

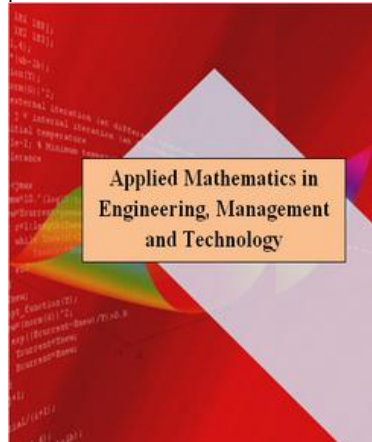
## Study of Relationship between the Employees' Quality of Work Life and Equity Perception

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### Abstract:

This research aims to study the relationship between the employees' quality of work life and equity perception in Rafsanjan executive systems. Measuring instruments are two questionnaires of work life quality and equity perception for which questionnaire of work life and equity perception. To test hypotheses Pearson correlation coefficient and linear regression as well as multiple regressions were used by SPSS software. Findings show the relationship between quality of work life and equity perception. Also there is a meaningful relationship between all components of employees' quality of work life and their equity perception. So it is suggested that concentrating on employees' job security, holding rights and advantages fairly and creating the opportunity of employees' skills growth and improvement and concentrating on employees' participation in decisions, companies have a positive effect on employees' equity perception.

**Keywords:** Quality of work life, Equity perception

### 1. Introduction

Today people spend the main part of their life in organizations. Every organization fulfills general or special goals for society and people by doing multiple or special tasks. These goals and tasks are more difficult than what can be fulfilled and achieved by a person or small group. So routines turnover depends on organizations and society's growth and continuity depends on their effective works and functions (Alaghban, 2005). Optimal use of current resources of an organization especially human force is common aspect of all management authorities' views and permanent continuity of an organization depends on suitable operation of these resources and it is believed that a promoted work environment increases employees' operations (Saeedi&Nazari,2008).

Researches show that processes of justice play an important role in organizations. Method of treating people in organizations can effect employees' beliefs, feelings, attitudes and behaviors. Main value of equity theory for managers is found of this point that this theory shows the importance of social comparison processes and explains that people ever evaluate themselves in society context and comparing with others. So, managers who use temporal solutions to solve the problem of injustice feeling confront serious difficulties (Rezaian, 2006).In fact as people fair and equitable ideas are ignored, they are motivated to modify the current position. Equity theory is the best method to control job and make enough recognition by cognitive processes.

Also using equity theory for mangers is more evident in reward and punishment system because formal rewards (such as salary pay and labor mission) are simply in people views rather than informal rewards (internal satisfaction and feeling of success) that is often in one's perceptions of equity and social comparisons are clearly a powerful factor in labor environment (Rezaian, 2006).

While producing a fair policy in organization people feel equity, so they also feel satisfaction, increasing productivity, decreasing lapse of service and finally commitment to responsibilities and goals of organization (Rezaian, 2007). So, regarding the importance of paying attention to equity perception some conditions should be produced in which employees' perceptions in labor environment is associated with fair and equity. Managers

should recognize the effective factors on these perceptions to make proper equity perceptions to organization in employees. One of the most important factors to improve employees' equity perception is the subject of work life quality. Using human resources properly is based on some positive and useful measures by which employees' relative or perfect satisfaction to organization is provided, otherwise not only their efficiency isn't increased but also organization may move in a reverse direction. These measures are explained as work life quality (Jamshidi, 2001). It is worth to mention that paying attention to employees' basic needs, providing suitable environment and making the fields of growth and creativity in labor environment has very useful effects on organization's operation (Hosseinzadeh&Saemian, 2002). Regarding the nature of work life quality and its proper consequences it is expected that employees feel equity and fair to the results of their work and related rewards from organization. This causes to increase organizational efficiency and effectiveness. In present society improving work life quality is of the most important goals of organization and people who work for it (Ghasemi, 2002).

Work life quality means bringing under correct inspection, producing good work conditions, holding proper payments and advantages and the most important creating challenged, participated and satisfied work space. High quality work life is obtained by regarding the philosophy of employees' relationships and includes employing efforts in use of high quality work life which are regular efforts from organization in which employees find better chances to effect on their works and help organization to have a general effectiveness (Jozee, 2003). In this regard the most important condition provided by management is creating an environment with high quality effectiveness (Mohab Ali, 2004), where organizations provide some chances to satisfy employees' needs (Maadanipour, 2003).

