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## Perception of organizational justice: A survey research in Turkish National Police Organization in Erzurum department

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### Abstract

This study focuses on male and female police officers working for the Turkish National Police (TNP) in the province of Erzurum (irrespective of their ranks or status). The aim of this study is to identify how the active police officers perceive “organizational justice”.

336 police officers, 88,7 % of whom are male and 11,3 % of whom are women participated in this survey (please see Table I, sampling is in line with the gender distribution of the TNP).

**Table 1:**

SEX	Frequency	Valid Percent
Men	298	88,7
Women	38	11,3
Total	336	100,0

Age interval of the participants is indicated below in Table II and majority is comprised of young police officers which is in compliance with the recent trends. It is ensured that very young and very old groups are represented in almost equal numbers.

**Table 2:**

AGE	Frequency	Valid Percent
22-26	36	10,7
27-31	121	36,0
32-36	83	24,7
37-41	39	11,6
42-46	34	10,1
47 and more	23	6,8
Total	336	100,0

As for the distribution of the participants by their level of education, (Table III) majority are graduates of university BA degree (60,7 %) while 19 % are graduates of vocational school of 2 years (Police Vocational School/PMYO). 4,5 % of the participants hold PhD that is an important finding.

**Table 3:**

Educational Status	Frequency	Valid Percent
Elementary/Middle School	3	,9
High School	50	14,9
Vocational School/PVHS	64	19,0
University (BA)	204	60,7
Post-graduate (MA/PhD)	15	4,5
Total	336	100,0

The scale that is used in this survey to measure “the perception of organizational justice” has been used in a post-graduate thesis submitted to the Turkish Military Academy of the Turkish Armed Forces. This scale is a four dimensional one developed by Colquitt (2001) and has been employed by different researchers in Turkey. Özmen *et al.* (2007) gathered the scale under three factors: reliability of factors and fairness of distribution 0,94; process fairness 0,86, interaction fairness 0,88<sup>[13]</sup>. Meydan (2010) used a scale of four factors. In addition, the reliability coefficient for the factors was determined to be as follows: 0,84, 0,82, 0,93, 0,91 while it is 0,93 for the entire scale. For this survey, factor load is not considered and the scale is one dimensional<sup>[13]</sup>. The articles of the

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scale is redesigned according to the aim of the scale (without changing the meaning) and there are 25 articles. The scale is designed in line with "Likert" (bipolar) scaling of 5 scores. Thus, a participant can score minimum 25 and maximum 125. The scores regarding the perception of the organizational justice can be interpreted as follows (Table IV);

**Table 4**

Score	Means
0-25	Very negative perception of organizational justice
26-50	Negative perception of organizational justice
51-75	Moderately positive perception of organizational justice
76-100	Positive perception of organizational justice
101-125	Very positive perception of organizational justice

As it can be inferred from its design, this is a descriptive study. It aims to horizontally group and describe the perception of the participants without any relationship analysis or statistical testing.

**Keywords:** Organizational Justice, Organizational Behavior, Management, Performance

**1. Introduction**

**1.1. The Concept of Organizational Justice**

Aristoteles defines justice as "the total of all virtues" while Immanuel Kant elaborates on justice as "a concept ensuring a reasonable balance between the rights and duties of the individuals" [1]. Within an organizational setting, the concept of justice is linked with work behavior/workplace conducts and has a strong impact on behavior of employees. It could be even said that organizational justice is vital for an organization. It is not a fictive concept either. It is an experience personally tested, observed and felt and a perceived impression occurring at the end of such an experience. Generally, it is associated with the equity between "performance/effort and the ones acquired in return for those efforts" and the perception of that equity (justice).

The Equity Theory of Adams (1965) is the first putting forward the psychological processes in the perception of employees regarding organizational justice. According to this classical theory, the individuals check if they are treated with justice and what they do provided to that organization (efforts, time, cognitive sources etc.) in order to achieve what (salary, promotion, opportunities for them to grow etc.) and the ratio between the two and they decide according to that ratio [2].

