

Comparison of organizational justice and excellence between the employees of sports and non-sports offices in Alborz Province

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study was to compare organizational justice and excellence between the employees of sports and non-sports offices in Alborz province. The study adopted a descriptive-analytical method. The population of the study consisted of the employees of sports and non-sports offices in Alborz province. A number of 384 employees were randomly selected as the participants including 150 sports and 234 non-sports employees. The data was collected using Organizational Justice Questionnaire [5] and EFQM Organizational Excellence Questionnaire. The reliability of these questionnaires was calculated in the pilot study to be 0.95 and 0.97, respectively. Mann Whitney U test was run to analyze the data. The results showed a significant difference in organizational justice between sports and non-sports offices in Alborz province. Non-sports offices obtained a higher mean score of organizational justice than sports offices. There was also a significant difference in distributive and procedural justice between sports and non-sports offices in Alborz province. However, there was no significant difference in interactional justice between the offices. The results showed no significant difference in organizational excellence between sports and non-sports offices in Alborz province although non-sports offices obtained a higher mean score of organizational excellence than sports offices. In the end, a few recommendations are made for research and application.

Keywords: organizational justice, organizational excellence, enablers

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, no one may deny the role of human resources (HR) management and its effect on achieving organizational goals and appropriate management of organizations. Since HR is considered as a strategic factor and a main constituent of organizations and managers should deal with various people, needs and motives in the organizational environment, HR management should be paid due attention in order to create an intimate, friendly environment without confusion and disorganization [1]. Justice is one of the intrinsic, essential human needs that, when done appropriately, creates a suitable context for social development. Consistent with the development of societies, the theories of justice have developed and extended from religions and philosophy into empirical studies. In this regard, organizational studies consider justice as the key to the sustainment of society, workflow and progress [15]. Ambrose et al (2002) contend that organizational justice has three important domains. First, in ethical terms, the society expects that an organization follows the socially-agreed-upon criteria of justice since managers, as the leaders of social institutions, are expected to meet the criteria. Second, in commercial terms, when people think they are not treated fairly by the organization, they may lock out the organization and its services. Similarly, the

employees may not do their best in the organization so that their dissatisfaction may reduce organizational productivity. Third, in legal terms, when customers, employees and shareholders are not treated fairly by the managers, they may pursue the violation of justice in the courts of law [7]. HR constitutes an important part of organizational resources and capital, which is considered as a strategic factor in every organization. The success of every organization depends on the appropriate allocation of tools, equipment, money, raw material and HR, which is viable only when organizations can align their employees' abilities, competence as well as individual and collective characteristics with organizational goals. Thus, it is said that organization is the orderly allocation of individuals to achieve specific goals, which may be realized when the leaders center their decisions on the policy of fair behavior with employees [5]. The implementation of an appropriate organizational excellence model is another important constituent that management bodies need to follow in the organizational system. The excellence model is a managerial structure that facilitates development and optimization based on the main principles and criteria of inclusive quality management and self-assessment system. It is an instrument to measure how well the systems, self-assessment and guidance are established in the organization, which leads the way for managers to improve organizational and employee performance [4].

Organizational excellence is also a management structure that facilitates development and optimization through reliance on fundamental concepts and principles as well as the main criteria of inclusive quality management and self-assessment system. An excellent organization continually fulfills the expectations of stakeholders and has appropriate mechanisms to sustain this status. Nowadays, Continuous Quality Improvement and organizational excellence model are considered as the most important factors in organizations. Organizational excellence model enables the organizations to compare their current and desired status among themselves, recognize the difference and set to take corrective measures. EFQM excellence model is the most famous model used particularly in Europe to manage businesses [3]. This model provides a systematic framework for organizational performance assessment in terms of the results and enablers. Recognizing the strengths and weaknesses as well as improvable points in organizations by using this model may produce an inventory of ranked plans for achieving improved performance. In the contemporary world, consistent with outstanding changes in economic, social and technological domains, dramatic changes are also made in new management systems and procedures so that modern management has adopted completely different attitudes as to how to lead an organization. Continuous Quality Improvement and organizational excellence models are two concepts that have currently secured an important niche in global organizations [13]. Irrespective of the type of activity, size, structure and/or the level of success in achieving its organizational goals, every organization needs a model against which to measure its amount of success in reaching its business strategies and ideals. From among the models of organizational excellence, EFQM model has attracted the attention of Iranian researchers as it is the basis for Iran National Quality Award. Due to its comprehensive cycle of continuous improvement, EFQM model may act as a suitable framework to improve the quality structure in the organization. This cycle begins with a self-assessment to recognize the status quo and the obtained results. Based on the results, organizations can decide where to focus their maximum efforts to reinforce the enablers so as to obtain better results in future assessments. Following the necessary corrective measure, the organization would conduct a self-assessment again to evaluate the results of these measures. Based on this self-assessment, the results may be selected for improvement and the cycle is resumed [3].

