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THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT OF YOUTH AND SPORTS ORGANIZATION EMPLOYEES IN ILAM

***Haydeh Sadeghi Kalaani, Lila Sabbagian Rad and Amir Ahmad Mozaffari**

Department of Physical Education and Sport Science, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran

**Author for Correspondence*

ABSTRACT

The present research aims to identify the influence of the organizational justice exerted on the psychological empowerment of Youths and Sports Organization employees in Ilam. Research method was descriptive-correlative in which the sample size selected based of Cochran's sample size formula included 90 subjects of Youths and Sports Organization in Ilam. Two standard questionnaires were distributed to the respondents as the research measurement instruments, namely, the organizational justice questionnaire encompassing 20 questions with 3 small scale manifest items and the psychological empowerment questionnaire encompassing 22 questions with 5 small scale manifest items. Results obtained from the research path analysis via LISREL Software demonstrated that organizational justice coupled with interactional justice ($R^2 = .29$) and procedural justice ($R^2 = .28$) specifications meaningfully affected the employees' psychological empowerment ($P \leq .01$), whereas there didn't appear to be a sensible correlation between the distributional justice and the employees' psychological empowerment. Furthermore, organizational justice has totally accounted for about 30 percent of the variance change in employees' psychological empowerment. Therefore, relying on the present research findings, it can be stated that the most important factor contributing to the employees' psychological empowerment in sports organizations is generating interactional justice. For due reason, organizational behavior managers in sports organizations are suggested to do as they think best to establish organizational justice of the interactional type in the organizations so as to enhance their workforce productivity.

Keywords: *Interactional Justice, Procedural Justice, Workforce, Psychological Empowerment, Sports and Youths*

INTRODUCTION

Human resource has always been considered the most important, opulent, and valuable organizational capital and resource. Human resources have a vital role in developing and growing or failure and collapse of the organizations. Research has indicated that human resources exert a profound impact on the organizational effectiveness in sports organizations as well (Eydi *et al.*, 2011; Ibrahim *et al.*, 2013). Generally speaking, there are three critical notions calling our attention to the human resource management. The first notion is the profitability potential. It means that organizations can optimize the human resources' performance through applying effective human resource management methods such as job design. The second is paying attention to the changes occurred in values and being aware of the workforce and customers' status and capabilities. In fact, shifted concepts of the sound and effective methods of human resources and our expectation to effectively improve them have brought about the second essential notion. Finally, organizations, as representatives of the society owe to it, and by the same token, this is also true for organizations' human resources. When an organization uses effective human resources management methods to enhance the life quality of its human resources, this will in turn help the society in the long run. Therefore, social responsibilities are taken as the third contributing factor in driving such an attention (Chelladurai, 2005). On the other hand, rapid environmental changes forces organizations to resort to managerial procedures so as to adapt themselves to the new environment among which we can address employees' empowerments a key factor to the modern organizations survival. The purpose behind employees' empowerment is to empower employees' minds akin to their arms. On the