One of these conditions is work life quality and promoting it in labor environment. Group efforts of management and employees in order to improve efficiency and work life conditions are regarded as programs of work life quality. Some common characteristics of these programs and organizational development include: concentrating on work team that is problem solution commissions by work team containing many aspects of work life such as providing additional training, presenting facilitators, managers and director replying employees (Jozee, 2002). Programs of work life quality provide a framework to coordinate, create, survive or continue and improve function and increase efficiency of organization (Abtahi&Kazemi, 2005). These programs encourage employees to collaborate with manager in making decisions about current problems and chances of work environment and relate to work effect on people, organizational effectiveness and employees participation in organization (Taali, 2002). Performing the programs of life work quality need the levels of collaboration, tolerance, help, support and responsibility much higher than what is in present organizations (Abtahi&Kazemi, 2005).

In addition, regarding work life quality is important because it is followed by voluntarily employees' partnership, making employees sure about noting lose their jobs as a result of work life quality programs, educating employees to solve problems by group and some subjects such as quality, security, customer orders and labor regulation table (French Wach Bell, translated by Mehdi Alvani&HasanDanaeefard, 2003). Certain results of work life quality programs include decreasing costs, speed, high quality products, decreasing employees' absenteeism and lapse of service, satisfaction, safety and proudly participation in organization (Taali, 1996). Work life quality is conformed personal consequences and quality of one's individual work improvement (Patron, 2005) from which equity perception is one.

In a paper Berg(2011) mentioned that work life quality leads to proper consequences in operation, achieving goals, organization productivity and equity perceptions and morals in employees. Almalki& colleagues (2012) also found that work life quality is followed by some results such as fair and justice in payments. Studies of Berg(2011) and Almalki(2012) support the relationship between work life quality and equity perception. This relationship shows the importance and necessity of regarding work life quality as an important variable in employees' equity perception in work environment. The results of this research are important for organizations because promoting work life quality in work environment causes to increase employees' commitment and operation and to reduce absenteeism and lapse of service. These conditions effect on employees perception to equity and justice positively. In one hand equity perception leads to positive consequences such as employees'

perceived equity of legal regulations and their perceived justice of workplace conditions. While employees feel that they are behaved fairly, they will be more committed in to do their tasks and try more to achieve organizational goals.

## 2. Research hypotheses:

Main hypothesis:

There is a relationship between employees' work life quality and equity perception in Rafsanjan executive systems.

Secondary hypothesis:

- 1- There is a relationship between employees' job security and equity perception in Rafsanjan executive systems.
- 2- There is a relationship between employees' material rights and advantages and equity perception in Rafsanjan executive systems.
- 3- There is a relationship between opportunity of growing skills and continuous learning with equity perception in Rafsanjan executive systems.
- 4- There is a relationship between employees' partnership in decisions and equity perception in Rafsanjan executive systems.
- 5- According to distributing respondents' ideas there is a relationship between employees' work life quality with mediated variables such as age, years of service and education level in Rafsanjan executive systems.
- 6- According to distributing respondents' ideas there is a relationship between employees' equity perception with mediated variables such as age, years of service and education level in Rafsanjan executive systems.

## 3. Materials and methods

Statistical society of this research includes employees in Rafsanjan executive systems containing 3012 people from whom 344 people were determined by class sampling method proportionate to society size and using Chocrane formulation.

In this research data gathering instruments are two packed questionnaires; questionnaire of measuring work life quality contains 19 questions used by modifying Khajooi's questionnaire (2006) from Kerman Open University. Likert five-option scale is used in this questionnaire to measure related factors. The questionnaire containing four dimensions measures employees' work life quality. 1-4 questions measure employees, job security, questions 5-10 measure employees' material rights and advantages, questions 11-13 measure opportunity of employees' growing skills and continuous learning and questions 14-19 measure employees' participation in decisions. In this questionnaire, questions 1-19 are direct. In direct questions code 1 is regarded for the option of "completely disagree", code 2 for "disagree", code 3 for "no idea", code 4 for "agree" and code 5 for "completely agree".

Total mark of this evaluation shows employees' work life quality. In order to measure the variable of equity perception Allen and Meyer questionnaire containing 16 questions was used. In this questionnaire Likert five-option scale was used to measure related factors. All 16 questions of this questionnaire are reverse. In this questionnaire code 5 is regarded for the option of "completely disagree", code 4 for "disagree", code 3 for "no idea", code 2 for "agree" and code 1 for "completely agree". Total mark of this evaluation shows respondents' equity perception.

