

Employee Ambivalence: An Examination of Spatial and Procedural Justice in Public Sector Higher Education Institutions



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Abstract: *The contemporary era underscores multifaceted principles grounded in organizational justice, among which spatial and procedural justice stand out prominently. This research aims to delve into the influence of spatial and procedural justice on employee performance within a public sector organization. Employing a quantitative research approach, primary data was acquired through a survey questionnaire distributed to university employees, utilizing the convenient sampling technique. Out of the 80 distributed questionnaires, 70 were completed and returned, with the remaining excluded from the analysis. The survey instrument, comprising 17 closed-ended items measured on a Likert scale, was adapted from a prior study. Statistical analysis, employing SPSS, was conducted to calculate and interpret results from the gathered data. The findings of the study indicate that spatial justice (SJ) and procedural justice (PJ) exhibit a positive and significant impact on employee performance in the public sector organizations. Consequently, the study recommends that public sector organizations prioritize attention to spatial and procedural justice as integral factors in enhancing employee performance. It is worth noting that the results may be generalized to other organizations within a similar contextual framework.*

Keywords: Spatial Justice, Procedural Justice, Employee Performance

Introduction

Ambivalence, an affective condition characterized by paradoxical sentiments and contradictory sentiments, is often seen within organizational environments. The need for employees to manage both favorable and unfavorable elements of their professions often results in a condition of ambiguity and lack of determination. Uncertainty may be expressed via a range of behavioral reactions, including plans to leave the organization, absenteeism, or presentism. (Ali et al., 2023) Showing absence of justice leads to feelings of unrewarded effort

towards certain causes in public sector organizations across the globe and the same is found in Pakistan. Specifically focusing on Sindh and limiting to its upper part where universities like Mehran University of Engineering & Technology, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Campus Khairpur are providing educational services in their respective fields. It is observed that the employees that once worked efficiently have shown a slow decline in work quality. It relatively leads to poor output on their part (Kalay, F., (2016)

Work embeddedness is the degree to which

personnel have a sense of affiliation and commitment towards their respective positions and institutions. It includes social relationships, occupational happiness, and perceived prospects for advancement, among other elements. Job embeddedness may serve as a buffer against negative feelings and behaviors (Ali et al., 2023). Therefore, it is now essential to ensure that an employee or worker is fully present at a given position so that they feel valued. It increases morale and results in enhanced work integration. The study indicates that negative emotions and conduct may be mitigated and behavior can be improved. It is better for workers to operate in a fair atmosphere, since injustice might motivate them to engage in undesirable conduct.

Organizationally, Mehran University of Engineering & Technology, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Campus Khairpur is obligated to uphold a measure for organizational fairness. The notion of workplace justice, or organizational justice, pertains to the way in which an organization is seen in terms of fairness. It pertains to the equity of the treatment, procedures, and results that are encountered by personnel and additional interested parties. It is essential due to the fact that its lack has resulted in lower employee motivation and satisfaction, employee attrition and absenteeism, employee performance and productivity, organizational citizenship behaviors, trust, and loyalty to the company. (Tett and Meyer, 1993) defines turnover intention as the inclination of employees towards quitting or switching their current organization or workplace. Related to this ambivalent attitude of employees, with which they are indecisive to continue with full spirit or leave, the precursor to practical turnover is identified (Halter et al., 2017). Previously carried out research works in the same field suggest that turnover intention is very complicated stage which may easily result in the negative attitude of the employees towards their own organization (Yaghoubi, et al., 2009). The research of Chen et al. proved that young employees are more likely to have such intentions due to lack of experience and abundance of vigor and energy to work more

enthusiastically, positively and result-orientedly (Chen et al., 2023). According to the research scholars, among the factors that ignite turnover intention and turnover, organizational justice stands atop. Spatial and Procedural Justice are one the mainstream elements within the concept of organizational justice.

