Correlation of Work-related Cultural Dimensions and Perceived Organizational Justice: A Questionnaire Study in Iranian Hospitals

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Abstract:

Introduction: *organizational perceived justice, a multidimensional construct, is defined as the individuals' perception of the fairness in the organization or the degree to which the initiatives of an organization toward employees perceived to be fair. This study was aimed to investigate the correlations of organizational cultural dimensions with employees' perceived organizational justice.*

Methods: *A cross-sectional study was conducted in 2015 at 3 teaching hospital of Yazd, Iran. A total of 120 employees contributed in the study. The required data were gathered using two valid questionnaires including an adjusted version of Hofsted's (1984) cultural dimensions and Moorman & Niehoff (1993) organizational perceived justice questionnaire. Data analysis was done through SPSS$_{19}$ statistical software and using Pearson correlation coefficient.*

Results: *Our findings indicated that the cultural dimensions' scores have no correlation with employees' perception of organizational justice, although some aspects of these two variables are correlated.*

Conclusion: *Although our results did not confirm the correlation of cultural dimensions' scores with perceived organizational justice but further investigation is required to unequivocally establish the absence of correlation between these organizational concepts.*

Keywords: *Organizational justice, Distributive justice, Procedural justice, Interactional justice, Organizational Cultural dimensions, Hospital*

1. INTRODUCTION

Justice or fairness refers to the idea that an action or decision is morally right, which may be defined according to ethics, religion, fairness, equity, or law. People are naturally attentive to the justice of events and situations in their everyday lives, across a variety of contexts (1). Organizational justice introduced to management literature at 1987 by Greenburg who defined the concept of organizational justice with regard to how an employee judges the behavior of the organization and the employee's resulting attitude and behavior (2). In the other words organizational perceived justice is a kind of perception that reflects the employees' feelings about the organization's actions toward its employees. These feelings include feelings about organization's decisions, decision-makers and managers (1). From the origin of perceived organizational justice, different authors have described various dimensions, components or types for it. Three main proposed components of organizational justice are distributive, procedural and interactional justice (which includes informational and interpersonal justice) (3). These components are defined as followings:

- Distributive justice: Distributive justice is conceptualized as the fairness associated with decision outcomes and distribution of resources. The outcomes or resources distributed may be tangible or intangible. In the other words, distributive justice means the fairness of outcomes or allocations that an individual receives or a person's judgment about the fairness or reasonableness of the allocation of the results. Perceptions of distributive justice can be fostered when outcomes are perceived to be equally applied (3,4).

- Procedural justice: Procedural justice is defined as the fairness of the processes that lead to outcomes. It refers to the fairness of the procedures that are used in decision making about results' allocation. In the other words, procedural justice reflects the evaluation of organizational justice in relation to policies and processes (3,4). For example, an individual may ask how decisions concerning employees' promotions are made (4). In summary, distributive justice refers to outcomes (results or ends) while procedural justice refers to means or methods (5). When individuals feel that they have a voice in the process or that the process involves characteristics such as consistency, accuracy, ethicality and lack of bias then procedural justice is enhanced (1).

- Interactional justice: perhaps the most important advance in organizational justice literature is consideration of the importance of interpersonal behaviors in the organization which is called interactional justice (1). Interactional justice refers to the treatment that an individual receives as decisions are made and can be promoted by providing explanations for decisions and delivering the news with sensitivity and respect. Interactional justice describes the employees' evaluation of the fairness of administrators' behavior (6). According to this definition, employees (in addition to a tendency to get fair results and to ask about the fair procedures for decision making about results allocation) evaluate their managers' behavior and then consider the results of this evaluation in decision making about their social exchange with the organization (4). Some authors suggest that interactional justice should be broken into two components: interpersonal and informational justice. Interpersonal justice refers to perceptions of respect and propriety in one's treatment while informational justice relates to the adequacy of the explanations given in terms of their timeliness, specificity and truthfulness. It reflects the degree to which people are treated with politeness, dignity and respect by authorities and third parties involved in executing procedures or determining outcomes. Informational justice reflects the employees' perception of their managers' openness and honesty in providing information to them in comparison with others (4). Also, informational justice reflects the individuals' perception of the fairness of information that is used in organizational decision making (7). Informational justice focuses on explanations provided to people that convey information about why procedures were used in a certain way or why outcomes were distributed in a certain fashion (1).

Some researchers also have added one further dimension to theses dimensions named systemic justice. According to these authors systemic justice reflects the general perception of justice throughout the organization and the work environment (3).

