifi-

cant correlation ( $r=0.30$ ,  $p=0.00$ ). Procedural justice and normative commitment correlate positively and significantly ( $r=0.42$ ,  $p=0.00$ ). Also there is a positive and significant correlation between interactional justice and normative commitment ( $r=0.40$ ,  $p=0.000$ )

**Table 5. Pearson's correlation between normative commitment and aspects of organizational justice**

variable	Correlation coefficient (r)	Level of significance (P)	N
Organizational justice	46/ 0	000/ 0	123
Distributive justice	30/ 0	000/ 0	130
Procedural justice	42/ 0	000/ 0	128
Interactional justice	40/ 0	000/ 0	127

According to table 6 and the results obtained through multiple regression test, interactional justice is the first variable to enter the equation. This factor alone explains a 42% change in the value of organizational commitment ( $r^2=0.42$ ). The equation's B rate in the first stage shows 1.6 point increase in organizational commitment for a single unit growth in interactional justice. The resulting F in this stage is 48.5 that with the degree of freedom of 1&118 is significant up to 99%.

In the second and final stage, procedural justice also enters the equation, which leads to 5% increase in

the equation's expressing power ( $r^2=0.46$ ). According to the equation's B rate in this stage, for a single unit increase in the value of interactional justice, organizational commitment increases by 0.89 and for the same amount of increase in procedural justice, organizational justice increases by 0.94. Equation's  $\beta$  rate shows that interactional justice is a stronger indicator of organizational commitment. These results have been obtained with regard to the value of F ( $F=29.1$ ) and with the degree of freedom of 2&117 and are up to 99% significant and can be applied and generalized to the whole statistical population.

**Table 6. Regression equation for organizational commitment in different stages**

stage	variable	Rate B	rate $\beta$	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	d.f	sig
first	Interactional justice	1/6	65/	65/	42/	5/47	118 & 1	001/0
	constant	53/7	-					
second	Interactional justice	89/	41/	68/	46/	29/1	117 & 2	001/0
	Procedural justice	94/	30/					
	constant	1/35						

## Conclusions

The purpose of the present research was to study the relation between organizational justice and organizational commitment among the librarians working in academic libraries of Khuzestan province universities of ministry of science. The findings of this research are as follows:

Organizational justice here means the fair and moralistic treatment of an organization's personnel; it

is consisted of three elemental factors (distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice) and has a direct and positive relation with organizational commitment. The results of this research support the ever-increasing instances of the significant relation between organizational justice and an employee's organizational commitment. The correlation of these two factors was examined in Pearson's correlation test and the results –with regard to the level of ( $p=0.000$ )– showed that organizational justice ( $r=0.69$ ), distribu-

tive justice ( $r=0.42$ ), procedural justice ( $r=0.58$ ) and interactional justice ( $r=0.66$ ) correlate with organizational commitment directly and significantly. These results also correspond to those obtained by Sayyar (2008), Yaghoubi *et al* (2009), Ghafouri and Golparvar (2009), Bidgoli (2011), Raymond *et al* (2006), Lee (2007), Camerman *et al* (2007) and Manville (2007). Their findings also showed that there is a positive and significant relation between organizational justice and organizational commitment; and that the more organizational justice is observed by the managers, to the greater extent will the employees be committed to their organization. However these results are different from what was concluded by Fatholahi (2011) study of Tehran's municipality, where he didn't find any significant relation between organizational justice and organizational commitment.

Another conclusion of this study is the relation between organizational justice and its factors and affective commitment. The employee keeps on working for an organization with affective commitment because he believes in the organization and is willing to remain as an employee of that organization. There is a significant relation between affective commitment and organizational justice and its different aspects. The findings of this research were examined by Pearson's correlation test and the results proved this significant and positive correlation between affective commitment and organizational justice and its elements. (Affective commitment with organizational justice  $r=0.50$   $p=0.000$ , with distributive justice  $r=0.38$   $p=0.001$ , with procedural justice  $0.38$   $p=0.001$ , with interactional justice  $r=0.49$   $p=0.000$ ). These results are similar to those of Yaghoubi *et al* (2009), Shekari *et al* (2011), Diane (2006), Rego and Cunha (2006). As the results of most of studies around the world suggest, the significant correlation between organizational commitment and organizational justice and its three aspects has been proven. So it is fair to say developing organizational justice will lead to a boost in the employees' affective commitment, especially among the librarians of the libraries under study.

