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The Effect of Organizational Justice Perceptions on Burnout

Serap Durukan Köse
Associate Professor, Department of Health Management,
Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University, Turkey

Abstract:
Organizational justice, expressed as the perception of how people are treated equally, affects the organizational outcomes such as employee loyalty to the organization, job satisfaction, and the level of burnout in their work. Employees who believe that the distribution of gains is fair (distributive justice), that the distribution processes are fair (procedural justice), and that the fair interaction during the distribution process (interactional justice) will be peaceful and happy;thus, they experience less burnout syndrome. In this study, the effect of organizational justice (procedural, distributive, interactional justice) that the nurses perceive in the hospital where they work is investigated. It was concluded in this study that as the perception of organizational justice increased, burnout syndrome decreased. As a result of the analysis conducted on the sub-dimensions of organizational justice and burnout, it has been observed that it had a statistically negative effect on the emotional exhaustion dimension of the procedural, distributive, interactional justice and on the depersonalization dimension of distributive justice as well.

Keywords: Organizational justice, burnout, health workers, nurses

1. Introduction

There are two factors that will provide a competitive advantage in organizations. The first of these are the factors related to organizational structure (physical) and the other is the (administrative) factors related to the organizational process. While physical factors related to organizational structure models and production patterns are an important competitive element, their ability to gaina competitive advantage in the long term is weak. The fact that all kinds of technology are easily accessible and imitated leads them to fail to provide a competitive edge in the long term. Therefore, the success of contemporary organizations is associated with their managerial abilities rather than material elements. This situation reveals the importance of knowledge and skill, the mobilization of mind and heart power in line with the objectives of the organization, briefly the critical role of the human element in the organizational success (Tutar, 2007). In other words, employees who exhibit positive work attitudes and contributions beyond their projected or contractual roles are seen as the source of an organization's competitive advantage (Aryee Budhwar & Chen, 2002). It can be said that these human behaviors, which are formed in the social environment, are shaped as a result of the comparison of the individual efforts and gains with the efforts and achievements of other individuals, namely as a result of the justice perceptions (Kaplan & Öğüt, 2012).

It is not easy to direct employees to positive attitudes and behaviors. Because the high contribution and working pace, which are expected from the employee by today's business world, make him/her more stressful than it was yesterday while consuming the resources of the employee rapidly (Şeşen, 2010).The fact that employees do not find their gains (wages, premiums, promotions, etc.) equal to their contribution to the organization is the beginning of the emotional breakpoint. This fracture is deepening not only because of the fact that the financial expectations of the employees are not met but also that strategy and applied policies in the decisions taken in relation to the working conditions are perceived unfair. Depending on the degree of negative tendencies concerning the perception of organizational justice, reactions such as stress, anger, resentment, and rage affect employees' burnout tendencies. The psychological incompatibility arising from the tendency of employees in the perception of organizational justice leads to weariness in the sense of attitude, behavior, energy, belonging and proficiency developed against work and causes burnout (Yeniçeri, Demirel & Seçkin, 2009).

1.1. The Organizational Justice

In today's rapidly changing business life, organizational justice has become increasingly more important for employees. The research shows that perceived justice is associated with people's feelings and behaviors in social interactions (Elovainio, Kivimäki, & Vahtera, 2002). Organizational justice is related to the perceptions of fair treatment of employees. Adams' theory of equality suggests that inequality (injustice) encourages people to respond in a variety of ways, both cognitive and behavioral (Fox, Spector & Miles, 2001).Organizational justice involves the enforcement and encouragement of fair and ethical practices and transactions within the organization. Employees within the organization expect the rules to be applied equally and consistently to everyone, to prevent prejudices, to pay equal wages for equal

work, and to benefit equally from social opportunities. However, the focus of the employees' perceptions of justice is not only the outputs and the comparison of these outputs; it also includes rules in the organization, the way these rules are applied and the interaction between individuals (polite, respectful and fair behavior of individuals) (Işık, Uğurluoğlu & Akbolat, 2012; Elovainio, Kivimäki, & Vahtera, 2002). Organizational justice is discussed in three dimensions as distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice (Aryee Budhwar & Chen, 2002):

