

# INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN INTERACTIONAL JUSTICE AND JOB SATISFACTION

**Mohd Ridwan ABD RAZAK**

Ministry of Human Resources, Malaysia

Email: mohdridwan76@gmail.com

**Enah ALI**

Ministry of Education, Malaysia

Email: edwan01@yahoo.com.my

## *Abstract:*

*The objective of this study is to evaluate the role of interactional justice as an important predictor for job satisfaction. A survey method was used to collect usable data from 97 employees of the largest courier and postal service provider in Malaysia. The outcomes of the SmartPLS path model analysis revealed three important findings. First, interactional justice was interrelated with job satisfaction. Second, interactional justice was interrelated with intrinsic job satisfaction. Third, interactional justice was interrelated with extrinsic job satisfaction. Therefore, this study confirmed that interactional justice may act as an important instrument to enhance employee's job satisfaction and motivate them to strongly support organizational objectives and strategies. Further, discussion, implications, and conclusions are described.*

*Keywords: Interactional justice, job satisfaction, intrinsic job satisfaction, extrinsic job satisfaction*

## **1. Introduction**

Interactional justice is a crucial issue that has been discussed in organizational management (Ashraf et al., 2018; Ouyang et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2017). From the organizational justice perspective, interactional justice broadly defined as a feeling of justice that arises in an employee as a result of the interpersonal treatment received from the immediate supervisor in the organization. When employees are satisfied with the treatment that has been received from his/her immediate supervisor, they tend to have better interactional justice (Ahmed et al., 2018; Mohd Ridwan et al., 2019; Van Dijke et al., 2019). Research by López-Cabarcos et al. (2015), Hao et al. (2016) and Rahman et. al. (2015), revealed that employees who get fair treatment from their immediate supervisor will show a positive attitude and be more satisfied with his or her job.

Many scholars strongly agreed that interactional justice plays an important role to gain competent employees and to enhance the organization's productivity (Imran & Allil, 2016; Sokhanvar et al., 2016; Tourani et al., 2016). In addition, interactional justice may enhance the level of employee's job satisfaction and it will directly influence the level of employee's motivation to improve their performance in doing daily tasks given (Deschamps et al., 2016; Ghazi & Jalali, 2017; Van Dijke et al.,

2019). Further, it may motivate employees to be more loyal to the organization (Dahanayake et al., 2018; Hwang et al., 2019; Otto & Mamatoglu, 2015). In turn, it may enhance organizational productivity and competitiveness (Chen, 2018; Ismail & Zakaria, 2009; Komodromos et al., 2019).

In depth analysis of recent literatures about organizational justice found that majority scholars argued that interactional justice can be divided into two categories: interpersonal justice and informational justice (Akoh & Amah, 2016; Dai & Xie, 2016; Leineweber et al., 2017). Interpersonal justice broadly defined as the situation where employees received fair treatment (i.e. with dignity and respect) from his or her immediate supervisor (Burton & Hoobler, 2011; Le Roy et al., 2012; Muzumdar, 2012). While, informational justice commonly viewed as the situation where employees obtain adequate explanation and justification for the decision made by the organization (Patient & Skarlicki, 2010; Till & Karren, 2011; Zapata et al., 2013). Therefore, if an employee is satisfied with these, they will show their commitment in performing daily tasks (Chuang et al., 2009; Abu Raddaha et al., 2012, Mirkamali & Thani, 2011).

Surprisingly, recent literatures about organizational justice exposed that interactional justice may lead to enhance employees' job satisfaction (i.e. intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction) (López-Cabarcos et al., 2015; Pieters, 2018; Sia & Tan, 2016). In an organizational behavior perspective, job satisfaction is often defined as an employee's positive emotional and attitudes towards their organization based on their evaluation on working conditions and environment (Alegre et al., 2016; Kianto et al., 2016; Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). Studies by Kanyurhi and Akonkwa (2016), Zeffane and Bani Melhem (2017) and Muterera et al. (2018) discovered that when employees are satisfied with their job, they are more likely to contribute to the organizational performance in the global market. Additionally, according to Azman and Mohd Ridwan (2016), Wahab et al. (2018) and Sardžoska and Tang (2015), job satisfaction consists of two main elements. Firstly, intrinsic job satisfaction (i.e. employees obtain their job satisfaction from internal jobs factor). Secondly, extrinsic job satisfaction (i.e. employees obtain their job satisfaction from external jobs factor).