In recent decades research on organizational justice has been pursued in 3 main categories. Some researchers in their studies have studied the situation of perceived organizational justice descriptively to find the ways of improvements. Some other authors have tried to identify the determinants or antecedents of perceived organizational justice or the factors influencing the justice perception of different organizational settings' employees. These studies have reported a variety of factors such as personal ones as the determinants of justice perception of employees in work environment. The last category of organizational justice studies includes those that have been done on the effects of justice perception with employees. This kind of studies also, have shown the justice perception of employees affects different aspects of organizational life such as job performance and satisfaction, productivity, work quality, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior and its dimensions and participating in organization's decision making and problem solving (3).

Culture is defined as the set of beliefs and behavior patterns which reflects the general customs of a particular group of a people and creates the core identity of that group who is called a society. Therefore, cultural values are respected common patterns which are learned, accepted and institutionalized at groups or societies (6). These values are the largely shared values of the members of those groups or societies identify those objects, conditions or characteristics that

members of the society consider important; that is, valuable (8). It is reasonable to hypothesize that the cultural dimensions of an organization can affect its employees' perception of justice in working environment. Therefore, in this study we tried to investigate the correlation of organizational cultural situation based on a revised model of Hofstede's cultural dimension with employees' perception.

2. METHODS

A cross-sectional study was conducted in 3 educational hospitals of Yazd, Iran (Shahid Rahnemoon, Shahid Sadoughi and Afshar hospitals) in 2015. The purpose of study was the investigation of the relationship between employees' perception of organizational justice and their respect to work-related cultural values in work environment. A total of 120 employees from different units of these hospitals participated in the study. Required data was gathered by using 2 valid questionnaires as followings:

1) Mansoori-Sepehr et al. (2014) work related cultural values questionnaire: This questionnaire is a revised Persian version of work-related cultural values questionnaire which its origin is from Hofsted's (1984) work on work-related cultural dimensions. In 1984, Hofsted introduced the first version of work-related cultural dimensions' questionnaire which includes 25 questions in 5 cultural dimensions called power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity-femininity, individualism-collectivism, and Confucian work dynamics. In 2006, Wu reexamined this scale in 2 cultures including one eastern and one western and proposed an updated version of Hofsted's work-related dimensions includes 23 questions in 5 cultural dimensions. In 2014 Mansoori-Sepehr et al. re-examined this new version of cultural dimensions in Iran culture and proposed a Persian version of work-related cultural dimensions' questionnaire in including 16 questions in 4 dimensions called power distance (4 items), uncertainty avoidance (4 items), masculinity-femininity (5 items) and individualism-collectivism (3 items). The respondents of this questionnaire are asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the questionnaire statements in 5-point Likert scale (from strongly agree to strongly disagree) which obtains the scores of 5 to 1. The higher scores of cultural dimensions reflect the higher enthusiasm of employees to high power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, high masculinity and collectivism. The reliability of this questionnaire has been obtained through Cronbach's alpha as 0.71 prior the study.

2) Moorman & Niehoff (1993) organizational perceived justice questionnaire: This questionnaire has 20 questions for evaluation of organizational perceived justice in 3 dimensions includes distributive justice (5 items), procedural justice (6 items) and interactional justice (9 items). The respondents of this questionnaire are questioned to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the questionnaire statements about their hospital in 5-points Likert scale (very high to very low) which obtains the scores of 1 to 5. The reliability of Persian version of this questionnaire has been obtained through Cronbach's alpha as 0.86 by Mardani Hamooleh et al. (2009). (ref5)

In this study, for ethical consideration an informed consent has been obtained from all participants and their personal information were kept confidentially. Also, the response rate of managers was 100% and that of nurses was 85% (171 completed questionnaires from 200 distributed questionnaires). After completing the questionnaires, collected data were analyzed using statistical software SPSS$_{19}$ (SPSS Inc, Chicago, IL). We used descriptive statistics and Spearman correlation coefficients in data analyses.

3. RESULTS

The demographic characteristics of study participants are presented in the table1:

Table1: *demographic characteristics of study participants*

Variable		N (percent)
Age	20-30	27 (22.5)
	31-40	69 (57.5)
	41-50	24 (20)
	Total	120 (100)
gender	Female	57 (47.5)
	Male	63 (52.5)
	Total	120 (100)
Marital status	Married	91 (75.8)
	Single	29 (24.2)
	Total	120 (100)
Education	Diploma	20 (16.7)
	Associate degree	16 (13.3)
	BS$_c$	69 (57.5)
	MS$_c$ and Ph.D.	15 (12.5)
	Total	120 (100)
Work experience	1-10	69 (57.5)
	11-20	43 (35.8)
	21-30	8 (6.7)
	Total	120 (100)

As specified in the above table, the highest percentage of participants in the study was men with 31-40 years age, with associate degree of education 1-10 years of work experience.