Distributive Justice: It is related to the fair perception of all kinds of gains by employees (Aryee Budhwar & Chen, 2002). Distributive justice is concerned with the honesty and faithfulness shown in the distribution of organizational resources. Distributive justice focuses on outcomes such as wage increases, performance assessments, rewards and punishments (Tutar, 2007). The gains achieved in relation to the individual's performance are based on the comparison of the gains of others and their perceptions of fairness among these distributions. As a result of the comparison, if there is equality in the distribution of performance and gains, the perception of distribution fairness of employees will be high (Mitchell et al. 2012).

Procedural justice: The justice perceptions of the rules and methods used in the process of determining the gains (Aryee Budhwar & Chen, 2002). The fair assessment of the decision-making process of the employees requires the existence of the following rules regarding the operational processes (Özdevecioğlu, Sucan, and Akın, 2014):

- Consistency: Transactions must be immutable and stable, with the ability to be independent of time and persons.
- Free from prejudice: Transactions should not be affected by personal interests and prejudices.
- Accuracy: Transactions must be based on valid and sufficient information with minimum errors.
- Compliance with the rules: There should be an opportunity to change the decisions regarding the transactions and the complaints about the issue should be taken into consideration.
- Represent ability: The problems, thoughts, and values of the individuals or subgroups affected by the procedures should be taken into consideration.
- Should be ethical: Transactions should be established in accordance with the general ethical rules.

Interactional Justice: It is about the level of candidness, sensitivity, and respect that administration has taken in behavior towards subordinates (Aryee Budhwar & Chen, 2002). Interactional justice has two aspects. One of them is the justice of interpersonal interaction, and the other is informative (disclosure) justice. Interpersonal justice requires that subordinates behave in a manner of respect and courtesy towards their superior and other employees. Besides, superiors should inform the subordinates in the organizational processes, the justice of informing is also widely used to inform subordinates about social and personal rights, to protect their interests and to respect their rights of information acquirement (Tutar, 2007).

Justice is a phenomenon in which individuals in the organization importantly pay attention to. Individuals judge whether the processes and mechanisms, tasks and awards in the organization are fair behavior shown to them, and as a result of this judgment, they develop attitudes towards the organization and consequently their work. Many studies have been conducted to reveal the perception of justice within the organization. These studies have been conducted with different perspectives. Some research reveals that the perception of organizational justice affects individuals' loyalty to the organization, job satisfaction, satisfaction of wages, withdrawal behavior, organizational identification, organizational citizenship behavior and the level of burnout in the work (Şesen, 2011; Dikmetaş Yardan, Durukan Köse & Köse, 2014; Tutar, 2007).

1.2. The Burnout

The term burnout, which emerged as one of the most important concepts of recent times, was first seen in the novel "A Burn-Out Case", which the British author Graham Greene first published in 1961. It is discussed in the novel that after the loss of faith and profession, an architect who has suffered a depression in the spiritual world and is disappointed, escapes to the African forests. In the novel, the concept of burnout is defined as "excessive exhaustion and loss of idealism with the feeling of anger for the work of the individual". The point to be considered here is that the concept of burnout is comprehended before it is subject to research and it is emphasized as a social problem by both practitioners and critics. The term burnout began to be used in daily life in 1970 and was first used by psychiatrist Freudenberg in 1970 to explain the state of fatigue, enervation, and failure of workin the workplace as a result of overwork. Dictionary meaning of the concept of burnout is "Exhaustion of energy, power or resources through excessive demands, fatigue failure". The most accepted and used definition of burnout is also made by Christina Maslach (Balaban & Konyali, 2016), who also developed the Maslach Burnout Scale (MBA) (Balaban & Konyalı, 2016). Maslach has defined the burnout as a syndrome characterized by physical, emotional and intellectual depletion, followed by the loss of self-esteem, chronic fatigue, desperation, and despair, which leads to negative relations with other people in professional business life (Leiter & Maslach, 1988). Maslach and Jackson dealt with burnout in three dimensions: emotional exhaustion syndrome, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion is the feeling of being overloaded and consumed due to his/her work. Depersonalization can be expressed as the development of negative, cynical attitudes and feelings to the individuals, with whom he works. A lack of personal accomplishment means an individual's negative assessment of his/her work, in other words, a decrease in the feeling of competence and the sense of accomplishment (Leiter & Maslach, 1988).