Spatial Justice: The fair and equal allocation of socially valuable resources and chances to exploit them in organization is known as "spatial justice" (Randal et al., 2020). In other words, it is also called distributive justice which is more prevalent term in the research works carried out on the organizational justice and employee performance. Within the intricate machinery of organizations, distributive justice acts as a powerful fuel, driving employee performance upwards. Numerous studies have illuminated the positive impact of perceived fairness in resource allocation on individual and organizational success. When employees believe rewards are distributed justly, it ignites a spark of motivation, engagement, and commitment to their work. This translates into increased effort, initiative, and ultimately, a more productive workforce (Colquitt et al., 2001). The perceived fairness fosters trust and cooperation among employees, leading to improved communication, collaboration, and teamwork, ultimately propelling organizational effectiveness forward (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001).

Furthermore, research suggests that distributive justice acts as a shield against negative emotions such as stress, anxiety, and resentment, which can significantly hinder performance (Kim et al., 2009). Conversely, a lack of perceived fairness can breed discontent, leading to job dissatisfaction, turnover intentions, and even counterproductive work behaviors, ultimately crippling individual and organizational performance (Colquitt et al., 2001).

Therefore, establishing and maintaining a culture of distributive justice becomes a critical strategy for organizations seeking to maximize employee performance. This can be achieved through various levers, including transparent and consistent decision-making processes, clear communication regarding resource allocation

criteria, and open channels for employee voice and feedback. By prioritizing fairness and equity, organizations can cultivate a more motivated, engaged, and productive workforce, fueling the engine of performance and driving organizational success towards the horizon.

Procedural Justice: Within the complex landscape of organizations, procedural justice serves as a guiding compass, directing employees towards optimal performance. It focuses on the fairness and transparency of the processes used to make decisions, fostering a sense of control and participation among employees. Research consistently demonstrates the positive impact of perceived procedural justice on individual and organizational success (Thibaut & Walker, 1975).

When employees feel that decisions are made fairly and transparently, they are more likely to accept the outcomes and actively contribute towards organizational goals (Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997). This translates into increased trust in leadership, enhanced commitment to the organization, and ultimately, a more engaged and motivated workforce (Moorman & Niehoff, 1993). Procedural justice also opens avenues for employee voice and feedback, allowing concerns to be addressed and fostering a sense of ownership over decisions (Greenberg & Cropanzano, 2001).

Moreover, research suggests that procedural justice acts as a buffer against negative outcomes. Employees who perceive fair processes are less likely to experience stress, anxiety, and feelings of injustice, which are the factors that significantly hinder performance (Brockner, J., Tyler, T. R., & Wiesenfeld, B. M. (2001). Conversely, opaque, arbitrary decision-making processes can breed cynicism, leading to decreased effort, withdrawal behaviors, and even counterproductive work activities (Tepper & Parada, 2014).

Therefore, organizations seeking to optimize employee performance must prioritize implementing fair and transparent decision-making processes. This can be achieved through various levers, including providing employees with clear information about decision-making

procedures and criteria. Encouraging employee involvement in decision-making processes through consultative meetings and feedback channels, ensuring that decisions are based on sound evidence and free from bias or favoritism and implementing mechanisms for employees to raise concerns or challenge decisions they perceive as unfair. By prioritizing procedural justice, organizations can create an environment where employees feel valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their best work. This fosters a sense of ownership and commitment, ultimately propelling the organization towards its goals through the collaborative efforts of a highly engaged workforce.

Research Objective

1. To assess the influence of Spatial Justice on employee performance.
2. To examine the impact of Procedural Justice on employee performance.
3. To scrutinize the correlation between Spatial, Procedural Justice and employee performance.

Research Question

1. What is the extent to which Spatial Justice influences employee performance?
2. What is the extent to which Procedural Justice influences employee performance?
3. To what degree does each of these factors, Spatial Justice, Procedural Justice and, employee performance Exert correlation?

Literature Review

Employee performance is a critical factor for organizational success. Numerous studies have investigated various factors influencing employee performance, including organizational justice. Two key dimensions of organizational justice are distributive justice - the perceived fairness of resource allocation - and procedural justice - the perceived fairness of decision-making processes. This literature review examines the impact of both distributive and procedural justice on employee performance.