Yagubi et al (2009) investigated the relationship of organizational justice with job satisfaction and organizational commitment in the employees of select hospitals of Isfahan University of Medical Sciences. The results showed that the mean scores of organizational justice, organizational commitment and job satisfaction were 3.45 ± 1.1 , 3.05 ± 1 and 3.3 ± 0.7 , respectively, in the hospitals. There was a significant relationship between organizational justice and commitment as well as between organizational justice and job satisfaction. Ramin Mehr et al (2009) investigated the relationship between perceived justice and organizational citizenship behavior. They reported a significant correlation among the components of organizational justice. Zarifi et al (2012) studied the relationship between organizational justice and job involvement in the experts with Physical Education Organization of Islamic Republic of Iran. The results of Pearson correlation coefficient showed a significant positive relationship between organizational justice and job involvement. The results of student t test and one-way ANOVA showed no significant difference in perceived organizational justice based on demographic variables including sex, work experience and the type of employment contract. However, there was a difference in perceived organizational justice among the employees based on the level of education. Moreover, there was no significant difference in the amount of job involvement among the employees based on demographic variables including sex, work experience, the type of employment contract and the level of education. Multiple regression analysis revealed that distributive justice could predict job involvement.

The results of the above studies emphasize the importance of organizational justice in organizations and offices as well as the viable foundations for organizational improvement and excellence. The studies on organizational justice have shown that perceived distributive justice is significantly associated with a variety of job behaviors including

the amount of organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, absenteeism, the employees' trust in managers, etc. Studies on the relationship of organizational justice with other organizational variables such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction and the like have been more intensive in foreign countries, which is noticeable both in the issue of justice and organizational excellence. The findings seem to suggest that job efficiency is highly dependent on employee job satisfaction so that job satisfaction is particularly important in foreign organizations and offices. Studies in Iran are often focused on organizational leaders' performance in reaching organizational excellence and justice, where the results mostly suggest that the leaders' performance account for deficiencies or progress. With regard to organizational justice, some studies have put more emphasis on the relationship between justice and organizational commitment. Some studies have reported the effect of dimensions of organizational justice on various aspects of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. There is scarcity of research with the same topic as the present study. Although some studies have addressed organizational justice and excellence in sports offices, there have not been comparative studies on these issues. Thus, considering the existing literature and previous findings, the present study aims to compare organizational justice and excellence between sports and non-sports offices in Alborz province, Iran in order to delve into the issue using a different approach. There is scarcity of evidence to show that organizational excellence is addressed in sports organizations and offices in Iran. Therefore, this study purports to investigate this model in sports and non-sports offices in Alborz province. In this regard, the following questions are formulated:

- How well is organizational excellence model implemented in sports and non-sports offices in Alborz province?
- In what office or organization have managers and decision-makers paid more attention to organizational excellence?
- Is there any difference in the mean scores of organizational excellence in different offices in Alborz province?