Burnout is conceptually different from stress. Depletion usually occurs as a result of prolonged exposure to stressful working conditions (Lambert et al., 2010; Finney et al. 2013). As a result of work stress, it is not a symptom of work stresses but a consequence of unmanageable work stress. It is necessary to overcome and even prevent it in terms of

organization and individual as exhaustion will bring severe and serious consequences. Burnout; it is accepted by many researchers that there is an inner psychological experience that includes expectations, attitudes, and perceptions and that arises on a personal level (Yıldırım & Erul, 2013).

It is known that burnout is more common in the professions where human factor has a very important place in the quality of service, and that serves directly to a human. Health workers are constantly responding to the needs of patients, confronted with the most sensitive aspects of their lives, working with people whose lives are in danger, and confronted with the great expectations of families and patients. This situation puts them in the face of intense stress and the problems caused by stress. For this reason, researches show that people working in healthcare institutions experience burnout intensively. In the researches, it is noted that the riskiest group in terms of burnout among healthcare workers are the nurses and then general practitioners. The factors causing burnout in nurses in the literature are examined as organizational, business and individual. Organizational factors; role uncertainty, lack of support from managers, job insecurity, lack of participation in decision-making, strict policies, long working hours, conflicts with team members, intensive patient interactions, lack of social support in the workplace, bureaucracy, lack of career expectations. At the same time, workload, shift work, lack of salary, lack of status and prestige of the profession, the versatility of work, as well as physical and mental difficulties, time pressure, limitations are the factors related to work that cause burnout in nurses. Individual factors are age, education, gender, health status, personality, self-efficacy perception and ability to cope with stress (Kaya, Kaya, Arık & Pratik, 2010; Durukan Köse, Köse & Avcı, 2017; Helvacı & Turhan, 2013).

1.3. Relationship between Organizational Justice and Burnout

Organizations are communities of their own culture and sub-cultures. The distribution of awards within the organization, the processes of doing business and interpersonal relations, which constitute the sub-dimensions of the perception of justice, can vary from organization to organization as the specific practices of organizations. The perception of justice can also increase or decrease with this differentiation that changes from organization to organization as one of the elements that shape the behavior of individuals within the organization. The burnout of individuals within the organization may change with the perception of justice. In this context, the fair perception of individuals' practices within the organization softens their negative attitudes. When individuals perceive an injustice in the organization, they can tend to reduce or hide their voluntary behavior. On the contrary, the high perception of justice of individuals enables them to be motivated and increasing motivation can reduce the level of burnout of individuals (Challenge, print & Çetin, 2011).

In the studies carried out by Elovainio, Kivimäki, & Vahtera (2002) on 4.076 individuals (506 males, 3.570 females) working in 7 hospitals in Finland, the regression analyses were used to examine the relationship between the perception of justice and health levels of employees, low levels of psychiatric disorders and absence due to illness. The disability rates of the workers who perceived organizational justice as low were 1.2-1.9 times higher than those who perceived organizational justice as high, and the probability of having a low level of psychiatric disorder increased from 1.7 to 2.4. As a result, the low level of organizational justice perception of employees was seen as a risk factor for the health of employees. In a study conducted by Chênevert et al. (2013) on 457 people at a major health care facility in Canada, it was concluded that distributional justice, which is one of the sub-dimensions of organizational justice, had an effect on complaints of exhaustion and psychosomatic complaints.