(Gori, Topino, Palazzeschi, and Fabio, 2020) use 179 Italian workers to study if organizational

justice can help to increase workers' job satisfaction. The job satisfaction scale, the change scale, and the organizational justice scale were among the three used. According to the authors' findings, organizational fairness is nevertheless impacted by partial mediation even though change acceptance has a major impact on workers' job satisfaction. However, when every aspect of organizational justice is considered, containing distributive, interpersonal, procedural, and informational justice, job performance is absolutely improved.

In a different vein, (Aeknarajindawat, N., & Jermstittiparsert, K., 2020). looked into how organizational justice might affect the way an organization behaves in terms of citizenship, employee job happiness, and organizational outcomes in a few Thai pharmacy companies of their choosing. The writers utilize the survey design while using a questionnaire to get data. 170 company employees were selected using simple random selection. The statistical program for social sciences (SPSS) and AMOS software were both employed in the analysis. The outcome of the regression analysis demonstrates that organizational justice in the company has a considerable and advantageous impact on the employee's attitude towards organizational citizenship.

(Kalay, F., 2016) investigated how organizational justice affected Turkish employees' performance. 942 teachers from three cities in the Turkish metropolitan who work in public schools were used in the study. partial least squares structural equation for three study participants modeling strategies. He came to the conclusion that whereas organizational justice and distributive justice both have considerable favorable possessions on workers' job performance, interactional justice and procedural justice have no substantial effects on that performance. However, the study fell short of outlining the key variables that affect organizational justice in a given organization.

In a pharmaceutical company in the city of Bangladesh, (Rahman, Haque, Elahi, and Miah, 2015) evaluate the effect of organizational justice on employee work satisfaction. 76 industry workers were used in the study utilizing

straightforward random sample approaches. The writers draw on multiple regression analysis and discipline. They came to the conclusion that, among the several organizational justice metrics, distributive and interactional justice had the greatest influence on their job satisfaction. Furthermore, here is no actual correlation between procedural justice in the workplace and employee job satisfaction. Although the authors clearly described the various organizational justice metrics, they made no mention of the effect that informational justice has on employees' job satisfaction, which would have given the study more credibility.

(Ali, 2016) examines the effects of organizational justice on employee performance, both intrinsic and extrinsic, using data from 231 academic staff members at Kata Kinabalu Polytechnic in Malaysia. Organizational justice was broken down into procedural, distributive, and Employee performance was dependent on both internal and extrinsic performance, both interpersonal and informational. Based on their research, they came to the conclusion that only information justice and distributive justice had a meaningful relationship with the organization's extrinsic employee performance in Indonesian suburban hospitals.

In a separate study, (Percunda, Tamasani, and Chaldyando, 2020) investigated the correlation between organizational fairness and satisfaction with performance appraisals. The questionnaire used in the study is used to choose the respondents. To ascertain the impact, regression analysis and correlation were used and the hospital's performance evaluation in reference to organizational justice. The study revealed a significant correlation between organizational justice and employee satisfaction with performance appraisals within the company. It was found that interactional justice had a more pronounced influence on performance evaluations. Furthermore, performance assessment was strongly linked to distributive, procedural, and interactional fairness.

2.1 Spatial justice and Employees' Performance

Spatial justice reflects how employees feel about the fairness of the outcomes they get from the business (Folger and Cropanzano, 2001). Spatial justice affects people's attitudes, including job satisfaction, in addition to employment-related outcomes Lambert, E. G., & Hogan, N. L. (2013). Spatial justice has a favorable effect on work satisfaction and a negative impact on turnover intentions, per study done to explain resource allocation results in businesses. When workers compare the appropriateness of outcomes with reference criteria and believe that the outcomes are fair, they find greater satisfaction (Lee, 2000).