The present study examines these questions and other similar questions that address and compare organizational justice and its dimensions including procedural, distributive and interactional justice in sports and non-sports offices in Alborz province. Thus, the study aims to examine organizational justice and excellence in sports and non-sports offices in Alborz province and to compare the status quo in terms of the justice and the amount of organizational excellence.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study adopted a survey design. The method of the study was descriptive-analytical. The theoretical framework of the research was determined using documentary (library) study and previous findings. Due to numerous sports and non-sports offices in Alborz province, the population of the study was unlimited so that it was not possible to determine the exact number of employees with these offices. Thus, the population of the study consisted of the employees with all sports and non-sports offices in Alborz province whose number is unknown. A number of 384 employees with sports and non-sports offices in Alborz province were selected as the participants. The data was collected using Organizational Justice Questionnaire [7] and EFQM Organizational Excellence Questionnaire generally referred to as the questionnaire of European Foundation for Quality Management and National Iranian Productivity Organization. Organizational Justice Questionnaire comprises 20 items addressing three dimensions of organizational justice including distributive, procedural and interactional justice. EFQM Organizational Excellence Questionnaire consists of 44 items addressing two dimensions of enablers and results including 9 criteria in total that consists of leadership, policy and strategy, employees, partnership and resources, processes, customer results, employee results, social results and key performance results. The items are on the Likert scale ranging from Completely (3), Significantly (2), Partially (1) to Never (0). The validity of the questionnaire was approved of by experts. The reliability of the scale was calculated using Cronbach's alpha formula. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS 20. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. In this regard, the respondents' status and answers were tabulated first. Besides, the measures of central tendency (mean) and variability (standard deviation, maximum and minimum scores) were used to describe the data. Considering the type of hypotheses and scales, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was run to examine the normality of the distribution of research variables. The results revealed the non-normal distribution of the data; thus, non-parametric Mann Whitney U test was run to analyze the data and examine the research hypotheses.

RESULTS

The descriptive statistics of demographic data revealed that, from among 150 sports employees, 56% were male and 44% were female. Of 243 non-sports employees, 69.7% and 30.3% were male and female, respectively. The majority of sports offices employees ranged in age from 31 to 40 years old, amounting to 46%. The employees aged 20-30 and 41-50 constituted 28.7% and 20% of the respondents, respectively. In non-sports offices, the majority of respondents ranged in age from 31 to 40 years old, amounting to 42.7%. The majority of employees in both sports and non-sports offices had bachelor's degrees, constituting 54% and 68.4% in sports and non-sports offices,

respectively. Most of the sports offices employees had 1-10 years work experience, amounting to 57.3% while 26% had 11-20 years experience. 16.7% had 21-30 years of work experience. In non-sports offices, however, the majority of employees had 1-20 years work experience. Table 1 illustrates the mean scores and descriptive statistics of research variables.

Table 1. Mean and standard deviation of research variables for different groups

Variable	Sports offices				Non-sports offices			
	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD	Min.	Max.
Organizational justice	62.77	16.95	27	100	66.65	20.05	20	100
Distributive justice	14.86	4.69	5	25	16.14	5.52	5	25
Procedural justice	18.96	5.67	6	30	20.44	6.62	6	30
Interactional justice	28.94	8.1	9	45	30.07	9.41	9	45
Organizational excellence	2055.12	808.58	99	3739	2066.48	951.72	0	3872
Enablers	1153.47	427.08	33	2102	1184.27	521.09	0	2169
Results	933.40	386.68	66	1670	937.91	463.50	0	1703

The table illustrates the mean scores, standard deviation, maximum and minimum scores of the research variables. As shown in the table, non-sports offices obtained higher scores on all the research variables comparing with sports offices.

The results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test of the normality showed that the data was not normally distributed. Thus, non-parametric Mann Whitney U test was run to analyze the data.

Table 2. Mann Whitney U test to compare the main and auxiliary variables in the groups (sports and non-sports offices)

Variable	Mann Whitney U	P value	Result
Organizational justice (main variable)	15360	0.031	H ₀ rejected
Organizational excellence (main variable)	13710	0.841	H ₀ supported
Distributive justice	14702	0.000	H ₀ rejected
Procedural justice	14969	0.011	H ₀ rejected
Interactional justice	15896	0.112	H ₀ supported
Enablers	14807	0.581	H ₀ supported
Results	15491	0.692	H ₀ supported