Many scholars believed that interactional justice, intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction are different constructs, but actually it is highly interdependent. For example, the ability of organization to nurture feeling of interactional justice (i.e. interpersonal justice and informational justice) among employees may lead to enhancing employee's job satisfaction (Hao et al., 2016; Sia & Tan, 2016; Yuan et al., 2016). In conjunction with this interesting phenomenon, it has encouraged researchers to further investigate this phenomenon.

## **2. Objective of the Study**

Based on the discussion above, there are three objectives of this study. First, to evaluate the effect of interactional justice on job satisfaction. Second, to evaluate the effect of interactional justice on intrinsic job satisfaction. Third, to evaluate the effect of interactional justice on extrinsic job satisfaction.

### **3. Review of Literature**

#### **3.1. *The relationship between interactional justice and job satisfaction***

Issues of interactional justice and job satisfaction in the organization gained strong attention from many scholars. For example, perception 254 hotel employees in Metropolitan Cebu (Sia & Tan, 2016), 300 employees from various state-owned enterprise (SOEs) and primate Chinese companies (Hao et al., 2016), 291 employees from five banks in Faisalabad, Pakistan (Kashif et al., 2016), 263 employees from Neyshabur University of Medical Sciences in Iran (Saadati et al., 2016) and an extensive empirical reviews of 120 research literatures from 2007 to 2014 (Demir, 2016). All the studies mentioned above revealed that if the superior or immediate supervisor in the organization able to treat their subordinate with dignity and fairly, it will enhance the level of employee's job satisfaction (Demir, 2016; Hao et al., 2016; Kashif et al., 2016; Sia & Tan, 2016; Saadati et al., 2016). Thus, it was hypothesized that:

H1: There is a significant relationship between interactional justice and job satisfaction.

#### **3.2. *The relationship between interactional justice and intrinsic job satisfaction***

Several recent studies were conducted using a direct effects model to study about interactional justice on different samples. For example, perceptions of 200 police officers, including constables, sub-inspectors and circle officers appointed in different police stations of western Uttar Pradesh, India (Rani et al., 2018), 317 employees of the Ministry of Local Government and thirty Local Government Councils in Osun State, Nigeria (Ajala & Bolarinwa, 2015), 220 public sector universities of Peshawar, Pakistan (Mahboob, 2017), 100 Engineering employees from department of electrical at Al-Arabia Sugar Mill, Noon Sugar Mill and Shakarganj Sugar Mill Manufacturing Plants in Sugar Industry of Pakistan (Nawaz et al., 2018) and 106 bank's employees and 97 administrative officers at a university at Namibia (Pieters, 2018). These studies exposed that if the superior or immediate supervisor in the organization able to treat their subordinate with dignity and fairly, it will nurture the intrinsic job satisfaction (Ajala & Bolarinwa, 2015; Mahboob, 2017; Nawaz et al., 2018; Pieters, 2018; Rani et al., 2018). Thus, it was hypothesized that: H2: There is a significant relationship between interactional justice and intrinsic job satisfaction.

#### **3.3. *The relationship between interactional justice and extrinsic job satisfaction***

Further extant studies used a direct effects model to examine the relationship between interactional justice and extrinsic job satisfaction using different samples. For example, perception of 200 employees of six public and private banks of Multan, Pakistan (Parven & Awan, 2018), findings from 53 critical analysis of research literatures from 2013 to 2017 (Alharbi, 2017), 200 employees who worked in manufacturing sector in Batu Pahat and Seremban, Malaysia (Ganesan et al., 2017) and 500 employees from export processing companies in Sri Lanka (Gamlath, 2019). These studies found that the ability of an organization's administrator to appropriately and fairly treat their subordinate had been an important determinant of extrinsic job satisfaction (Alharbi, 2017; Gamlath, 2019; Ganesan et al., 2017; Parven & Awan, 2018). Thus, it was hypothesized that:

H3: There is a significant relationship between interactional justice and extrinsic job satisfaction.