Shah, Waqs, and Saleem (2012) claim that job satisfaction among employees in Pakistani public and commercial organizations is positively impacted by organizational justice, namely spatial and informational justice. Conducted an empirical study in the Income Tax Department in Amman to look at the effects of organizational justice and individual traits on job satisfaction and performance. The study conducted by Harvey and Haines (2005) provided strong evidence that the perception of fair procedures and the decisions made about human resources after a natural disaster are predictive of later work attitudes, such as job satisfaction.

According to Beugré, C. D. (2010), when workers believe that the organization is fair in all spatial, procedural, and interactional ways, this will lead to favorable outcomes for the organization as a whole as well as for the workers themselves, including lower turnover intentions, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. High perceptions of justice will foster faith and trust, which are important factors that motivate organizational commitment (Hendrix et al., 1998). Research indicates that when workers believe their employers are treating them fairly, they become more devoted to them and perform better, according to Cowherd and Levine (1992). The three aspects of views of justice work satisfaction, perceived job characteristics, perceived organizational features, and affective commitment have a

positive correlation.

The best indicator of performance now is spatial justice. Recent research has shown that this is a significant and still-emerging issue, with management even increasing compensation based on performance (Chang, 2008). Conversely, justice increases people's conviction in the organization's management, boosts their access to their rights, and enhances performance. Workers can determine how equitable this allocation is by comparing it to that of other workers

2.2 Procedural Justice and Employees' Performance

When it comes to organizational justice, scholars generally agree. Many of them separated it into two distinct but related categories: distributive justice, which emphasizes fairness in outcomes and results, and procedural justice, which emphasizes following procedures (Danaeifar et al., 2016). Employees who feel that the method and distribution are fair are generally able to overlook certain things (Ashraf et al., 2018).

Procedural justice pertains to the protocols utilized in decision-making processes that affect workers, such as pay scales and overall employment system equity. Stated differently, the matter pertains to the equity of the procedure utilized for decision-making within the company (Fields et al., 2000). Furthermore, made note of the significance of procedural justice, which raises questions regarding the methods used to decide on compensation structures.

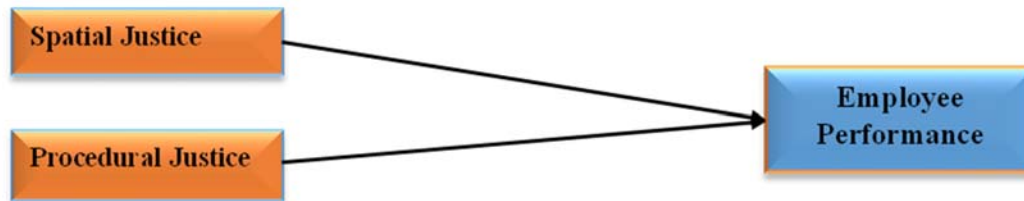
Within the organization, the setting of salaries and wage structures is seen as an internal structure. Procedural justice encompasses how decisions are made about the design and management of structures, as well as whether these procedures and processes have been carried out in an impartial and consistent manner, since justice is applied to internal structures (Milkovich et al., 2013).

Workers' perceptions of procedural justice have a significant impact on their comprehension and acceptance of outcomes. Employees and managers alike would be more receptive to

accepting low wages if they thought the wage and salary preparation process was fair. In addition, payment procedures may be deemed more equitable if: (i) they are applied continuously and involving all employees; (ii) employees participate in this process; (iii) they have the option to challenge the outcomes; and

(iv) the data used in the process is accurate (Milkovich et al., 2013). According to Deutsch (1975), human resources practices must take procedural justice into account in order to satisfy Adam's idea of equity, which states that a fair ratio of inputs to outputs is necessary to boost job satisfaction and improve performance.

2.1 Research Model



2.2 Hypothesis

(H1): Spatial Justice exerts a positive and significant impact on Employee Performance.

(H2): Procedural Justice exerts a positive and significant impact on Employee Performance.

(H3): There exists a positive and significant correlation among Spatial Justice, Procedural Justice, and employee performance.