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other hand, empowerment refers to an internal feeling which helps employees make decisions independently in the work process (Najafi *et al.*, 2011). As a theoretical concept, employees' empowerment has a considerable effect on the organizational effectiveness, management and organizational initiative. Competent employees show more flexibility in controlling and doing their duties. While encountering opportunities and solving problems, they do new tasks and remove obstacles now and then based on the instructions or sometimes relying on personal creativity. As a result, their motivation is reinforced when they encounter problems and hardships. Liden *et al.*, (2000) advocated the idea that competent employees have a high level of job satisfaction, organizational commitment and job performance (c.f. Shelton, 2002). Recently, a good deal of attempts has been done in governmental organizations to improve the concentrated management structure and system, and despite a plethora of discussions regarding employees' empowerment advantages, it has yielded trivial exploitation, and further, the number of leaders and groups familiar with the ways of creating an empowerment culture are inconsiderable. For due reason, one of the main obsessions of the organizational behavior experts, in the field of sports, seems to be unearthing prerequisites of the employees' empowerment in sports organizations. Reviewing previous literature related to human resources, organizational behavior, and theory shows that organizational justice is a valuable construct to establish and keep motivation in employees. The most important evidence in this regard tends to be Equity Theory within new trends regarding the motivation (Robbins, 1998). In other words, conducting research on the organizational justice was commenced by Adams works about Equity Theory (Robbins, 1998; quoted from Adams, 1963 and 1965) which underlined perceiving the fairness of consequences. He called the employees' perception of the fair distribution of consequences as distributional justice. Studying procedural justice was initiated following the study of the distributional justice. Research findings indicated that processes by which rewards are determined are as important as the process of rewards distributions; the same is true regarding their fairness (Lind and Tyler, 1998). Ultimately, the study of the interactional justice was pursued based on the perceived fairness of the interpersonal relations with regard to the organizational procedures and the quality of the interpersonal relations. Masterson *et al.*, (2000) advocated that interactional justice better predicts job performance compared to the procedural justice. Employees express the problem of justice as a conflicting source of disparity between them and their superiors (Nabaatchi *et al.*, 2007). Furthermore, violating justice in the organization increases the probability of liable prosecution by employees (Chelladurai and Madella, 2006). Anyway, respecting justice is a key factor ensuring the survival and stability of the development stream of the organization and its employees (SeyedJavaadin *et al.*, 2008). Therefore, one of the main duties of the management is to keep and develop fairly balanced behaviors by managers and feeling of justice by employees. Respecting justice, especially in some of the management behaviors regarding employees (distribution of rewards, superiors' relations, promotions and assignments) is of paramount importance to them. In the process of developing fairly balanced behaviors and beyond that forming the feeling of justice in employees, realizing the ways justice-based behaviors will influence the organizational behaviors such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behaviors, counterproductive motivational or demotivating behaviors are highly important. Therefore, being adequately acquainted with the ways that organizational justice affects the psychological empowerment and its sub-sections, managers will be able to come up with fruitful strategies and course of actions to develop the feeling of justice in organizations. A substantial body of research shows that organizational justice implies to the employees' perception of fairness and fairly balanced working behaviors. Without having a correct perception of justice and fairness and, hence, dealing with them, organizations will run into many challenges in motivating and leading the employees (Lambert *et al.*, 2007). Research in the area of organizational justice will address the fact that how employees will respond to the perceived justice or injustice (Pool, 2007). Evaluating justice by employees in the organization will pave the way for predicting a heterogeneous array of the working consequences. Previous literature shows that researchers and experts presume workforce and employees' empowerment as the management strategic procedures including endorsing authority and decision making power in lower levels of the organization, sharing the information with the employees and letting them have access

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to the organizational sources. The presence of the loyal workforce committed to the organizations' objectives and values, inclined to keep their membership in the organization, and wholeheartedly try beyond the realm of their defined duties and responsibilities is a crucial factor leading to the organizational effectiveness.

On the other hand, research regarding organizational justice uncovers the fact that equity in all dimensions of the organization can enhance the employees' motivation. However, it is not so far clear whether organizational justice, as a predicting construct, can well foresee the employees' psychological empowerment in sports organizations. In the area of the organizational behavior management, researchers such as Loqmani (2012), Taalebpour *et al.*, (2013), and Cleave (1993) showed that in referees, coaches and sports managers, psychological empowerment and attitude consequences are established via internal properties of the sports jobs. Accordingly, it appears that psychological empowerment in sports employees has been less investigated in terms of organizational macro-variables like organizational justice.

For this reason, the present research aims to investigate the influence of different dimensions of the organizational justice exerted on the employees' psychological empowerment in Youths and Sports organization of Ilam Province so as to identify the possible effects and finally pose useful and effective strategies.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research method is of the correlative-descriptive type. Research sample encompasses employees of Youths and Sports Organization in Ilam including 120 subjects among which 91 subjects were selected through random sampling based on the sample size determination formula. Results of the present calculation correspond to Kerjsey and Morgan's table values. In order to measure psychological empowerment, a questionnaire, adapted from Spreitzer (1995), was used and distributed to the employees. The questionnaire was for the first time translated by Na'ami in 2006 in Iran.

It subsumes five small-scale manifest items: meaning including 4 questions (1-4); competency including 4 questions (5-8); choice include 4 questions (9-12); impact including 4 questions (13-16); cooperation with others including 6 questions (17-22). The present questionnaire represents 22 items anchored on a 5-point scales. The reliability of the psychological empowerment test was calculated in a research through Cranach's alpha and was estimated to be 81% for meaning, 76% for competency, 75% for choice, 79% for impact, and 84% for cooperation. Meanwhile the validity estimation through re-examination for meaning was 84%, for competency 87%, for choice 84%, for impact 88%, and for cooperation was 84%. In order to make the questionnaire's construct validated, we utilized the confirmatory factor model or measurement via LISREL Software whose results indicate proper criteria for constructs and factors' validity (RMSEA= .109; $\lambda^2/df= 2.06$; GFI= .91; AGFI= .90).