#### 4. Theoretical Framework

The role of interactional justice as a significant predictor of job satisfaction (i.e. intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction) is consistent with the idea of organizational behavior theory. For example, Folger and Cropanzano's (1998) procedural justice theory explains that receiving fair interpersonal treatment and adequate information from the immediate supervisor about policies, procedures, rules and regulations implemented by the organization may strongly evoke a positive attitude and/or behavior to the employees. While, Dansereau et al. (1964) Leader-Member Exchange Theory posits that the quality of the relationship between immediate supervisor and employees based on principles of respect, openness, dignity and honesty. The essence of these theories suggests that employees may have a great satisfaction towards his/her job if the employees perceived that they were treated fairly (i.e. with respect, openness, dignity and honesty) by immediate supervisor and adequately informed about organizational strategies and objectives. This concept is further explained in Figure 1.

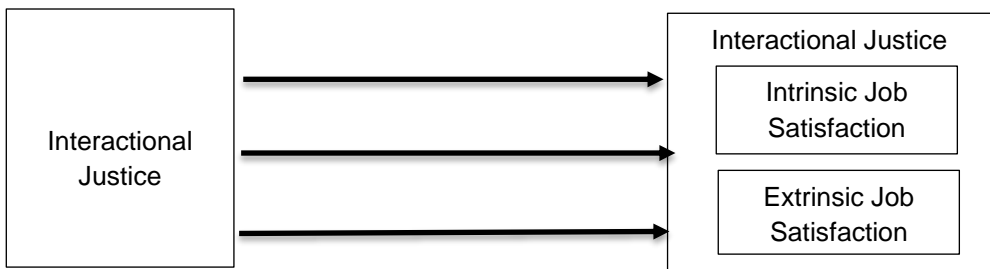


Figure 1. Theoretical framework

#### 5. Methodology

##### 5.1. Research Design

A cross-sectional research design was used in this study. It allows the researcher to combine the findings of previous literature pertaining to interactional justice with the actual research finding. Applying this data collection method has several advantages. For example, it may assist the researcher to collect precise data, minimize bias and enhance the quality of data being collected (Cresswell, 1998; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). This study was conducted at the largest courier and postal service provider in Malaysian.

##### 5.2. Measures

The questionnaire used in this study has three main components. First, interactional justice consisted of six items modified from organizational justice literature (Colquitt & Rodell, 2011). Second, intrinsic job satisfaction consisted of four items modified from job satisfaction literature (Weiss et al., 1967). Third, extrinsic job satisfaction consisted of four items modified from job satisfaction literature (Weiss et al., 1967). All these items were determined using a 7-item scale stretching from

“strongly disagree/dissatisfied” (1) to “strongly agree/satisfied” (7). Demographic variables were employed as controlling variables because this study emphasizes employee attitude.

### 5.3. Sample

This research employed convenient sampling techniques to collect 97 usable survey questionnaires from the executive level employees in the studied organization. This sampling technique was used because the management of the studied organization had not given the list of their registered employees to the researchers. This situation prevents the researchers from using a random sampling technique in choosing respondents for this research. The survey questionnaires were answered by respondents based on their consent and on a voluntary basis.

### 5.4. Data analysis

The SmartPLS software was used to assess the validity and reliability of the study instrument and testing the study hypotheses. There are four main reasons for choosing this software. It is the most accurate method to evaluate predictive research models, to analyze data with small sample size, to evaluate complex research models with many latent variables, and to analyze reflective and formative measurement models (Henseler & Chin, 2010; Ringle et al., 2005, Hair et al., 2017). For the purpose of this study, discriminant validity and convergent validity was used to measure the validity and reliability of the study instrument. While analysis of path coefficients, predictive strength (R2), and predictive relevance (Q2) was used for testing the study hypotheses.

## 6. Findings and Discussion

### 6.1. Sample Profile

Based on Table 1, majority of the respondents were males (73.2%), between 35 to 44 years old (35.1%), holding Malaysia Certificate of Education (57.7%), working at branch office (64%), working for 5 to 14 years (35.1%), permanent staff (97.9%), monthly salary between RM2500 to 3999 (56.7%), married (94.8%), and has 3 – 6 children (60.8%).