As it can be seen, organizational justice can be expressed as the employee perception of "how salaries, awards, penalties and promotions are realized, how such decisions are adopted or how those decisions are shared (and how work load is determined and delivered)" [3]. In the literature, this concept is dwelt upon with its certain sub-dimensions. This study focuses on only three of them [4, 5];

**1. Distributive justice:** it is about the distribution of the organizational awards and resources. The phenomenon such as salaries, promotion etc. are evaluated within this scope. Homans (1961) launched the concept of distributive justice explaining that individuals expect a profit vis-a-vis their investments and the more such an expectation is met, the more positive the perception of justice shall be. The Equity Theory of Adams developed departing from the ideas of Homans (1961) and it has been the most influential approach in examining organizational justice for a long time.

**2. Operative Justice:** it is a concept on "fairness of operations and operation processes" that are the most important tools of decision-making. Thibaut and Walker

(1975) involved this concept into the literature. It means giving a right to the employees to say in decision making process and implementation and justice perception of the employees regarding the processes determining awards and salaries.

**3. Interactional Justice:** Bies and Moag (1986) draw attention to the quality of interpersonal behaviour during actions and introduced a new development to the history of justice. Courtesy, honesty and respect matter in the communication process between the source of justice and a recipient. Bies and Moag (1986) depart from the behavior between individuals and evaluate to what extent they are fair and just to each other.

Another theory on justice (fairness/equity/rightfulness) is by Crosby (1976) that is Relative Deprivation Theory. According to this theory, the employees working in lower levels compare their achievements against those working in superior levels and such a comparison causes a sense of deprivation in an employee. If the award system of an organization is designed to appreciate the differences made by the employees such as unique skills and superior efforts, then that organization becomes a token and proof of justice (fairness/equity/rightfulness).

**1.2. Organizational Justice and its Association with Some Work Related Variables**

**1. Work Satisfaction and Organizational Justice:** Association between work satisfaction and organizational justice is one of the most studied issues [6]. According to the research conducted so far [7, 8, 9, 10] it is observed that the more the perception of organizational justice in a workplace is increased, the higher the work satisfaction will be or vice. In studies researching outcomes and methods of work satisfaction, it appears that organizational justice is an important factor significantly affecting the perception of organizational justice [6].

**2. Work Performance and Organizational Justice:** Some studies conclude that when employees understand harmony, efficiency and productivity out of organizational justice, a significant increase occurs in all these aspects [12].

**3. Organizational Loyalty and Organizational Justice:** Various studies on the perception of organizational justice plays an important role in attitudes of the employees towards an organization. For instance, Colquitt *et al.* (2001) reviewed 183 studies in order to identify the impact of organizational justice on different aspects in an organization. Thus, they established that justice perception has a positive impact on organizational loyalty [11].

**2. Methods and Techniques**

This study uses the survey or the field survey method and its sample is comprised of 330 male and female police officers of Turkish National Police (irrespective of their ranks or status). While the sample size was determined, the following criteria were taken into consideration (See Table V);

**Table 5**

Universe of research	2336
Standard Error (t)	0,05
Frequency in Universe (p)	0,5
Level of Significance (Alfa)	0,05
t score	1,96
Sample Size	330

In this study to be conducted in June 2015 in the province of Erzurum/Turkey, male and female police officers were selected randomly and 336 people who filled out the survey forms are included into the survey. Collected data have been run on SPSS 18 statistics program and the below-mentioned results have been achieved.

**3. Results**

**Table 6**

Organizational Justice Perception Level	Frequency	Valid Percent
Negative (26-50)	15	4,5
Moderately Positive (51-75)	159	47,3
Positive (76-100)	150	44,6
Very Positive (101-125)	12	3,6
Total	336	100,0

The results indicate that none of the responders see their organization TNP “very negative” (score 0-25) (See Table VI).

On the one hand, 4,5 % of the responders perceive TNP negative in view of “organizational justice” (see Table VI). On the other hand, 47,3 % of the responders perceive TNP positive at moderate level, constituting the largest group in the study (see Table VI). The second largest group of the study is 44,6% of the responders who feel positive about the organizational justice at TNP (see Table VI).

