Mediating Influence of Organizational Justice on the Relationship between Work Environment and Work Engagement

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to put a model that looks at how organizational justice mediates the connection between engagement and the work environment to the test. Workers' opinions of their workplace are greatly impacted by their understanding of organizational justice. Nevertheless, there is a dearth of literature on organizational justice's causes and effects, especially as it relates to the mediating role it plays between the work environment and employee engagement in firms operating in India's service sector. This study aims to fill that void by studying the relationship between organizational justice and the antecedent and consequence of work environment and involvement in the workplace, respectively. Using a stratified disproportionate sample approach, 1,200 workers from firms in India's service industry were surveyed. Although the mediation is limited, the results demonstrate that organizational justice significantly mediates the relationship between work environment and job engagement. Organizations should take action to improve workers' views of fairness, according to the report. Impartiality and fairness in decision-making are key to enhancing procedural justice.

Keywords: Organizational Justice, Work Environment, Work Engagement, Indian Services Sector Organizations.

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizations have the formidable task of ensuring employee satisfaction to thrive in an ever-evolving work environment, maintain competitiveness, and adapt to new circumstances. Businesses should cater to their workers' requirements by creating a pleasant workplace if they want to see improvements in workers' effectiveness, efficiency, productivity, and dedication to the company. With 54.17 percent of India's Gross Value Added at current prices in 2018-19, the services sector is a key driver of economic growth in the country. With a proportion of services employment of just 28% in 2014 and a growth rate of 9.2% between 2015 and 2016, this sector is the fastest growing in the world and accounts for over 66% of India's gross domestic product. There is a lot of room for growth in the economy and better working conditions in this industry. But there have been a lot of problems lately for the service industry,

especially in HRM, where finding, keeping, training, and engaging a good staff has become an important priority. Now more than ever, businesses see human capital as the engine that propels expansion, and they know that a healthy workplace and a just justice system are critical to that growth. Effective leaders foster a motivated and engaged workforce by recognizing and rewarding actions that provide value, all the while ensuring that employees feel fairly treated. This study delves into the connection between organizational justice, work engagement, and work environment. It aims to show how organizational justice in the Indian service sector acts as a mediator between work environment and engagement, leading to beneficial results.

2. WORK ENVIRONMENT

In addition to the physical circumstances associated with work processes and procedures, the beliefs,

values, and conventions conveyed by an organization's processes are what make up the work environment and impact employees' experiences (VanMannen and Schein, 1979). Having trustworthy connections with coworkers, supportive conduct from direct supervisors, well-defined responsibilities, and sufficient infrastructure are all good elements of a work environment that contribute to employee happiness. According to research (Lazauskaite-Zabielske, 2018; Frenkel and Bednall, 2016), physical comfort is a negative predictor of job satisfaction but work pressure and coworker cohesiveness are favorable indicators. The significance of keeping an eye on the office to raise workers' quality of life at work is further demonstrated by employees' reports of personal accomplishments. Workers are more likely to have a positive impression of their job when they are actively involved in what they do. To succeed in today's cutthroat business world, one must pay close attention to how their work environment affects their mood, actions, stress levels, and productivity. Companies in the service industry should pay particular attention to this because most of their workers generate income via interactions with customers. These workers personify the company's best qualities and fundamental principles. Fairness in organizational procedures and a pleasant work environment go hand in hand. For workers to be happy in their jobs, the workplace must be conducive to their needs (Raziq and Maulabakhsh, 2015). According to research conducted by Thompson (2016) and Shelly et al. (2000), employees report better levels of job satisfaction and less intents to leave their current positions when their work settings are conducive to their creative work. Research also shows that people's impressions of fairness at work are strongly correlated with actual views of fairness on the job (Greenberg, 1990), which in turn helps foster an atmosphere of justice at work and sheds light on organizational justice (Maqsood et al., 2016).

3. ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE

It was Greenberg (1987) who first proposed the idea of organizational justice, which centers on how workers feel about the equity of their workplace. Distributional, procedural, and interactional justice (which encompasses both informational and interpersonal justice) are the subcategories into which these views fall. Workers have an innate sense of justice when it comes to workplace events and situations (Beer et al., 2016; Tabibnia et al., 2008). How people feel and act after deciding is heavily influenced by their perception of how fair or unjust it is. Perceptions of unfairness can have a detrimental impact on employment attitudes and workplace behaviour, making fairness a fundamental concern for firms. Fair salary, equal opportunity for advancement, and equitable methods of selecting new employees are all aspects of organizational justice. While all three aspects of justice—distributive, procedural, and interactional—are interdependent, the three characteristics that have a greater impact on employee engagement on the work are the former two and the quality of the relationships between them. Similarly, organizational involvement is most affected by distributive justice, next procedural justice, and last interactional justice. Both the organizational performance and the economic well-being of employees are impacted by organizational justice (Yean and Yusof, 2016). Organizational justice has far-reaching effects on businesses, especially in improving communication and cooperation between management and staff. In addition to influencing several outcomes connected to work, it guarantees that employees are treated fairly on the job (Moorman, 1991). According to studies, employee engagement rises when there is organizational fairness. According to Sharma and Yadav (2018), workers are more invested in their jobs when they believe their bosses are fair and trustworthy. According to Saks (2006) and Patrick and Sunil (2019), elements that contribute to work engagement include job role, productivity, recognition, incentives, a supportive work environment, fairness, and meaningful work. Encouraging fairness in the workplace goes beyond simply ensuring that employees have enough salary, benefits, and opportunity. A good organizational behavior is enhanced work engagement, which is caused by promoting views of distributive and procedural fairness (Kim and Park, 2017).