2. Research Methodology

2.1. The Purpose and Importance of the Research

In this study, based on the literature, it is aimed to examine the relationship between organizational justice perceptions and burnout syndrome of nurses working in health care institutions and to determine the effect of organizational justice perceptions on burnout. In line with this purpose, it is important to try to reduce burnout levels and to contribute to the studies in this direction by making various proposals to increase the understanding of organizational justice of nurses.

2.2. Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of 460 nurses working at a Public Hospital in Turkey. No sample was drawn (since the entire population was included) and the data collection tool as distributed to all of the participants. The data collection period took place between January-April of 2018, after which the responses of 295 (%64) participants were obtained and 273 (%59) were used in the present study.

The following are demographic findings related to participants. According to Table 1, 60% of the participants are between 36 and 45 years of age, 50% of them have a bachelor's degree and approximately 72% of their income is between 3001-4000 TL. In addition, 52% of the participants worked in the hospital for 7 years or longer; about 55% have been in the healthcare sector for less than 20 years.

Variables	n	%
Age		
20-35 years old	53	19,4
36-45 years old	166	60,8
46-65 years old	54	19,8
Gender		
Female	263	96,3
Male	10	3,7
Education status		
High school	30	11
Associate's degree	84	30,8
Bachelor's degree	137	50,2
Postgraduate	22	10
Level of income		
2000-3000 TL	71	26
3001-4000 TL	196	71,8
4001-5000 TL	6	2,2
Working time in the hospital		
0-6 years	130	47,6
7 years andup	143	52,4
Working time in the healthcare sector		
19 years and less	149	54,6
20 years and more	124	45,4
Total	273	100

Table 1: Demographic Findings for Participants

2.3. Data Collection Methods and Tools

In the study, the demographic variables' questionnaire consisting of 9 expressions due to determine the demographic characteristics of the employees, the "Maslach burnout scale" consisting of 22 items, and Colgitt's scale consisting of 20 items regarding organizational justice were utilized. The questionnaire directed to determine the perception of the nurses working in the public hospital on the organizational justice and the effect on the levels of burnout was taken from the master thesis titled "A Research on Evaluation of the Interaction between Organizational Justice and Burnout (A Public Hospital Case in Eskişehir)" and prepared by Duymuş in 2015.

Maslach Burnout Scale: The scale was developed by Maslach and Jackson in 1981. Canan Ergin adapted the scale to Turkish and tested the reliability and validity of the scale in 1992. There are three sub-dimensions in the Maslach Burnout Scale and there are 22 expressions in it: nine (9) for the emotional exhaustion dimension, five for the depersonalization dimension, and eight (8) for the lack of personal success dimension. In the question form, 5 points Likert scale is used (1: Never, 2: Very rare, 3: Sometimes, 4: Most of the time, 5: Always). Scale scores are calculated inversely for personal success (burnout increases as personal success decreases). High emotional exhaustion and depersonalization score and the low personal success score indicate burnout. High levels of burnout are understood by the high score obtained from the emotional exhaustion and depersonalization subscale, and the low score obtained from the personal achievement subscale.

Organizational Justice Perception Scale: The Scale was developed by Colquitt in 2000 and adapted to Turkish by Özmen et al. in 2007. This scale consists of 20 questions. Questions of the perception of Justice scale are arranged as on 5 points Likert scale "(5) Strongly Agree, (4) Agree, (3) No Idea, (2) Disagree, (1) Strongly Disagree". Özmen et al. (2001), who used the scale in their study, found that the scale was grouped under three factors and identified the reliability of the factors as "0.86" for procedural justice, "0.94" for distribution Justice, "0.88" for interaction Justice (Meydan, Basım & Çetin, 2011). In this study, the variables were grouped in 3 sub-dimensions.

