Organistional justice and fairness in workplace

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# Fairness in the workplace

Fairness in the workplace refers to establishment of a fair work environment, respecting all the rules, colleagues and other members of staff in the workplace. It also includes respecting the rules and keep good ethical behaviour. Maintaining a fair working environment is critical for any organisation as unfairness jeopardises personal ambitions and sometimes leads to serious outcomes like violence (Cropanzano, Goldman, & Folger, 2003). Unfairness is caused by giving unequal recognition and appreciation which is a great challenge while managing staff at different sites. Such challenges can be handled by providing frequent feedback and personal support at least once a month. The employees must also be allowed to provide upward feedback which will help to point the flaws in the system. Such feedback goes straight to the chief executive officer and an employee's identity is kept anonymous (Cohen, 2015). The fairness in the workplace is challenging but can be handled by being transparent and maintaining communication. Fairness judgments require equality and unbiased rules (Colella, 2001).

Feelings of inequality on the work can take several forms and are possible causes of tension about which administrators need to be concerned. This requires an understanding of the mechanisms by which injustice is promoting stress. Although some degree of injustice in the place of work may be unavoidable, stressful reactions can be lessened by explaining the source for resource distribution graciously and respectfully. It also demands giving the employees voice, listening to it carefully, and lastly using precise, fair measures and implementing them transparently (Greenberg, 2004).

## Theories, models and framework associated with fairness in the workplace

Several theories based on equity and fairness have been found in history (Blakely, Andrews, & Moorman, 2005). Adams's theory of equity received the supreme attention in the experimental literature of organisations. According to this theory, four situations leading to inequality in performance include less payment on hourly basis incentive, less payment on a piece-rate basis of payment, overpayment on hourly basis, and overpayment on piece-rate basis. Under first three situations, the theory show that the person will try to reinstate equity by lowering contributions through reduced quality and quantity of his or her performance (Cropanzano, 2012).

For lower payment on a piece-rate scheme, it is forecasted that the person will bring back equity by keeping their contributions unchanged and increasing their outcomes through the production of higher quantities of lower quality work. As hourly-rate overpayment results in fixed outcomes, equity reestablishment can be brought in this case by increasing inputs by the individual which manifest as greater quality or quantity of the performance (Vecchio, 1981). The theory predicts that the overpayment on a piece-rate base, will produce higher quality but the low quantity of outcome compared to the equitably paid staff. Quality and quantity are observed to show inverse relationship as the lesser amount of time is dedicated to producing either high quality or high quantity output, quality suffers prioritizing quantity and vice versa (Blakely et al., 2005).

Fairness theory and referent cognition theory (RCT) have also played an important role in gaining an insight into the organisational justice and fairness in the workplace. According to RCT, people are likely to experience feelings of injustice when disadvantaged in some comparison. The sense of injustice is also provoked when an individual's relational concerns are assessed by decision-makers. Equity theory emphasizes on the outcomes of holding someone accountable for injustice. Therefore, decision-makers should know and be prepared for the explanation from the persons they are expecting to point out injustice towards them (Greenberg, 2004). Fairness theory is more focused on the impact of answerability for fairness judgment.

Justice is essential according to the instrumental model as it helps encourage personal goals and maintain a fair work environment (Cropanzano, Goldman & Folger, 2003). On the other hand, as suggested by the interpersonal model justice is key to recognize one’s valued stand within a social group. Justice means treating people as they deserve to be treated according to the ideals of right or wrong (Greenberg, 2002). According to the interpersonal and instrumental concepts, the only reason that persons care about fairness is the threat of injustice to take a control of resources and jeopardize personal stand—not because it damages other individuals or break moral values. In this context, the goals of these models possess a streak of egoism. These models may be true in some way, but they fail to voice the whole scenario.

Despite the implications of these two models, they fail to take into account the personal obligation component and tend to justify the unfair behaviours from employees by injustice from the management and higher authorities. They ignore the moral duties and substitute personal needs as the reasons for behaving unfairly (Pan, Chen, Hao, & Bi, 2018). Therefore, the connection of instrumental and interpersonal models to ethics or morality is not completely clear. This is because they have been framed according to the desires and needs of a specific individual and not about the welfare of others (Cropanzano, 2001).

Philosophers offer a different viewpoint which relates more to moral obligations, deontic or deontological logic. Deontological philosophies are not related directly to physical benefits whereas they take into account a person’s enthusiasm and motivation which is autonomous of the outcomes created by the behaviour. That is, something is been done for the reasons without considering its outcomes, even if the consequences are undesirable.

# Summary of key points

To sum up, organisational justice and fairness are correlated with each other. Organisational justice is more linked to perceptions of justice or fairness in the organisation (Asadullah, Akram, Imran, & Arain, 2017). These perceptions are divided into four groups. First, interpersonal, are based on perceptions of interpersonal conducts and connections. The second, distributive, is a type of justice which reflects fairness of outcomes. Third, the procedural, relates to fairness in processes that lead to these results. Last, informational justice involves the accounts given for justice-related measures (Brockner, 2011; Pan, Chen, Hao, & Bi, 2018). ). Positive organisational behaviour (POB) of employees not only results in improvement of their work but also help to improve company’s performance. Organisational justice is a standard predictor of staff and organisation’s outcomes. Organisational justice leads to fairness which in turn lead to the development of a healthy working environment and improvement in individual's as well as the organisation's performance.

# Conclusion

The feelings of inequality among the employees can be dangerous and lead to severe outcomes like theft, hence should be dealt with carefully. Adams's theory of equity, Fairness theory and referent cognition theory (RCT) are important theories to be considered dealing with organisational justice and fairness. The two models, instrumental and interpersonal, focus on justice as the source of one’s valued stand and maintenance of fair work culture. Both of these models explain justice from the employee's point of view, without taking into consideration the company's benefit and workers ethical obligations. Hence, deontological philosophies must also be taken into account. The staff should stick to their moral, legal and ethical obligations and the employers must take care of their rights. Also, the provision of justice and the maintenance of fair work environment must be ensured by the organisation by providing frequent feedback and improving connection.

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