The organizational justice questionnaire was for the first time translated by Na'aami and Shekarkan (2001). It includes three latent small-scale manifest items of distributional justice with five items (questions 1-5), procedural justice with six items (questions 6-11), and interactional justice with nine items (questions 12-20). Na'aami and Shekarkan (2004 quoted from Saqa'iannejad *et al.*, 2009) have calculated construct reliability and validity coefficients for the present questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha which are as follows: for overall organizational justice 0.42 and 0.85, for distributional justice 0.46 and 0.78, for procedural justice 0.57 and 0.82, and for the interactional justice 0.40 and 0.64. In the present research, the reliability estimation of the questionnaire using Cranach's alpha for the interactional justice, distributional justice, and procedural justice is 0.81, 0.76, and 0.78 respectively.

Furthermore, results obtained from the confirmatory factor analysis model or measurement of the questionnaire offered that organizational justice constructs estimated for the questionnaire had a satisfactory and acceptable reliability and validity (RMSEA= .109; $\lambda^2/df= 2.04$; GFI= .93; AGFI= .91). Considering the nature of the present research and existing hypotheses, hypotheses were tested and analyzed according to LISREL Software, version 8.50 and SPSS version 21, just like the correlation and structural equation models.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present research aims to show the effect of the organizational justice dimensions on the psychological empowerment of Youths and Sports Organization employee's in Ilam. For this reason, Pearson correlation coefficient tests (for realizing the correlation of the variables) and structural equation model test (for realizing cause and effect relation among variables and their meaningful influences) were used. Results of Pearson correlation test showed that the interactional justice (R=0.449) and the procedural justice (R=0.390) are meaningfully correlated with the employees' psychological empowerment ($P \leq .01$), whereas there doesn't appear to be any meaningful correlation between the distributional justice and the employees' psychological empowerment. Results will enlighten the necessity of testing hypotheses. This means that based upon findings (i.e. Pearson test results) structural equation model using path analysis must be utilized for precisely realizing the influence of the interactional and procedural justice. Since there isn't any meaningful correlation between the distributional justice and the employees' psychological empowerment, the structural equation model test is no longer applicable to the present hypothesis. Results depicted in figure 1 and table 1 through the structural equation modeling show that the interactional justice will meaningfully have a positive influence on the employees' psychological empowerment. Although, table 1 clearly depicts the amount of influence, it must be stated that there are various and critical specifications in the structural equation model which will validate the model's interpretation. It must be stated if the value of λ^2 in proportion to degree of freedom (df) is smaller than 3, RMSEA smaller than 0.1, and GFI and AGFI larger than 90%, we can conclude that the implemented model has a moderated model fit. The standardized coefficient of the present relation while the value of t is larger than 2 or smaller than -2, it will be meaningful with the confidence of 99%.