Considering Table 2 and the 0.05 level of significance, there is a significant difference in organizational justice between sports and non-sports offices. The mean ranks show that non-sports offices enjoy higher levels of organizational justice than sports offices. However, there is no significant difference in organizational excellence between sports and non-sports offices. There is a significant difference in distributive justice between sports and non-sports offices. In this regard, there are higher levels of distributive justice in non-sports offices than in sports offices. In fact, the mean rank of distributive justice is higher in non-sports offices. There is a significant difference in procedural justice between sports and non-sports offices. The mean ranking shows that non-sports offices have higher levels of procedural justice than sports offices. There is no significant difference in interactional justice between sports and non-sports offices, however. There is no significant difference in enablers between sports and non-sports offices. There is no significant difference in the results criteria between sports and non-sports offices.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study aimed at investigating organizational justice and excellence in sports and non-sports offices in Alborz province in order to compare these two variables between the two types of offices. In this study, organizational justice was compared between sports and non-sports offices. The results of examining the main research hypothesis on the comparison of organizational justice in sports and non-sports offices showed a significant difference in organizational justice between sports and non-sports offices. The mean score of organizational justice was higher in non-sports offices than in sports offices. In this regard, non-sports offices employees think they are treated more fairly in their workplace than sports employees. Thus, they have reported higher satisfaction with their job and job relations. According to previous findings, organizational justice is done when a comprehensive, inclusive growth is considered for all employees. This is consistent with the idea of Lind and Tyler (1988) who contend that employees accept the decisions made out of fair treatment rather than unfair methods. Organizational justice in non-sports organizations denotes job satisfaction of the employees. Yagubi *et al* (2009), Seyed Javadin *et al* (2008), Ambrose *et al* (2002) and Folger and Martin (1986) have reported that organizational justice influences employees' job satisfaction. Gilliland (1995) emphasized the role of organizational justice in preventing the intention to leave, criticism of the work and tendency for displacement. The results of comparing procedural justice between sports and non-sports offices revealed a significant difference in procedural justice between these two types of offices. Non-sports offices obtained a higher mean score of procedural justice than sports offices. Procedural justice emphasizes

how decisions should be made to look fair. It considers the judgment of how justice is done in organizational procedures and the quality of behavior among organizational decision-makers and employees. Higher perceived procedural justice in non-sports offices indicate that the leaders of these offices pay more heed to behavioral codes. Comparison of distributive justice between sports and non-sports offices showed a significant difference in distributive justice between these offices. In this regard, non-sports offices obtained a higher mean score on distributive justice than sports offices. Distributive justice indicates individuals' perception of the justice in distribution and allocation of resources and rewards. Folger and Martin (1986) believe that distributive justice denotes the fair judgment of the distribution of results such as the amount of pay with promotion chances in an organizational fabric. This theory originates from Adams' Equity Theory. Adams emphasized the fairness perceived of the results – the distributive justice. This theory proposes that employees consider a relative balance via comparing their input-output with their colleagues' input-output as the desirable result. Konvsky and Cropanzo (1993) assert that distributive injustice occurs when individuals do not receive the reward they expect to obtain in comparison with others' rewards such as new position, responsibility, power, reward and promotion. The present findings showed that non-sports employees felt higher distributive justice than sports employees. Comparison of interactional justice between sports and non-sports offices revealed no significant difference in interactional justice between these offices. Both sports and non-sports employees had similar attitudes about interactional justice in their respective offices. Interactional justice denotes the social practice of procedures. Greenberg (1990) and Lind and Tyler (1988) consider interactional justice as a method that is transferred by leaders to subordinates. Thus, it is determined via management behavior. This justice is associated with the aspects of communication process such as honesty, respect, trust and politeness between the sender and recipient of justice. Since interactional justice is associated with cognitive, affective and behavioral reactions to management or superintendent, employees tend to show negative reactions such as quitting job when they feel injustice in interaction. Comparison of organizational excellence between sports and non-sports offices showed no significant difference in organizational excellence between the offices. Indeed, organizational excellence is implemented similarly in both types of offices. Besides, the total score of enablers and results showed that the offices had average performance in organizational excellence. Comparison of enablers in sports and non-sports offices revealed no significant difference in enablers between the offices. In fact, the enabler criteria are implemented similarly in the offices. Khodadad Kashi (2006) found no significant difference in enabler criteria between Shahid Beheshti University and Tarbiat Moalem University of Tehran. Comparison of results between sports and non-sports offices showed no significant difference in results criteria between the offices so that they had similar performance in terms of the results. Khodadad Kashi (2006) also reported no significant difference in results criteria between Shahid Beheshti University and Tarbiat Moalem University of Tehran.

Considering the present findings, it is recommended that sports offices follow organizational excellence models to make their programs efficient and improve their quality. Sports and non-sports offices may make reforms in their structure, rules and regulations and payroll status. Moreover, the planners and leaders of HR management in Iranian organizations and offices are recommended to encourage the organizations to release information on successful application of qualitative strategies as well as the advantages of these strategies. Since using organizational excellence models in developing countries requires more accurate studies, it is recommended that further studies be conducted to answer the needs of domestic organizations in this regard. It is suggested that researchers conduct studies on the association of organizational justice and excellence with organizational commitment, culture and effectiveness.

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