The Relationship between Organizational Justice and Turnover Intention: A Survey on Hospital Nurses

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A R T I C L E I N F O	A B S T R A C T
Article type: Original Article	**Introduction:** High organizational justice and its factors are associated with reduced turnover intention. Therefore, in this study, we aimed to examine the relationship between organizational justice and turnover intention among hospital nurses.
	Materials and Methods: This descriptive, analytical study was conducted on 135 nurses working in LabafiNejad Hospital in Tehran, Iran, 2015. The data were collected using Beugre's (1998) questionnaire of organizational justicequestionnaire. To analyze the data, Pearson's correlation and ANOVA tests were performed using SPSS, Version 20.
	Results: Mean organizational justice and turnover intention scores were 68.85 ± 7.67 and 47.8 ± 12.47, respectively. Among the different types of organizational justice, the highest mean score was pertinent to interactional justice (75.24 ± 16.68). A significant inverse correlation was observed between turnover intention and organizational justice ($r=-0.36$), interactional justice ($r=-0.38$), and procedural justice ($r=-0.36$),whileno association was noted between turnover intention and systemic and distributive types of justice. Furthermore, there was no link between demographic variables, organizational justice, and turnover intention.
	Conclusion: Considering the prominent role of organizational justice in personnel's intention to leave their job, and given high costs of recruiting and training new staff, managers should pay especial attention to promoting justice and employees' satisfaction and enhancing stability in their organizations by reinforcing positive attitudes in the employees.

Introduction

Along with increased competition and extension methods of human resource development, organizations empower their talented employees to achieve high organizational performance and employee retention.

Nowadays, occupational turnoveris deemed as one of the main challenges raised in all organizations, regardless of their geographic location and type (1).

Organizational progress largely depends on employee retention and providing a condition in which they can perform their duties efficiently (2). The organizations heedless of retaining their employees encounter shortage of human resources and the associated complications of staffing (3). Turnover intention is defined as employees' plan to leave their job (4, 5). Anticipated turnover is when employees think or believe they would leave their current position voluntarily. Unlike actual leave, turnover intention is not evident, and intentions are manifested in terms of particular behaviors.

Different factors such as management strategies, reduced workforce, salary and benefit, occupational stress, feeling of unfairness, and attrition in an organization can contribute to turnover intention (6).

Among these, organizational injustice is of critical significance since it can foster negative attitudes orincrease turnover intention (7-9).

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Organizational justice is an important motivational tool for organizational behaviors. Justice is a broad and multifaceted concept associated with non-discrimination and fair observance of differences within various disciplines. Organizational justice is characterized by different individuals and parties' perception of fairness of behaviors in an organization and their behavioral responses to those perceptions (10).

Intention to leave might stem from perception of organizational injustice. Among all, nurses, who constitute the largest occupational group in healthcare organizations, are of particular importance. Turnover can lead to nurse shortage and consequently, increase mean age of the remaining nurses (11). For instance, more than 40% of the formal workforce in the US hospitals are aged over 50 years (12). All these factors can contribute to nurse turnover and ultimately, exacerbate work pressure and stress within a vicious cycle (13). In this study, we aimed to determine the level of organizational justice as perceived by nursing personnel of LabafiNejad Hospital. We also purported to examine the relationship between organizational justice and turnover intention in the hospital.

Materials and Methods

This cross-sectional, descriptive, and correlational study was conducted in all the nursing staff of LabafiNejad Hospital in Tehran, Iran, 2015. Due to the limited number of nurses, sampling was not done and all the nurses were recruited (n=135). To assess the nurses' perception of organizational justice, we employed Beugre's (1998) questionnaire of organizational justice (23), which consists of 35 items and is scored using a five-point rating scale (totally

disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, and totally agree). The items examined the four types of distributive, procedural, interactional, and systemic justice. Turnover intention was evaluated using the following item "Would you like to leave this organization if you found another job opportunity?".

Former studies confirmed face and content validities of the organizational justice questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha for the organizational justice questionnaire was calculated to be 0.91 (14). The questionnaires were distributed by the researchers and were collected after two weeks. The results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test were indicative of normality of the variables. Thereafter, parametric tests of Pearson's correlation and ANOVA tests were run to examine the relationships between the variables. Data analysis was carried out using SPSS, Version $_{20}$. P-value less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Results

All the samples (n=135) were female with the mean age of 36.45±8 years. Minimum and maximum ages were 22 and 54 years, respectively, and mean years of service was 11.91±7.88 years. Moreover, 98.5% (n=133) of the participants had Bachelor's degrees, while two persons (0.7%) owned Associate and Master's degrees.

Mean scores of perceived justice (total and based on each dimension) within different age groups are presented in Table 1. The mean score of nurses' turnover intention was 6.8±2.4. More than 35% of the nurses stated that they would consider leaving the hospital if they found a better job opportunity.

Table1: Mean and standard deviation of justice

		Interactional justice	Distributive justice	Systemic justice	Procedural justice	Organizational justice
Age group of 20-30 years	Mean±SD	74.4±14.6	70.46±5.9	65.1±6.7	67.68±14.3	69.77±7
Age group of 30-40 years	Mean±SD	79.1±13.7	66.97±6	62.1±6.6	69/96±13.7	69.81±6.4
Age group of 40-50 years	Mean±SD	70.72±20.5	67.55±6.5	61.1±7.2	66. 4±15	66.54±8.9
Age group of >50 years	Mean±SD	77.87±20	64.81±6.2	66.66±8	71.33±18	70.38±10.8
Sum	Mean±SD	75.24±16.7	68.03±6.3	62.84±7	68.32±14.4	68.85±7.7

The highest (70.38±10.79) and lowest (66.54±8) mean scores of organizational justice were in those aged over 50 years and 40-50 years, respectively. Pearson's correlation reflected a significant inverse correlation between organizational justice and turnover intention (P<0.001, r=-0.36). The association between different types of organizational justice and turnover

intention is demonstrated in Table 2, where a significant inverse correlation is observed between turnover intention and interactional and procedural types of organizational justice, but no link was found between distributive and systemic types of justice and turnover intention.