Table 2 and 3 present the descriptive findings of cultural dimensions and employees' perception of organizational justice.

Table2: *Means for cultural dimensions in studied hospitals*

Dimension	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Power distance	120	1.00	3.75	1.87	0.62
Uncertainty avoidance	120	1.75	5.00	4.01	0.56
masculinity-femininity	120	1.00	5.00	2.95	1.00
individualism-collectivism	120	1.00	5.00	3.90	0.74
Cultural values	120	2.12	3.94	3.18	0.38

As specified in the above table the studied hospitals' employees have enthusiasm to low power distance, high uncertainty avoidance and moderate masculinity and collectivism.

Table3: *Means for organizational perceived justice in studied hospitals*

Dimension	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Distributive justice	120	1.00	4.60	3.10	0.75
Procedural justice	120	1.50	4.67	3.27	0.68
Interactional justice	120	1.11	4.56	3.30	0.65
Organizational perceived justice	120	1.46	4.46	3.22	0.54

As specified in the above table the contributors ranked their hospitals' initiatives toward themselves as highly fair.

Table 4 shows the correlation coefficients between cultural dimensions and perceived organizational justice.

Table 4: *Correlation of cultural values with organizational perceived justice in studied hospitals*

	Distributive justice		Procedural justice		Interactional justice		Organizational perceived justice	
	r	P_{value}	r	P_{value}	r	P_{value}	r	P_{value}
Power distance	0.04	0.61	0.05	0.56	0.08	0.33	0.08	0.38
Uncertainty avoidance	0.04	0.59	0.07	0.43	-0.05	0.55	0.03	0.73
masculinity-femininity	-0.09	0.30	-0.25	0.00*	-0.07	0.40	-0.18	0.04*
individualism-collectivism	-0.04	0.66	0.19	0.03*	0.04	0.65	0.07	0.39
Cultural values	-0.04	0.63	-0.02	0.78	-0.01	0.88	-0.03	0.69

*significant at $P_{value}<0.05$

As specified in the above table cultural values has not a statistical relationship with organizational perceived justice but some of cultural dimensions correlate with some kind of organizational justice.

4. DISCUSSION

This study was aimed to examine the correlation of organizational cultural dimensions based on Hofstede's model and employees' perception of organizational justice in 3 Iranian educational hospitals.

Our descriptive findings showed that these hospitals' employees evaluate their organizations' initiatives to be moderately fair. This means that from the viewpoints of employees the organizational justice level of these hospitals can be improved.

Also, the moderate scores of distributive, procedural and interactional justice shows that these hospitals can improve their performance in regarding to the organizational outcomes and payments to employees (such as salaries and benefits and job promotion), the process of decision-making about theses outcomes allocation as well as the interactions of supervisors with employees. In accordance to our descriptive finding about organizational perceived justice, some previous published works in this field such as Bahrami et al. (2014), Mohammadi et al (2014), Manzari Tavakoli et al. (2013), Ghraei et al. (2013), Dabbagh et al. (2012), Javadi et al. (2012), Yaghoubi et al. (2011), Hedayati et al. (2010) and Yaghoubi et al. (2009) have concluded that the perceived organizational justice of Iranian educational hospitals is in moderate situation. So, although that the level of organizational justice in our hospitals seems to be desirable but it can be improved, also (1,3,5,9-14).

In this study we assessed the situation of cultural dimensions in studied hospitals using an adjusted version of Hofstede's cultural dimension model consists of 4 cultural dimensions named power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity-femininity and individualism-collectivism.

Our results showed that the participants prefer low power distance to high one. Power distance refers to the inequality of power between superiors and subordinates. High power distance organizations have an exact organizational hierarchy in which there is a clear line between managers and subordinates. Different from this kind of organizations, low power

distance organizations tend to have a flat organizational structure (15). Our results about the power distance preference of contributed employees can be analyzed in political and social context of the country. The country's democratization process leading to wide participation of all people in its governance which we are experiencing after Islamic revolution justifies our results in regards to power distance preference of hospital employees. In a same study Jamshidi Navid & Noori (2013) in their study on the accounting personnel of a medical university concluded that the participants prefer a medium power distance (16). The different result of this study with our findings can be interpreted as a sampling issue because accounting personnel's preference to a higher power distance is justifiable because their nation of work that generally deal with financial issues requires to maintain the organizational hierarchy while hospital staff are less likely to do so. In the other cultural context, Wu (2006) in his study on the participants from 2 cultures including Taiwanese and U.S. culture showed that Taiwanese participants have a medium score on power distance while the U.S. participants have a medium/low score on power distance (15). These differences also are due to the nature of cultural studies in each country that the results are not generalizable or even comparable to other countries because of cultural differences between countries.