## 4. Findings

Describing sexuality position of respondents: According to data analysis among studied respondents 197 people (%68/9) were men and 89 people (%31/1) were women and one of them didn't determine it. Describing marriage position of respondents: According to data analysis among respondents 49 people (%17/3) were single and 235 people (%82/7) were married and three people didn't determine their marriage positions. Describing education position of respondents: According to data analysis among respondents 52 people (%18/8) were in diploma degree, 32 people (%11/6) were associate of art degree, 150 people (%54) were in B.A degree and 42 people (%15/2) were in M.A degree but eleven people didn't determine their education positions. Describing service years of respondents: According to data analysis among respondents service years of 139 people (%50/5) was less than one year, of 89 people (%32/4) 10-20 years, of 47 (%17/1) 20 years and more but 12 people didn't determine their service years. Describing age of respondents: According to data analysis among respondents 83 people (%29/3) were less than 30 years old, 143 people (%50/5) 30-40 years old, 57 (%20/1) 41 years and more but 4 people didn't determine their age.

Data analysis shows that Pearson & Spearman correlation coefficients between two variables of work life quality and equity perception are equal to 0.301 and 0.320 and with p-value (meaningfulness) of 0.000 and 0.000 and less than meaningfulness level of  $\alpha=0.05$  respectively, so in this level  $H_0$  level that is lack of relationship is rejected. As a result there is a meaningful relationship between work life quality and equity perception in Rafsanjan executive systems. It is accepted according to the manner of points scattering and also suited line in curve (26-4). In addition determinant coefficient between two variables is equal to 0.091 ( $R^2=0.091$ ) or in other words changes are common between two variables (9.1 changes of equity perception are explained by work life quality) (table1).

Table1: Statistics of Pearson & Spearman test related to the relationship between work life quality and equity perception

Equity perception									Variable
Determinant coefficient	Kind of relationship	relationship	Spearman			Pearson			Test
			Numbers	Meaningfulness	Correlation coefficient	Numbers	Meaningfulness	Correlation coefficient	
0.091	Direct	Yes	287	0.000	0.320	287	0.000	0.301	Work life quality

\*In meaningfulness level of 0.05

\*\*In meaningfulness level of 0.01

Secondary hypothesis:

Table2: To study the relationship between components of work life quality and equity perception, Spearman correlation coefficient was used and the results of this test are in the following table.

Results	Meaningfulness level(p-value)	Spearman correlation coefficient	Pearson correlation test	Secondary hypotheses	No.
A relationship	0.00	0.221	0.234	There is a relationship between job security and equity perception in Rafsanjan executive systems	1

A relationship	0.006 & 0.007	0.161	0.159	There is a relationship between material rights and advantages and equity perception in Rafsanjan executive systems	2
A relationship	0.00 & 0.001	0.229	0.199	There is a relationship between opportunity of growing skills and continuous learning and equity perception in Rafsanjan executive systems	3
A relationship	0.00	0.326	0.329	There is a relationship between employees' partnership in decisions and equity perception in Rafsanjan executive systems	4

\*In meaningfulness level of 0.05

\*\*In meaningfulness level of 0.01

The results of multiple regressions show that the variable of work life quality and its components have the most effects on the variable of equity perception and the variable of equity perception and its components have the most effects on the variable of work life quality.

## 5. Discussion

The results and findings of the research show that generally there is a relationship between employees' work life quality and their equity perception.

Development of the role of equity theory in employees' views and behaviors leads to an area of research called justice in organization (Rezaian, 2006). Organizational justice has a relationship with people proper behaviors in organization. It can be also a part limited part of social justice (Mehdad, 2007). Organizational justice is defined as one's perception of fair organizational methods that are obligatory and inconstant.

Belchur (mentioned by Mirsepasi, 2006) explains high quality work life as; "work environment is in high quality if people are considered as the main members and elements of organization, people face to thought challenges, conditions of the work environment causes to grow their abilities and works are done well there". And in D,L (Dutch) Landan's view it is an environment in which people are considered as essential members of organization, challenges human soul and grants individual growth and development and make easy doing works (Belchur, translation of Bonyad productivity management, 2002).