Table 2: The relationship between organizational justice and turnover intention (Pearson's correlation)

		Interactional justice	Distributive justice	Systemic justice	Procedural justice	Organizational justice
Turnover intention	r	-0.38	0.14	-0.135	-0.36	-0.36
	P-value	0.00	0.104	0.118	0.00	0.00

The association of organizational justice and turnover intention with demographic variables (i.e., age, years of service, and educational level) was examined using ANOVA test Table 3.

As it can be noted, there was no relationship between demographic variables, organizational justice, and intention to leave.

Table3: The relationship between organizational justice, turnover intention, and demographic variables (ANOVA)

	Age		Years of service		Educational level	
	P-value	F	P-value	F	P-value	F
Organizational justice	0.24	1.46	0.08	2.26	0.21	1.51
Turnover intention	0.26	1.34	0.38	1.01	0.08	2.54

Discussion

Organizational justice is defined as a cognitive predictor of many organizational variables such as intention to leave (27). The main purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between organizational justice (together with its different types) and turnover intention of the nursing staff of LabafiNejad Hospital.

The mean organizational justice score was 68.85±7.67, which represents almost optimum status (optimum organizational justice scores range between 55 and 70) in the studied hospital. The obtained mean score in the current study was higher than that of a similar study conducted by Ya'qubi(14) in Iran (41.8).

In addition, mean score of turnover intention was 6.8±2.4, which indicates desirable status of the variable in the current study. Among different types of justice, the highest score pertained to interactional justice (75.24), which is in line with the results of Hassani(9), but in disagreement with those of Ya'qubi(14).

Furthermore, the lowest (62.84) mean score was related to systemic justice that is not congruent with the results of a similar study performed by Ya'qubi(14) (their lowest mean score belonged to interactional justice). Interactional justice represents the relations between authorities and employees of an organization (9), which attained the highest score in the present study.

This result might ensue from the need for constructive interactions and collective nature of hospital work. The highest obtained score (70.38) of organizational justice belonged to those aged over 50 years, while maximum score of distributive justice (70.46) pertained to the age group of 20-30 years with the minimum years of service. This variation was observed in mean scores of other types of organizational justice in different age groups, as well. This issue might be due to transformation of the personnel's perspectives during their years of service.

For example, at recruitment, the staff was more attentive to personal interactions and attributed particular problems to other individuals, while those with longer job experiences showed systemic attitudes.

The results confirm this issue as the highest score of systemic justice belonged to those aged over 50 years.

Moreover, the results of the statistical tests indicated a significant inverse correlation between organizational justice and turnover intention (P<0.001, r=-0.36), which was corroborated by other studies (6, 8, 14, 15). This indicates that employees' appropriate perception of justice in an organization results in their satisfaction and positive attitudes. Thus, these factors as mediator variables can reduce turnover intention. Among different types of justice, interactional justice (P=0.00, r=-0.38) and procedural justice (P=0.00, r=-0.36) had a significant inverse correlation with turnover intention.

It is worth mentioning that the correlations found in our study are weak (r<0.4). A similar correlation was found in Iyigun and Tamer's study (16).

Additionally, a significant inverse relationship between interactional justice and turnover intention that is congruent with the results of Hassani (9), Parker (17), and Jones (18), but inconsistent with the results of Aryee (11) and Nadiri (19). The significant relationship between procedural justice and turnover intention is in line with the results of Golparvar (20), Radzi (21), and Lambert (22), but not in alignment with those of Aghaei's study (23).

No significant association was observed between distributive justice, systemic justice, and turnover intention in the current study. This finding did not comply with the results of Aghaei (23) and Zaman (24), who reported a significant relationship between those variables.

In the current study, no relationship was found between demographic variables (i.e., age, work experience, and educatioal level), organizational justice, and turnover intention.

This finding is consistent with the findings of Samavatian(25) regarding the relationship between age and organizational justice, but not with the studies by Ya'qubi(14) and Elovainio(26).

Conclusion

Our outcomes demonstrated a significant direct association between organizational justice and turnover intention. Since labor force is the main asset of any organization, especially in the health sector, it is of great importance for healthcare authorities to provide the necessary basis for the optimum organizational justice and consequently, increase satisfaction in their staff.

It can be stated that the most cost-effective forms of justice are interactional and procedural justice since interactional justice simply requires proper management of interpersonal relationships, while exerting the strongest effect on turnover intention, and procedural justice, which was found to have a significant relationship with turnover intention in this study, is almost associated with no costs, while presupposing unconditional implementation of the existing rules and procedures in all areas.

Moreover, distributive (related to the procedures for distribution of resources) and systemic justice can have a robust impact on nurse satisfaction as a mediator variable, and thereby influence on other organizational variables.

Thus, managers are recommended to promote staff satisfaction and retention rate by focusing on organizational justice, and guarantee themselves against the costs of recruiting and training new employees.

Finally, it should be mentioned that our results are limited to a single hospital and cannot be generalizable to all centers.

Acknowledgement

References

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