In according to the second cultural dimension, our participants showed a high uncertainty avoidance tendency. Uncertainty avoidance is defined as people's tolerance of uncertainty (ambiguity). In high uncertainty avoidance organizations, there are more written rules in order to reduce uncertainty. In low uncertainty avoidance organizations, there are fewer written rules and rituals (15). Our finding about this dimension, which is to somewhat different from Jamshidi Navid & Noori (2013) (16) is also understandable. Hospital jobs which are primarily concerned with the patients' life reasonably require a high level of uncertainty avoidance. That's why so far a great effort has been done on the development of clinical guidelines for clinicians to act based on them. About this dimension, in the study of Wu (2006) Participants from both cultural groups have tended to have a high uncertainty avoidance value.

About the third dimension, our results showed that the contributors have a moderate masculinity preference. Masculinity (MAS) defines the gender roles in

organizations. In high MAS organizations, very few women can get higher-level and better-paying jobs. In low MAS organizations, women can get more equitable organizational status. A higher score on masculinity means that participants prefer men to have power and expect men to be effective leaders in organizations (15). The average masculinity-femininity score of our participants, which is in accordance with Jamshidi Navid & Noori (2013) (16) can be due to greatly expanded participation of women in Iran society in recent decades. For example, in our country a high percentage of the university students are women. The broad participation of women in work environment and social issues has shifted the society to the preference of moderate level of masculinity-femininity. In this dimension, Wu (2006) have concluded in their study that the Taiwanese participants have a medium score on masculinity and the U.S. participants have a very low score on masculinity (15).

Finally, in the last dimension our participants obtained the moderate score of collectivism. Individualism-collectivism refers to how people value themselves and their groups/organizations. People with high individualistic values tend to care about self-actualization and career progress in the organization while people with low individualistic values tend to value organizational benefits more than their own interests. The obtained collectivism score of our participants, which is same to that of Jamshidi Navid & Noori (2013) (16) can be due the Islamic religious beliefs which emphasize the primacy of collective interests over individual ones. Also, the existing democracy of country can be itself an affecting factor of collectivism because democracy is a collective behavior in its nature which expands collectivism of a society. In this dimension, the Taiwanese participants in the study of Wu (2006) have had a medium score on collectivism and the U.S. participants also have had a medium score on collectivism (15).

Our analytical findings indicated that the cultural dimensions' scores have no correlation with employees' perception of organizational justice, although some aspects of these two variables are correlated. Based on our knowledge, a little literature is available on this subject. Jamshidi Navid & Noori (2013) in their study have shown that all 4 cultural dimensions are positively associated with accountability level (16). Bahrami et al. (2005), in a study on hospital employees have concluded that

organizational culture is correlated with employees' organizational commitment which can also have a correlation with organizational perceived justice (6). The same finding has been reported by Soltani et al. (2015) (17). Also, Golparvar & Vakili (2009) in a same study have indicated that the organizational culture has a moderating role in the relationship of procedural justice and employees' satisfaction (18). Baharifar & Javaheri-Kamel (2010), in another study have concluded that ethical values including individual ethical values and cultural ethical values positively correlate with organizational distributive and procedural justice (19). Also, Rafie et al. (2015), in their study of medical university employees have shown that organizational commitment, which is affected by perceived organizational justice correlates with ethical decision making which is also can be related to ethical values (7). Azar & Alipour Drvishi (2010), in another study on the banking personnel in Iran have confirmed the relationship of organizational culture with perceived organizational justice (20). In general, a few studies are available on the relationship between organizational culture and perceived organizational justice. Indeed, these few studies have been done using different conceptual models of organizational cultural dimensions. Therefore, it seems that further study is needed. It is notable that our study had some limitations. The results which presented in this study are cross-sectional, so the limitations of cross-sectional studies are relevant to our study. Also, all analyzed data of this study was self-reported.

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Authors' contribution: All authors contributed equally in this work.

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