Regarding the nature of work life quality and its suitable consequences it is expected that employees feel equity and fair to their work results and related rewards from organization. This causes to increase organizational efficiency and productivity. Although there are limited experimental researches about the relationship between work life quality and equity perception, but the results of these researches confirm this relationship. In a paper Berg (2011) mentioned that work life quality leads to proper consequences in operation, achieving goals, organization productivity and equity perceptions and

morals in employees. Studies of Almalki & his colleagues (2012) show that work life quality is followed by some proper consequences such as fair and justice in payments. Regarding the effect of work life quality on employees' equity perception, the results of this research are important for organizations because promoting work life quality in work environment causes to increase employees' commitment and operation and to reduce absenteeism and lapse of service. These conditions affect on employees' perception to equity and justice positively. It is important that equity perception leads to positive consequences such as employees' perceived justice of managers' respect, employees' perceived justice of legal regulations and their perceived justice of workplace conditions. In other side, the results of this research are valuable for author because employees' equity perception is recognized and it is determined that how effective is work life quality on equity perception. Employees who feel equity compared with others or for every reason are aimless employees that make some problems for self and organization and finally leave organization. So increasing equity perception raises work life quality in organization. The results of research explain that in general there is a positive meaningful relationship between job security and equity perception and increasing job security raises equity perception.

In organizational life job security is a problem in which employees are involved and a part of psychological and mental organization energy is consumed for it. While employees get a suitable level in this regard, they strongly spend all their mental energy in organization and organization is less involved in human tensions.

**Job security:** Job security is inevitable for productivity (Soltani, 2002). Job security is an important problem for employees for which employees' much mental energy is consumed and sometimes is problematic for organizations. Previously while discussing job security, formal and permanent employment was associated, but today job security is associated by social security; job security is regarded from a new vision and it is paying attention for job security by making human powerful and growing them. In new meaning of job security organizations should depend on people; it means that organizations should provide conditions to make their employees powerful in especial dimensions, practical boldness, experiencing, job satisfaction, behavior, communication, thought and work conscience and they can meet organization's especial and social expectations and get job constancy and equity. Economic satisfaction makes employees hopeful in their jobs and equity feeling that plays an important role in job security is formed in them (Aran & Bidgol, 2000).

Providing growth security and continuous security means providing the fields of improving individual ability, development chances and opportunities to use achieved skills and providing outcome and employment security. This is supplied by improving individual abilities, development chances, job security, outcome security and assurance of constant employment (Mehdizadeh Ashrafi & Ilka, 2000).

Adamz showed that primary and main parts of exchanges between employer and employees are primary data and final results. Data expected by employees return to them in the frame of results and consequences including: degree of training/education, skills, creativity, seniority, age, personal characteristics, rate of effort, apparent characteristics of every one. In other side in these exchanges organizations return something to employees in the frame of bad results including: salary/reward, job advantages, challenged or motive tasks, job security, promotion, some symbols explaining people places, recognizing and participating people in important decisions (Krinter & colleagues, 2004, quoted by Farhangi and Safarzadeh, 2006). So it is expected that increasing job security raises employees' equity perception.

Results of the research show that there is a meaningful relationship between employees' received rights and advantages with equity perception. Then behaving people in organization fairly they feel more comfortable and safe in their jobs and interestingly try more in organization.

Rights and advantages are economically based on theories, rules and many factors such as economic, politic, cultural, social and moral factors. Anyway job agents including workers and employees and even managers and directors should receive salary and wage for their works to compensate the labor and pain arising from their jobs and give them an opportunity to live according to their positions.

Certainly as employees feel this justice, positive motives will be created in them and they try satisfactorily for organization productivity; otherwise human forces generally aren't prepared to bear the pain and hardness of work and it affects on their work positively (Abtahi, 2002).

Robbinz (1991) explained that people like a clear and fair system of payment and job promotion. Regarding one's job and skill fair rights are followed by job satisfaction. The main reason of relationship between rights and general job satisfaction isn't sum of money that an employee receives but it is because of one's perception and understanding of considering fair and justice. In this regard employees expect that organization considers justice to hold and perform policies related to salary, reward and their promotion. Analyzing work life quality Valton (1973) called fair payment as a purpose to promote work life quality and it is important that there is a relationship between these variables. Fair payment means equal payment, equal labor and also payments suited with employees' measures and with other kinds of works. Compensating fair and sufficient service means that employees of organization receive salary from which intra- and extra-organizational equity is resulted and employees don't feel loss and injury while comparing themselves with other employees (Mehdizadeh Ashrafi & Ilika, 2010).