2.4. Data Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to test the validity of the scales used. Confirmatory factor analysis (DFA) is performed to test the validity of the scales used. CFA is known as a latent variable analysis and is used to test causal models with a theoretical basis (Sumer 2000: 49). The values of chi-square conformation test ($\Delta\chi2$), root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), and incremental fit index (IFI) are frequently used. It is decided that the model compatibility is good with the fact that $\Delta\chi^2$ value is not meaningful, RMSEA value is less than .08, CFI and IFI values are greater than .90.

The Regression Analysis and Structural Equality Model have been utilized to measure the extent to which each perception of justice (procedural, distributive and interactional justice) affects burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment).

2.5. Research Methodology

The sub-dimensions and their relations between the organizational justice and burnout scales used in the research are shown in Figure 1.
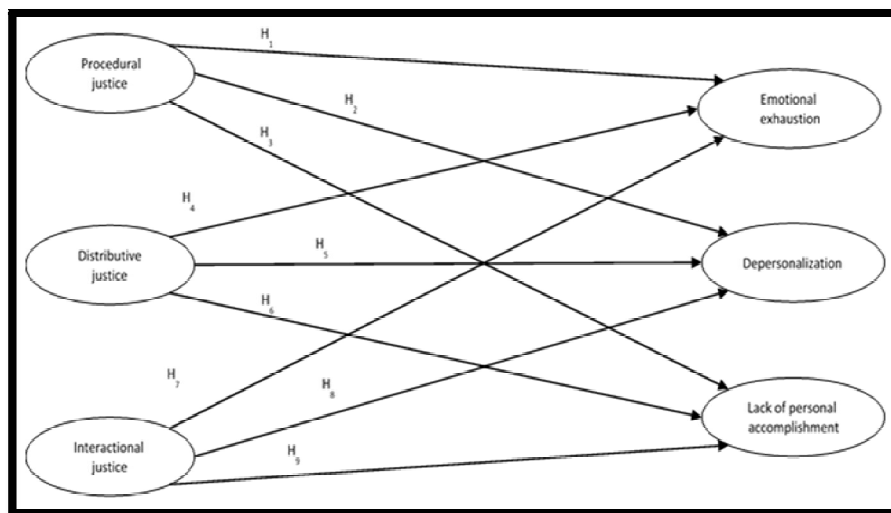

Figure 1: Hypothesized Model 1

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive Statistics

The means, standard deviations, intercorrelations and scale reliabilities among the key variables are presented in Table 2. According to the table, it is seen that there is a negatively significant relation between Organizational Justice and Burnout.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Procedural justice	2.033	0.747	(0.827)***					
2. Distributive justice	2.290	0.853	0.635*	(0.800)***				
3. Interactional justice	3.644	0.911	0.180*	0.236*	(0.954)***			
4. Emotional exhaustion	3.226	0.756	-0.295*	-0.289*	-0.234*	(0.892)***		
5. Depersonalization	2.231	0.767	-0.242*	-0.246*	-0.114	0.558*	(0.783)***	
6. Lack of personal accomplishment	3.550	0.529	0.161*	0.152**	0.020	-0.330*	-0.437**	(0.727)***

Table 2: Means, Standard Deviations, Inter Correlations and Scale Reliabilities
*Correlation is Significant at the 0.01 Level (2-Tailed)
**Correlation Is Significant at the 0.05 Level (2-Tailed)
***Cronbach's Alpha;
SD = Standard Deviation.
Note. N=273

3.2. Measurement Model

First of all, the variables were tested for model fit. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used with SPSS Amos 23 to test our variables. A measurement model was tested that had six latent factors (i.e., distributive, procedural and interactional justice and emotional exhaustion syndrome, depersonalization and lack of personal accomplishment) and 42 indicators (seven items for Procedural justice, Four items for Distributive justice, nine items for Interactional justice, nine items for Emotional exhaustion, five items for Depersonalization and eight items for Lack of personal accomplishment). The CFA indicate that ten variables should be dropped because of low factor loadings (two items from the Organizational Justice, eight items from the Burnout scales were dropped). The fit indices appear in Table 3. We use generally, the measurement model as analyzed using a CFA of the variables indicates a good fit ($\chi 2$ = 751.841, df = 432, p=0.00; GFI=0.94, AGFI=0.89, NFI=0.91, CFI=0.94, RMSEA=0.06).