1. Methods

This study is purely quantitative one. The research design is concerned with descriptive survey design. In this study, the data analysis was performed through SPSS 29.0, to determine the impact of Spatial and Procedural Justice on employee's performance. The population was involved from the Mehran University of Engineering & Technology, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, Campus Khairpur Mirs'. Almost, all the individuals working in the selected organization who willingly engaged in this research, possessed good educational backgrounds. Total population of the Campus was 320 employees. The convenient sampling method was adopted to eliminate the fear and anxiety factor that involved while filling the questionnaire. Most of the employees are reluctant to engage in the research studies that may affect their career if research ethics are violated or they fear about so. Hence, 80 respondents were approached to involve in survey as per their willingness and availability. Moreover, 5 respondent did not return the

questionnaire and 5 were spoiled or improperly filled, each questionnaire contained the 17 items. Researcher received the 70 questionnaires, which were properly filled and same were included in the study. Primary data was collected and used in this study. The questionnaire was adapted from (Faskin, Stephen Olumid, 2021) with slight modification. To ensure the reliability of questionnaire, pilot study was carried out in which the reliability of the questionnaire was achieved as 0.729. Cronbach's alpha was used to test the reliability of items to assure the research relevance. The questionnaire included closed ended items and had four sections. Section A collected the demographic data of the respondents, i.e. age, gender, qualification, experience, job title, and marital status. Section B inquired about Spatial Justice. Section C studied the Procedural Justice and section D examined the employee performance. Likert scale was used in this study which represents the responses, i.e. completely agree, completely disagree, neutral, agree and disagree.

2. Findings / Results

The descriptive statistics show demographics of the respondents stated in questionnaire, which was included in section one i.e gender, age, marital status, education, experience, and job title.

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Respondents' Gender	Male	63	90.00	89.00
	Female	7	10.0	98.6
	Total	70	100.0	
Respondents, Age	25-35	15	21.4	21.4
	36-45	29	41.4	62.9
	46-55	26	37.1	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	
Respondents' Education	Intermediate or less	10	14.3	14.3
	Bachelor	25	35.7	50.0
	Master	30	42.9	92.9
	M.Phil	5	7.1	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	
Respondents' Experience	4	10	14.3	14.3
	6	23	32.9	47.1
	8	13	18.6	65.7
	10	19	27.1	92.9
	12 or above	5	7.1	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	
Respondents' Job Title	Sectional Head	10	14.3	14.3
	Officer	22	31.4	45.7
	Staff	38	54.3	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	
Respondents' Marital Status	Married	60	85.7	85.7
	Single	10	14.3	100.0
	Total	70	100.0	

Description of respondents (Table 01)

The table presents demographic data of respondents based on gender, age, education, experience, job title, and marital status. The majority of respondents are male, accounting for 93.0% of the total, while the remaining 98.6% are either male or female. The age range is 25-35 years, with 21.4% falling within this age range. The majority of respondents have an intermediate or less education, with 35.7% having a bachelor's degree, 92.9% having a

master's degree, and 100.0% having an M.Phil degree. The majority of respondents have at least four years of experience, with 47.1% having six or more years, and 100.0% having 12 or more years of experience. The majority of respondents hold a position as Sectional Head, with a total of 14.3% holding this position. The majority of respondents are married, with 85.7% being married and 14.3% being single. The cumulative percentage of respondents in each category is based on their age, education, experience, job title, and marital status.

4.1 Reliability Analysis

Reliability Analysis (Table 2)

Variable Names	Cronbach's Alpha Value	Number of Items
Spatial Justice	0.863	06
Procedural Justice	0.820	06
Employee Performance	0.835	05
Overall reliability of scale	0.788	17

The study uses Cronbach's Alpha to measure the reliability of various variables, including Spatial Justice, Procedural Justice, and Employee Performance. The results show high levels of internal consistency among the items measuring Spatial Justice, Procedural Justice, and Employee Performance. The Spatial Justice variable has a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.863, indicating that the items within the variable are reliably measuring the same underlying construct. The Procedural Justice variable also demonstrates good internal consistency with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.820, indicating that the items related to Procedural Justice reliably

measure the intended construct. The Employee Performance variable also has a high Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.835, indicating that the items assessing employee performance are reliably measuring the same underlying construct. The overall reliability of the scale, combining all items from Spatial Justice, Procedural Justice, and Employee Performance, is represented by a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.788, indicating that the scale as a whole is reliable in measuring the intended constructs. These results enhance the credibility and reliability of the measurements used in the study.