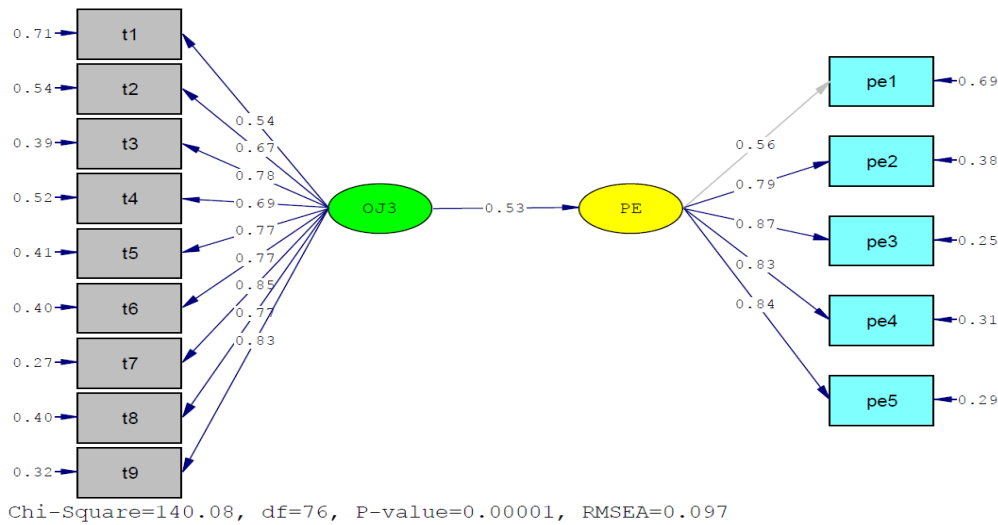


Figure 1: The structural equation model of the influence of the interactional justice on the employees' psychological empowerment

Table 1 indicates the r value or the correlation coefficient, R^2 value or the relation determination coefficient, t value or the meaningfulness level and model's fit criteria such as K^2 , RMSEA, GFI, and AGFI. As it is evident, first, the impact scale of the interactional justice on the employees' psychological empowerment is meaningful thanks to the meaningfulness of the t value; second, the satisfactory validity and the model fit and model is confirmed (RMSEA= .097; GFI= .90; AGFI= .92; R^2 = .29; λ^2/df = 1.84); third, the coefficient of determination or R^2 is 0.29. This means that 29 percent of the changes related to the psychological empowerment can be explained through establishing the interactional justice in employees of Youths and Sports Organization in Ilam.

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Table 1: Results obtained from implementing the structural model of interactional justice and the employees' psychological empowerment

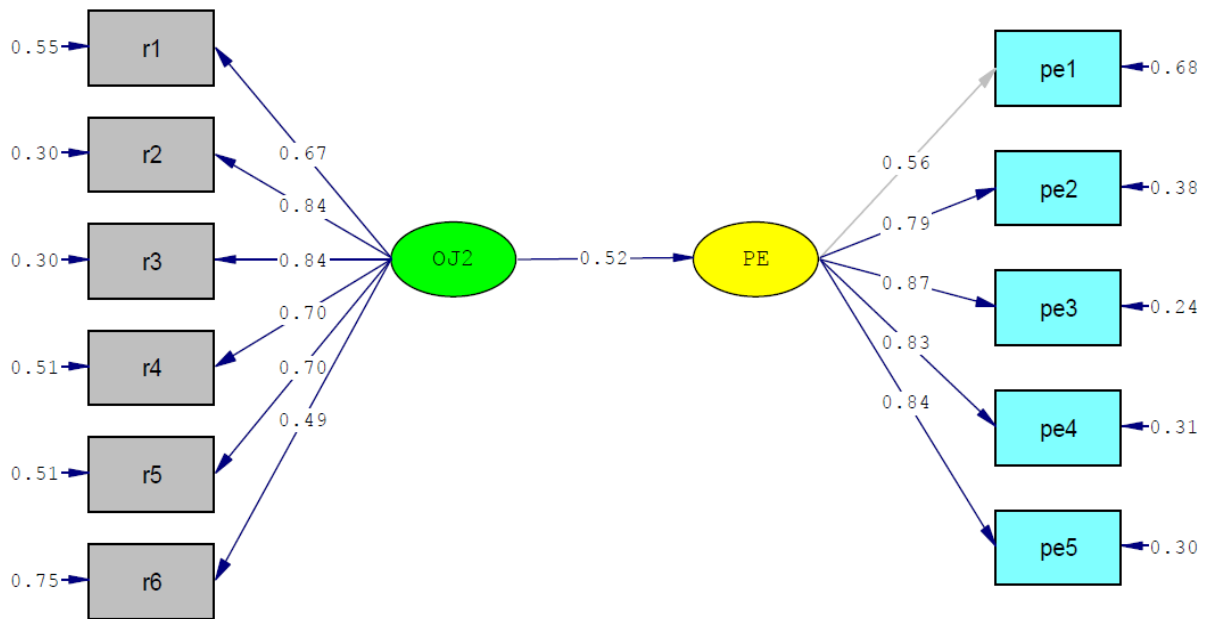
Variables effect	Standard coefficient (r)	Coefficient of determination (R ²)	t-value	result
interactional justice on psychological empowerment	0.53	0.29	3.89	meaningful

GFI= 0.95 RMSEA= 0.097 df= 76 $\chi^2 = 140.08$

AGFI= 0.93

with a confidence of 99% t value is meaningful

Figure 2 represents the standardized coefficient (**r**) of the suggested causal relation between the procedural justice and the psychological empowerment. In other words, the model shows that the procedural justice exerts a positive and meaningful influence on the psychological empowerment of Youths and Sports Organization employee's in Ilam. Model fit criteria of this model are derived from the fact that interpretation of results based on the model and its findings have A satisfactory reliability and validity (RMSEA= .103; GFI= .95; AGFI= .91; R2= .28; $\lambda^2/df= 1.93$).