Model	df	X²	X²/ df	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA
CFA model	432	751.841	1.740	0.906	0.890	0.912	0.942	0.068
Hypothesized model	426	598.786	1.406	0.902	0.888	0.900	0.969	0.039

Table 3: The Model Fit Indices

3.3. Structural Model

The next step in analyzing the data is to test the hypothesized model. Structural equation modeling (path analysis) with Amos 23 was used to test the hypothesis. Having confirmed that the measurement model had adequate fit, the proposed structural model was tested. Results of the structural analysis of the proposed model provides an acceptable fit to the data (Figure 2).
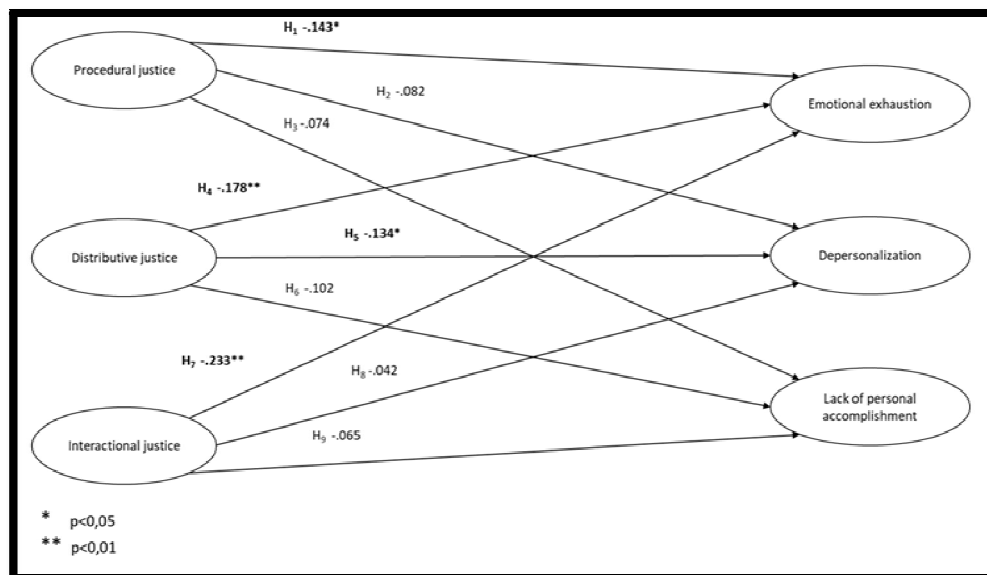