Only 3,6 % of the responders think “very positive” about the organizational justice at TNP (see Table VI).

Other findings establish that there is no difference between responding male and female police officers from the standpoint of the perception of organizational justice at TNP ( $p>,005=,447$ ) (see Table VII). Yet, though statistically it is not significant, it is important to point out that none of the female police officers hold a “highly positive” perception. Then this issue must be further analyzed to see if such a perception is gender-dependent.

**Table 7**

Sex	Perception of Organizational Justice			
	Negative (26-50)	Moderately Positive (51-75)	Very Positive (76-100)	Highly Positive (101-125)
Men	4,00%	47,30%	44,60%	4,00%
Women	7,90%	47,40%	44,70%	0,00%
Total	4,50%	47,30%	44,60%	3,60%

The findings about the level of education of the responding police officers, it seem that that “differentiation in the level of education” has no impact on difference in the perception of justice. ( $p>,005=,868$ ) (see Table VIII). As a corollary, the police officers from various educational backgrounds do not perceive TNP differently (positive-negative), in view of “organizational justice”.

**Table 8**

Educational Status	Perception of Organizational Justice			
	Negative (26-50)	Moderately Positive (51-75)	Very Positive (76-100)	Highly Positive (101-125)
Elementary/Middle School	0,00%	33,30%	66,7%	0,0%
High School	2,00%	54,0%	42,0%	2,0%
Vocational School/MYO	3,10%	42,2%	51,6%	3,1%
University (B.A.)	5,90%	46,6%	43,1%	4,4%
Post-graduate (MA/PhD)	0,0%	60,0%	40,0%	0,0%
Total	4,5%	47,3%	44,6%	3,6%

The study also demonstrated that there is no statistically significance between the number of years in profession and the difference in perception of organizational justice ( $p>,005=,111$ ) (see Table IX).

**Table 9**

Time in Profession	Perception of Organizational Justice			
	Negative (26-50)	Moderately Positive (51-75)	Very Positive (76-100)	Highly Positive (101-125)
1-5 Years	5,3%	57,3%	33,3%	4,0%
6-10 Years	6,6%	51,0%	39,1%	3,3%
11-15 Years	0,0%	32,4%	58,8%	8,8%
16-20 Years	3,1%	34,4%	59,4%	3,1%
21-25 Years	0,0%	39,4%	60,6%	0,0%
26-30 Years	0,0%	44,4%	55,6%	0,0%
31 Years and more	0,0%	0,0%	100,0%	0,0%
Total	4,5%	47,3%	44,6%	3,6%

**4. Discussion**

According to the findings, the perception of the organizational justice regarding the Turkish National Police is positive in general. To put it in other terms, majority of the police officers covered by this survey believe that the TNP is fair/equitable/just organization in treating its employees. Whereas a small group of the responders feel negative about it by 4,5%, such a situation must be accepted normal.

When other findings such as “gender, level of education and the number of years in the profession” are assessed, there is no other finding causing one to approach towards such a positive result in a skeptical way.

Without doubt, the reasons behind the negative perception of a small group can be further studied. As it has been emphasized before, it must be further analyzed whether the difference in the perception of women police officers is related to gender-dependent behavior at the TNP.

**5. Conclusion**

In a nutshell, the TNP is perceived as an organization where the concept of organizational justice (and related behavior) is well established and its members are sure about its fairness. Furthermore, in almost all variables, the level of positive perception is seen in a similar fashion.

**6. Limitations**

This research is limited to the degree of the scale that is used in data collection and the answers that interviewers stated. It is designed and conducted taking consideration of the Turkish National Police Organization’s department in Erzurum.

**7. Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that they have no potential conflict of interest.

**8. Funding and Permit**

This research was funded by the researcher and all permits are obtained from the authority of the Turkish National Police organization. And this research and process have been superintended by the academical ethic authority of TNP.

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