Chi-Square=83.34, df=43, P-value=0.00022, RMSEA=0.103

Figure 2: The structural equation model of the influence of the procedural justice on the employees' psychological empowerment

Table 2 indicates the **r** value, R², and the model's fit criteria such as K2, RMSEA, GFI, and AGFI. Based on the findings depicted in the above table, it can be stated that the amount of the procedural justice influence on the employees' psychological empowerment with regard to **t** value is meaningful. Furthermore, with regard to the coefficient of determination we must remark that 28 percent of the changes related to the employees' psychological empowerment can be explained through applying procedural justice in the organization.

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Table 2: Results obtained from implementing the structural model of procedural justice and the employees' psychological empowerment

Variables effect	Standard coefficient (r)	Coefficient of determination (R ²)	t-value	result
Procedural justice on psychological empowerment	0.52	0.28	3.79	acceptable

GFI= 0.95 RMSEA= 0.103 df= 43 $\chi^2 = 83.34$ AGFI= 0.91

with a confidence of 99% t value is meaningful

At last, the final research model analyzes the overall influence of the organizational justice on the psychological empowerment of Youths and Sports Organization employees in Ilam. Results acquired from Pearson correlation coefficient indicated that there is a positive and meaningful relation between these two final constructs ($r= .407$; $P \leq .001$). For this reason, the present model was implemented in the structural equation model. Model fit results also showed that the final influence of the organizational justice on the employees' psychological empowerment is considerably meaningful (RMSEA= .110; $\lambda^2/df= 2.06$; GFI= .96; AGFI= .92; $R^2= .30$; t-value= 3.93).

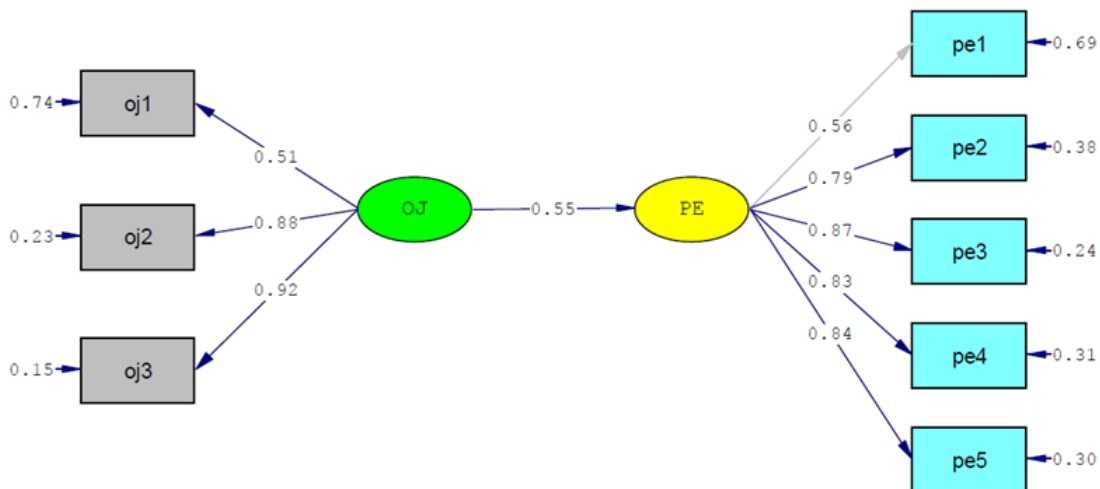


Figure 3: Results of the final research model (the influence of the organizational justice on the employees' psychological empowerment)

As depicted in figure 3, the organizational justice entirely exerts an influence of 0.55 on the employees' psychological empowerment; and with regard to the coefficient of determination, it must be stated that about 30 percent of the changes related to the organizational psychological empowerment is explained through applying the organizational justice.