Figure 2: The Effect of Organizational Justice Perceptions on Burnout

The first hypothesis examines the relationship between procedural justice and emotional exhaustion. In support of Hypothesis 1, the path coefficient between procedural justice and emotional exhaustion (β= -0.143, $p<0.05$) was negative and significant. The results indicate that an increase in the level of procedural justice also causes a decrease in emotional exhaustion of nurses. The second hypothesis examines the effect of procedural justice on depersonalization. In this case, no statistically significant influence of procedural justice on depersonalization was found ($\beta = -0.082$, $p > .05$). The third hypothesis examines the effect of procedural justice on lack of personal accomplishment. In this case, no statistically significant influence of procedural justice on lack of personal accomplishment was found ($\beta = -0.074$, $p > .05$). The fourth hypothesis examines the relationship between distributive justice and emotional exhaustion. In support of Hypothesis 4, the path coefficient between distributive justice and emotional exhaustion (β= -0.178, $p<0.01$) was negative and significant. The fifth hypothesis examines the relationship between distributive justice and depersonalization. In support of Hypothesis 5, the path coefficient between distributive justice and depersonalization (β= -0.134, $p<0.05$) was negative and significant. The results indicate that an increase in the level of distributive justice causes a decrease in emotional exhaustion and depersonalization of nurses. The sixth hypothesis examines the effect of distributive justice on lack of personal accomplishment. In this case, no statistically significant influence of distributive justice on lack of personal accomplishment was found ($\beta = -0.102$, $p > .05$). The seventh hypothesis examines the relationship between interactional justice and emotional exhaustion. In support of Hypothesis 7, the path coefficient between interactional justice and emotional exhaustion (β= -0.233, $p<0.01$) was negative and significant. The results indicate that an increase in the level of interactional justice causes a decrease in emotional exhaustion of nurses. The eighth hypothesis examines the relationship between interactional justice and depersonalization, finally the ninth hypothesis examines the relationship between interactional justice and lack of personal accomplishment. No statistically significant influence of interactional justice on depersonalization ($\beta = -0.042$, $p > .05$) and lack of personal accomplishment ($\beta = -0.065$, $p > .05$) were found.

Also, regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between the levels of burnout and organizational justice. Statistical predictions of the model show that the model is meaningful and usable ($\beta = -0.345$, $p <0.05$). Accordingly, the perception of organizational justice explains 11.9% of burnout. In other words, as the perception of organizational justice increases, the sense of burnout decreases.

4. Discussion

Organizations are communities of their own culture and sub-cultures. The distribution of awards within the organization, the processes of doing business and interpersonal relations, which constitute the sub-dimensions of the perception of justice, can vary from organization to organization as the specific practices of organizations. The perception of justice can also increase or decrease with this differentiation that changes from organization to organization as one of the elements that shape the behavior of individuals within the organization. The burnout of individuals within the

organization may change with the perception of justice (Defi, Baskı & Çetin, 2011). The organizational justice or injustice perceived by employees will lead to many positive and negative behaviors and attitudes. One of these negative emotions is burnout. Burnout is an emotion that can be found in every occupational group intensively related to people at the present time, especially in every employee working in healthcare organizations from the lowest to the highest level. One of the triggering elements of this emotion can be expressed as the perceptions of justice of the employees (Elovainio, Kivimäki, & Vahtera, 2002; Chênevert et al., 2013).

In the studies aimed at determining the relationship between organizational justice dimensions and emotional burnout in literacy, it is observed that operational, distributive and interaction justice negatively affects the depletion (Vaamonde, Omar & Salessi, 2018; Safari, Tamizifar & Jannati, 2012; Lambert et al, 2010; Chênevert et al., 2013). In this study, it is concluded that the operational, distribution and interaction justice affects the emotional exhaustion and the distribution justice also affects desensitization negatively. In a study conducted by Korkmaz (2013) in a private hospital in 2013, it is observed that as the perception of organizational justice increases, burnout is reduced. Similar results can also be observed in research conducted in different sectors (Shkoler & Tziner, 2017). As a result of this study, it is observed that the burnout syndrome decreased (11.9%) as the perception of organizational justice increased.

It can be said that personal experience less burnout as their organizational justice perceptions become stronger. Therefore, managers who try to avoid the negativity of burnout should give importance to justice in their organization and check the personnel's perceptions of justice. Considering that the healthcare organization in which the study is conducted is a public institution, transactions are generally made according to pre-determined procedures in public institutions and there is hardly any intervention in these procedures. However, daily decisions concerning the fulfillment of tasks are taken and explained by the managers of the relevant institution. Employees should be given the feeling that the decisions, wages, and promotions within the organization, the behaviors of the managers to the employees, the equality of authority and responsibility, are being tried to be fair and acted in this direction. When the weaknesses of the employee's perceptions of justice are identified, the reasons for this should be determined and resolved without wasting time.

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