**Table 1**

**Respondent profile**

Respondent	Sub Profile	Percentage
Gender	Male	73.2
	Female	26.8
Age (years)	< 25	3.1
	25 – 34	25.8
	35 – 44	35.1
	45 – 54	25.8
	> 55	10.3
Education Level	LCE / SRP	7.3
	MCE / SPM	57.7
	HSC / STPM	9.3
	Diploma	11.3
	Degree	13.4
	Ph.D	1.0
Working location	Headquarter	8.2

	State office	27.8
	Branch office	64.0
Tenure of service (years)	5 – 14	35.1
	15 – 24	34.0
	> 25	30.9
Status of service	Permanent	97.9
	Contract basis	2.1
Gross monthly salary (MYR)	< 2,000	10.3
	2,000 – 2,499	19.6
	2,500 – 3,999	56.7
	4,000 – 4,499	4.1
	4,500 – 4,999	5.2
	5,000 – 5,499	2.1
	5,500 – 5,999	2.1
Marital status	Single	5.2
	Married	94.8
Number of dependents	No children	5.2
	< 3 children	29.9
	3 – 6 children	60.8
	> 6 children	4.1

Note: LCE / SRP : Lower School Certificate / Sijil Rendah Pelajaran  
MCE / SPM : Malaysia Certificate of Education / Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia  
HSC / STPM : Higher School Certificate / Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia

### 6.2. Instruments Validity and Reliability

Based on Table 2 and 3, all constructs used in this study had achieved the standard of convergent validity (when the value of AVE for all constructs is larger than 0.5) and discriminant validity (when the value of AVE in diagonal were larger than the square correlation with others in off-diagonal) (Barclays et al., 1995; Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Henseler & Chin, 2010). Besides that, all items used in this study had met the standard of factor loadings when the value of cross factor loadings for all items larger than 0.7 (Henseler & Chin, 2010). Further, instruments used in this study also had the high internal consistency when the value of composite reliability for all constructs larger than 0.8 (Henseler & Chin, 2010; Nunally & Bernstein, 1994).

Table 2

#### Results of convergent and discriminant validity analysis

Construct	AVE	Interactional Justice	Intrinsic Job Satisfaction	Extrinsic Job Satisfaction
Interactional Justice	0.764	0.874		
Intrinsic Job Satisfaction	0.694	0.710	0.833	
Extrinsic Job Satisfaction	0.683	0.710	0.914	0.826

Table 3

**Results of cross factor loadings and composite reliability**

Constructs	Cross Factor Loading			Composite Reliability
	1	2	3	
<p>Interactional Justice</p> <p>1. The immediate supervisor explains clearly the decision to reward the performance-based remuneration.</p> <p>2. The immediate supervisor is honest in determining performance-based remuneration.</p> <p>3. The immediate supervisor is able to adapt his/her communication style to match the employee's level of thinking.</p> <p>4. The immediate supervisor is aware of the employee's personal needs in making decisions with regard to awarding performance-based remuneration.</p> <p>5. The immediate supervisor treats employees ethically in making decisions with regard to awarding performance-based remuneration.</p> <p>6. The immediate supervisor lets the employees appeal against the performance-based remuneration results.</p>	0.820 0.878 0.892 0.905 0.907 0.837			0.951
<p>Intrinsic Job Satisfaction</p> <p>How satisfied are you with your work right now?</p> <p>1. Career guarantee.</p> <p>2. The attention is given to my suggestions.</p> <p>3. The recognition received from my work achievements.</p> <p>4. Relationship with the immediate supervisor.</p>		0.825 0.816 0.849 0.842		0.901
<p>Extrinsic Job Satisfaction</p> <p>How satisfied are you with your work right now?</p> <p>1. Immediate supervisor's supervising style.</p> <p>2. Tasks are given.</p>			0.78 7 0.85 8	0.896

3. The freedom to choose a working style.			0.85	
4. Rewards given (e.g.: pay raise, bonus).			1	
			0.80	
			8	

**6.3. Constructs Analysis**

Based on Table 4, mean value for all constructs ranging 5.5490 to 5.6057. It shows that many respondents in the studied organization believed that they have high levels of interactional justice, intrinsic job satisfaction, and extrinsic job satisfaction. Furthermore, the value of VIF for intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction are smaller than 5.0. It shows that the correlation between interactional justice with intrinsic job satisfaction and extrinsic job satisfaction is free from collinearity problems (Hair et al., 2017).