Conclusion

The present article aims were to identify the influence of the organizational justice and its various dimensions on the psychological empowerment of Youths and Sports Organization. Findings indicated that the value of the Pearson correlation coefficient for the two variables, namely organizational justice and psychological empowerment was 0.407 which is meaningful. Besides, results related to the structural equation modeling test represented a causal relation between the organizational justice and the psychological empowerment. The results of the present study were consistent with the previous research. And the point was that one of the employees' obsessions in every single organization was implementation of justice in that organization. And the presence of expert employees is another contributing factor which

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overshadows the bureaucratic phenomenon. Professional staff must not be entangled by the bureaucratic ups and downs in a way that they are not able to make use of their creativity. Strategies based upon bureaucracy control, i.e., applying rules, regulations, procedures and instructions, policies and choice hierarchy and standardizing affairs is to unify and coordinate behaviors which will lead to not expressing ideas and opinions and will yield injustice in power distribution, and finally brings about the inability or inadequacy of the employees. Accordingly, the organization structure must be designed in commensurate with the organizational objectives and the staff ability. It seems that sports managers, particularly in macro-levels, before making any decision in the organization, must create an atmosphere for the employees' participation in the decision making process through knowing different views, and set the field for generating organizational justice via collecting thorough and trustable information from them so as to increase the employees' empowerment possibility. Other results obtained from the Pearson correlation test indicated that there is a meaningful relation between the two interactional and psychological empowerment variables. In other words, by implementing the structural equation model for the present relation, it became evident that almost 29 percent of the changes related to the organizational psychological empowerment can be explained by means of the interactional justice. Results are considerably consistent with research findings conducted by Shahheidari and Kamalian (2012). In order to justify results, it must be stated that the interactional justice takes the method in which the organizational justice is transferred from super-ordinates to the sub-ordinates. The interactional justice is integrated with cognitive, emotional, and behavioral reactions with regard to the management or, in other terms, superiors. Therefore, when an employee feels interactional injustice, he will definitely react negatively to his supervisor than to the organization. It is, thus, predicted that the employee is unsatisfied with his direct supervisor instead of the organization, and he will feel less commitment to his supervisor than to the organization. Furthermore, employees' negative attitudes are highly directed to the superiors and less with the organization. Results indicated that about 28 percent of the changes related to the organizational psychological empowerment can be explained by the procedural justice. Results are considerably consistent with research findings conducted by Shaahheidaripour and Kamaalian (2012). Procedural justice is the perceived justice derived from the process implemented for the distribution of rewards. The question that needs to be answered is that "is it possible for a worker who receives less reward not to feel inequality or injustice?" According to procedural justice, the answer is "yes". Therefore, payments based on the application of this fair procedure is perceived to be fair even if it seems to be trivial. Contrary to the research findings conducted by Shaahheidari and Kamaalian (2012), there didn't appear to be any meaningful correlation between the distributional justice and the employees' psychological empowerment. It seems that employees are inclined to receive a fair reward in response to the job they are doing. Equity, according to Adams, is reached when employees feel that the ratio of inputs (attempts) to the outputs (rewards) is as fairly and adequately distributed to them as their fellow employees. Employees who feel inequality will respond to it via negative reactions such as reducing their effort and application, weak organizational citizenship behaviors, and in severe conditions resigning from and leaving their job.

This perception of justice has exerted many contributions in the organizational environments, and scholars have investigated its relation to numerous variables such as work quantity and quality. Because of the focus of justice on the consequences, it has been predicted that this model of justice is generally related to cognitive, emotional, and behavioral reactions. Therefore, when a particular consequence is perceived not to be fair, injustice might influence the individual's feelings (nervousness, satisfaction, feeling of conceit or sin), perceptions (having a nodding acquaintance with your or others 'inputs and outputs), and finally his behavior (job performance or leaving the job). Results offer that the ratio of the contributions of the individual to the organization and his performance to what he gains from the organization is another important and effective dimension on forming internal empowerment of the employees. Results and findings in the present research do not present such a proportion. Therefore, in order to come up with organizational justice in the workplace, sports organizations managers are suggested to burden the attempt of making strategic planning and direct them to the interactional and

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procedural justice in a way that the organization productivity be reached via employee's psychological empowerment.

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