4.2 Correlations

	SJ	PJ	EP
SJ	1		
PJ	.449**	1	
EP	.053	.076	1

The table presents a correlation matrix displaying Pearson correlation coefficients between three variables: Spatial Justice (SJ), Procedural Justice (PJ), and Employee Performance (EP). The correlation coefficients indicate a moderate positive correlation between SJ and PJ, indicating statistical significance. However, the correlation between SJ and EP is very weak, with a positive value of 0.053, indicating no statistically significant relationship. The correlation between PJ and EP is also weak, with a positive value of 0.076, indicating no statistically significant relationship. The table concludes that there is a

moderate positive correlation between SJ and PJ, a very weak positive correlation between SJ and EP, and a very weak positive correlation between PJ and EP. It is important to note that correlation does not imply causation, as the values indicate the strength and direction of linear relationships between variables but do not provide information about causation or other potential influencing factors.

4.3 Regression Analysis

Independent Variables	Coefficients	T statistics	P value
SJ	.461	4.130	.000
PJ	.317	3.310	.000
R-square .617	Adjusted R-square .410	F statistics 55.013	
Dependent Variable Employee Performance			
Hypothesis		Hypothesis Supported	
H ₁		Yes	
H ₂		Yes	
H ₃		Yes	

The regression analysis reveals that both Spatial Justice (SJ) and Procedural Justice (PJ) have a significant impact on Employee Performance. The coefficients represent the estimated change in the dependent variable for a one-unit change in the corresponding independent variable. The T statistics assess the significance of each coefficient, and the P values indicate whether the coefficients are significantly different from zero. The R-square and Adjusted R-square represent the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable (Employee Performance) explained by the independent variables. In this case, approximately 61.7% of the variability in Employee Performance is explained by the independent variables. The Adjusted R-square adjusts for the number of predictors in the model, providing a more reliable measure. The F statistics assess the overall significance of the regression model, with a high F value (in combination with a low P value) indicating that at least one of the independent variables significantly contributes to explaining the variability in the dependent variable. The regression analysis supports the hypotheses related to the relationships between the independent and dependent variables, indicating that both Spatial Justice and Procedural Justice have a statistically significant impact on Employee Performance. The R-square and Adjusted R-square values provide insights into

the explanatory power of the model, and the hypotheses related to the relationships between the independent and dependent variables are all supported based on the analysis results.

3. Conclusion

Employee ambivalence is characterized by conflicted or confused attitudes and feelings at work, resulting from opposing views on various aspects of their job, job function, or the company. This dual emotional state can impact performance, engagement, and job satisfaction. Factors contributing to ambivalence include contradicting organizational signals, unclear responsibilities, conflicting expectations, and unclear workplace regulations. An employee may be satisfied with their work but frustrated by poor communication within the company.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the correlation and influence of Spatial and Procedural justice on employee performance. The application of the Pearson Correlation test revealed a positive association between Spatial and Procedural Justice and employees' performance. Additionally, employing regression analysis as another analytical tool highlighted a robust contribution and variance of Spatial Justice to employee performance, while Procedural Justice demonstrated a moderate contribution and variance.

Moreover, three hypotheses were formulated to examine the impact and relationship between the independent variables (Spatial and Procedural Justice) and the dependent variable (employee performance). All three hypotheses were accepted, indicating a positive impact and relationship between the independent and dependent variables. This study contributes valuable insights into the crucial role of Spatial and Procedural Justice in shaping and enhancing employee performance within organizational contexts.

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