**Table 4**

**Results of collinearity and descriptive statistics**

Constructs	Mean Value	Standard Deviation	Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)
Interactional Justice	5.6057	.7402	
Intrinsic Job Satisfaction	5.5490	.7058	1.000
Extrinsic Job Satisfaction	5.5722	.6760	1.000

**6.4. Results of Testing Hypotheses**

Referring to Table 5, there are three important findings. First, the presence of interactional justice in the analysis contributed 52.7% to the changes in job satisfaction and it is considered substantial (Cohen, 1988). The results of testing hypothesis 1 indicated that interactional justice interrelated with job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.726$ ;  $t = 12.728$ ), it meant H1 is accepted. Therefore, this result proves that interactional justice plays an important role in enhancing employee’s job satisfaction. Further, the testing of predictive relevance found that interactional justice was able predict job satisfaction with value of Q2 is larger than zero (i.e. 0.313).

Second, the presence of interactional justice in the analysis contributed 50.5% to the changes in intrinsic job satisfaction and it is considered substantial (Cohen, 1988). The results of testing hypothesis 2 indicated that interactional justice interrelated with intrinsic job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.710$ ;  $t = 12.004$ ), it meant H2 is accepted. Therefore, this result proves that interactional justice plays an important role in enhancing employee’s intrinsic job satisfaction. Further, the testing of predictive relevance found that interactional justice was able predict intrinsic job satisfaction with value of Q2 is larger than zero (i.e. 0.318).

Third, the presence of interactional justice in the analysis contributed 50.4% to the changes in extrinsic job satisfaction and it is considered substantial (Cohen, 1988). The results of testing hypothesis 3 indicated that interactional justice interrelated with extrinsic job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.710$ ;  $t = 12.620$ ), it meant H3 is accepted. Therefore, this result proves that interactional justice plays an important role in enhancing employee’s extrinsic job satisfaction. Further, the testing of



predictive relevance found that interactional justice was able predict extrinsic job satisfaction with value of Q2 is larger than zero (i.e. 0.313).

**Table 5****Outcomes of testing hypotheses**

<b>Path Coefficient</b>	<b>Beta Value</b>	<b>t Value</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>
H1: Interactional Justice and Job Satisfaction	0.726	12.728	0.527
H2: Interactional Justice and Intrinsic Job Satisfaction	0.710	12.004	0.505
H3: Interactional Justice and Extrinsic Job Satisfaction	0.710	12.620	0.504

The outcomes of this study show that interactional justice has a strong relationship with job satisfaction. This situation is in line with the employee's perception that the levels of interactional justice, intrinsic job satisfaction, and extrinsic job satisfaction are high in the organization studied. Therefore, the capability of managers to nurture interactional justice among employees is very crucial to enhance employee's positive attitude especially job satisfaction.

In line with the study objectives and ultimate outcomes, this study may contribute to the theoretical, research methodology, and practical. For the theoretical, this study has loaded with widest information and theories about interactional justice and job satisfaction in order to enhance the understanding of interdependent between these variables. In terms of research methodology, the instrument used to collect usable data for this study has satisfied the level of validity and reliability requirement needed. Therefore, it may generate accurate, reliable, valid, and unquestionable outcomes. While for the practical contribution, outcomes of this study may help organizations to improve organizational justice, especially interactional justice in organizational management. This move is very crucial to ensure the management of the organization can be executed fairly and effectively to achieve organizational ultimate objectives. The readiness of organization to consider and implement what was discussed above may stimulate individual employees to demonstrate a positive attitude that can contribute to the organizational productivity.

## **7. Conclusion**

Ultimate outcomes of this study proved that interactional justice has a strong connection with employee's job satisfaction. To maximize employee's job satisfaction intrinsically and extrinsically, organization needs to strengthen the ability of managers in managing their subordinate fairly and effectively. Further, outcomes of this study have enriched and enlarged the body of knowledge about the importance of interactional justice in the organizational management. Therefore, any study and practice related to the organizational justice domain need to incorporate the elements of interactional justice. This is a powerful strategy to stimulate positive attitude and energy from employees to enhance the level of organizational productivity and competitiveness.

Although the outcomes of this study may look valid and reliable, it has some limitations. First, this study was conducted in one courier and postal service provider

in Malaysia. Therefore, it may not be suitable to generalize to other organization backgrounds. Second, this study employed a cross-sectional research design to obtain usable data. Therefore, it failed to evaluate the changes that occurred in assessing the relationship between the variables. Third, this study uses a direct effect model to assess the connection between variables. This study model has ignored the effect of mediating and/or moderating variables in the relationship. Finally, this study uses a small sample size. Therefore, it may have a bias problem.

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