Another interesting result of this study is the significant relation between continuance commitment and organizational justice and its elements. Having continuance commitment, one remains as an employee of the organization because he cannot find another job. What was found via Pearson's correlation test showed a significant and positive relation between continuance commitment and organizational justice and its elements. (continuance commitment and organizational justice ( $p=0/001$ ,  $r=0/39$ ), dis-

tributive justice ( $p=0/003$   $r=0/36$ ), procedural justice ( $p=0/000$   $r=0/42$ ), interactional justice ( $p=0/006$   $r=0/34$ ) This means with the increase in organizational justice the continuance commitment will also grow. This can be generalized to the whole statistical society, thus proving the research's hypothesis.

These findings are in tune with results of studies done by Imani (2008), Ghefour and Golparvar (2007), Shekari (2011) and Panggabean (2008) in which a significant relation between continuance commitment and organizational justice have been found. However the results obtained in this research contradict those found by Yaghoubi *et al* (2009) in their study on Isfahan's selected hospitals of university of medical science, where there findings indicated no significant relation between continuance commitment and organizational justice. They believed, concerning continuance commitment, it is valuing the organization that increases the employee's commitment and the relation of organizational justice and commitment is of little importance.

Another conclusion to this research is the significant relation between normative commitment and organizational justice and its elements. Normative commitment expresses a state of being in debt to the organization and a commitment to stay there and keep on working under the organization's codes and norms because of a feeling of pressure from the organization. In this research the relation between normative commitment and organizational justice and its elements was examined by Pearson's correlation test and the results, regarding the significance level of  $p=0/000$  showed that organizational justice ( $r=0/46$ ), distributive justice ( $r=0/30$ ), procedural justice ( $r=0/42$ ) and interactional justice ( $r=0/40$ ) have a significant relation with normative commitment. This means with the increase in organizational justice and its elements, the value of normative commitment will also grow. And this result can be generalized to the whole statistical society.

These results are in agreement with some of the results obtained previously by Ghafouri and Golparvar (2009), Yaghoubi *et al* (2009), Shekari (2011) and Panggabean (2008). Actually in light of the studies carried out in this area we can accept that the employee will show a greater normative commitment by observation of organizational justice rather than the lack of it.

If the employees sense a lack of justice in their organization they will stress out, and consequently try to even this stress by reducing their emotional dependence and affective commitment toward the organization. It is in such instances that their organizational commitment will drop. On the other hand, perception of justice in the workplace will induce more

sense of duty and responsibility in the employee, thus trying to pay his debt to his career, and hence an increase in his normative commitment.

According to Cohen-Charash and Spector (2001), organizational commitment is influenced by the interaction between employees and their supervisors and the perception of fairness by the workers. They believe organizational commitment exists only when organizational justice (distributive, interactional and procedural justice) is observed.

In this research, to study the simultaneous effect of the element of organizational justice on organizational commitment, multiple regression test has been applied. With the significant level of Sig=0/000 the results indicated that among the three elements of organizational justice, interactional justice plays the more important role in organizational commitment and hence is the first preference. Procedural justice is the second preference. With the reliability of 99% both interactional and procedural justice had significant results and this could be generalized to the whole statistical society. The results also showed that distributive justice has no significant share in organizational commitment since this element didn't enter the regression equation.

All in all the analysis of multiple regression points to the fact that procedural and interactional justice are more related to organizational commitment. This result is in tune with the findings of studies carried out by AhmadiAzarm (2001), Na'ami and Shekarkan (2004), Sayyar (2008), Rup and Cropanzano (2002), Hoffman (2005), Rego and Cunha (2006) and Panggabean (2008).

In General, the conclusions in this study indicated the relation of two attributions of organizational justice and its factors (distributive justice, procedural justice, interactional justice) with organizational commitment (affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment). Therefore to increase the library employee's organizational commitment, the managers must focus on improving two aspect of organizational justice, that are, interactional justice and procedural justice. Since the control of these two factors are closely and directly in the hands of the managers, it is necessary for them to make good and beneficial associations with their employees to improve their organizational commitment.

### Suggestions for further study

In light of the results of this research, these suggestions for future studies seem useful:

1. To carry out similar studies in other organizations.

2. To carry out similar studies in other libraries and information centers

3. To seek better ways to create fair and just systems in organizations

4. To study the effect of other variables on organizational commitment of librarians of academic libraries

5. The appraisal of the level of justice in organizations and its effect on employee's performance.

### Research limitations

Usually in each study the researcher faces certain obstacles and limitations which he is not able to overcome or control. Some of these obstacles and limitations that occurred in this research are as follows:

Lack of scientific resources directly related to the subject under study;

Authorities and managers in some of the libraries included in the statistical population were unwilling to co-operate and to permit the handing-out of surveys.

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