So people, who think that policy of salary, advantages and promoting organization's members is based on justice and fair, probably have more job satisfaction; in other side equity is in question in many researches but most researches have a limited extent, for example more or less salary (hour wage) is studied against the quality or quantity of one's work. As people feel inequity in wage payment system, they try to reduce their payment by decreasing work quality and increasing work quantity; but as they feel inequity in hourly payment system, for example they feel that extra money is paid it is tried to increase work quality and quantity and vice versa. In general, it seems that this theory is supported by performed researches (Josef.A, Champox, translated by Maarooft & Soleimanzadeh, 2005). Therefore, as people receive fair and equal salary and more reward and are behaved well, they try more energetic to improve productivity and effectiveness of organization.

The results of current researches show that there is a meaningful relationship between opportunity to grow skills and continuous learning with equity perception; increasing skills and continuous learning raises equity perception.

Work environment is high quality where people are considered as the main members in it, have an opportunity to learn in several ways and can pass job development route, in addition develop more. In this environment human's mind faces thought challenge and conditions are suitable to grow their abilities and works are done well (Bahramzadeh & Khedmatgozar Baghan, 2005).

Programs of work life quality can make positive motives for employees to employ their skills and talents in organization and help employees to learn, grow, accept responsibility and make new skills in order to solve problems of organization and workforce (Abtahi & Kazemi, 2005). Therefore more opportunities for organizations lead to make employees more satisfied and constant in organization and its goals (Robins, translated by Aarabi & Parsian, 1996). Researches show that more chances to promote job decreases job-related tension and ambiguity and increases commitment (Javedani, 2003).

In fact training is of the most important measures and programs of every organization and causes to strengthen present human forces and undertakes future success; so to achieve this strength employees should be trained to gain necessary skills fairly. This leads to deeper insight and intelligence and finally causes to achieve to organizational goals more efficiently and effectively. Therefore giving more opportunities for employees to learn skills and they are behaved fairly, employees employ all their skills to do high quality work in organization.

The results of research show that there is a meaningful relationship between employees' participation in making decision and their equity perception and increasing participation raises equity perception.

Employees' participation in quality is as a fillip to a low-used resource that is employees' brain and leads to make better decisions. Group thoughts and ideas of employees while leading to improve organization's performance show a real valuable source of opportunities (Belchur, translated by

Toosi&Saebi, 2001). Participating in decisions as a human aspect in an organization is generally a suitable device to excite employees and increase their efficiency that is used to change employees and the current conditions (Toolabi, 2003). However, increasing employees' participation raises work quality and improves work life quality, increases organizational morale, commitment and loyalty in addition to motivation and interesting in, also decreases strong and bad dispute, struggle, hostility and competition and also customers' dissatisfaction and tension at work (Toosi, 2002). Justice is vital for all social participations. Continuity of people's voluntarily presence in groups depends on their perceptions of considering fair and justice; while members of a group with a social system has a fair perception of the system behavior, it is more committed to participate and keep its development (Pour Ezzat, 2004). Understanding justice also depends on organization following procedural justice. For example such a procedure that allows participators to explain their themes. It is better than a procedure that prevents it (Greenberg, 1987). Sadlers&Toren Hill (2003) explain that justice is a framework by which employees' confidence and distrust feelings are completely commented and perceived. The main hypothesis of organizational equity is that fair behavior is the main base for employees; it determines their reactions to organizational decisions. Organization expects these reactions to be a reason of proper performance and productivity in work environment. Regarding that procedural justice is a sign of being valuable and respectful of employees in organization, it's expected that organization can increase emerging polite apparent behaviors, considering others' rights and people's perception of authorities' fair behavior by promoting procedural justice and making decision without individual prejudices, paying attention to employees' problems and disturbances, gathering information before making decision and employees' participation in organizational decisions (Mehdad, 2007).

## 6. Conclusion

Regarding the effect of work life quality on employees' equity perception, the results of this research are important for organizations because promoting work life quality in work environment causes to increase employees' commitment and productivity and decreasing absenteeism. These conditions influence employees' perception of equity and justice positively. It is important that equity perception leads to some positive consequences such as employees' perceived justice of respect from managers, employees' perceived justice of legal regulations and employees' perceived justice of work conditions. In other side the results of the research are important for author because employees' equity perception is recognized and it is determined how work life quality affects on this factor.

Suggestions:

- 1-Showing dimensions of work life quality to employees and training them in training centers.
- 2-Using present findings to increase dimensions of work life quality in organization.
- 3-Producing employees' participation programs in making decision in organizational level.

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