4. WORK ENGAGEMENT:

According to Schaufeli et al. (2002), when people are fully engaged in their job, it results in favourable work-related outcomes because of their "vigor, dedication, and absorption" in the task. Positive

psychology, which seeks to improve people's happiness, is consistent with this idea. Companies place a high value on engaged workers since research has shown that engaged workers are more likely to be creative, perform better on tasks, act as good corporate citizens, and have satisfied customers (Bakker et al., 2014). When workers are enthusiastic about what they're doing and fully immersed in their work, it shows. Work involvement, however, can vary between persons, contexts, and time periods, according to studies conducted in the last decade. Worker engagement is highest, for instance, during demanding two-hour work episodes (Reina-Tamayo et al., 2017), the day after a night of sufficient recuperation (Sonnentag, 2003), and days when a range of resources are available (Sunil and Patrick, 2021). Work engagement may be favourably influenced by HR strategies like job redesign, according to research (Bakker and Albrecht, 2018; Holman and Axtell, 2016; Alfes et al., 2013). The idea of work engagement has grown in popularity since it strongly predicts important outcomes for employees, teams, and organizations. Xanthopoulou et al. (2009) and Christian et al. (2011) both found that engaged workers increased financial performance and performed better in their responsibilities. This is because engaged workers are highly dedicated and focused on their duties. Engaged employees are more inclined to take risks, think outside the box, and come up with novel solutions to problems (Gawke et al., 2017; Orth and Volmer, 2017). Work engagement's sub-dimensions, namely energy, devotion, and absorption, shed light on the relative merits of different parts of the job. The ability to maintain high levels of energy and perseverance in the face of adversity is a hallmark of a vigorous worker. Dedication is a sign of a deep emotional investment in one's profession, which can include emotions like excitement, pride, motivation, and a desire to overcome obstacles. In the third dimension, known as "absorption," one gets so engrossed in what they're doing that they have trouble separating themselves from their job and the passage of time flies by. The availability of resources should be the primary goal of interventions aimed at increasing employee engagement. In addition to providing chances for professional growth, a healthy social climate may assist cultivate social support among

workers and between workers and supervisors. The degree of employee engagement is heavily influenced by the work environment, according to research. A literature study will serve as the basis for the researcher's model testing and validation efforts as they delve into the relationship between service sector workers' engagement behaviours and their views of fairness on the job.

5. NEED AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Workers' attitudes and actions have a major influence on the quality of services provided by service companies. Within this framework, the creation of a long-term competitive advantage in the service industry is mostly dependent on the efforts of the employees. In exchange for the effort they put in, employees want to be treated fairly and to work in an atmosphere that supports them. Because of these expectations, companies are more concerned with maintaining a fair work environment, which is good for morale. Negative results, impacting employees' energy, commitment, and focus, might occur when these expectations are not satisfied. The actions of the business and its management reflect the work environment and organizational justice, according to research. When these actions are imitated and repeated, they can favorably impact job engagement.

6. PROPOSED MODEL

While studies on organizational justice have shown that workers care about how fair their bosses treat them, we still don't know much about the mental processes that underpin justice or how to make our workplaces more engaging for employees. The purpose of this research is to look at how the physical and mental elements of a workplace affect employees' dedication to their jobs. Employees are more likely to go above and above when they feel appreciated and valued by their employer (Neal, West, and Patterson, 2005). According to Brunet and Savoie (1999), an organization's climate may be described as the way its employees perceive their treatment and management inside the company. A more engaged workforce is the result of an optimistic work environment that provides people with room to learn and advance (Kerfoor, 2008). Supervisor empowering management practices (SEMPs) have been linked to a modest but statistically significant correlation with outcomes in

behavior like as performance (Wagner, 1994) and citizenship behavior (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, and Bommer, 1996). Organizational environment and fairness are moderating variables that might explain this weak link (Brunet et al., 2010). The literature on justice in behavioral outcomes like performance (Buengeler and Hartog, 2015) and on the impact of work environment on job satisfaction and productivity (Raziq and Maula-bakhsh, 2014; Kaur et al., 2009) is sparse, but there is some evidence that justice plays a role in these outcomes. Consequently, the researcher intends to fill this void by examining these matters within the framework of the Indian service industry. The following are the aims of the study: Is it true that organizational justice affects workers' views of justice in the workplace? Is it true that organizational justice affects employees' engagement with their work? Does organizational justice have a moderating role in the connection between workplace conditions and employee

dedication? There must be more investigation into the understudied relationship between workplace, feelings of organizational justice, and engagement on the job. Employees' views of justice are influenced by the work environment, which encompasses aspects such as the quality of relationships (involvement, peer cohesion, supervisor support), opportunities for personal growth (autonomy, task orientation, work pressure), and the maintenance and change of systems (clarity, control, innovation, physical comfort). Additionally, the ethical climate of the workplace plays a role. The level of energy, commitment, and focus shown by workers are impacted by these views. Organizational justice can mediate the connection between employee engagement, intentions to leave, and working conditions.

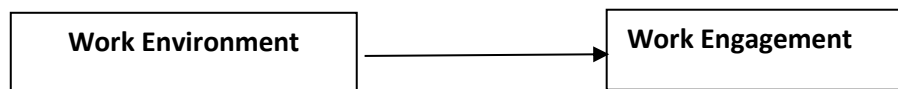A comprehensive framework incorporating the variables is as follows:

Figure 1: Model illustrating the Total effect of Work Environment on Work Engagement
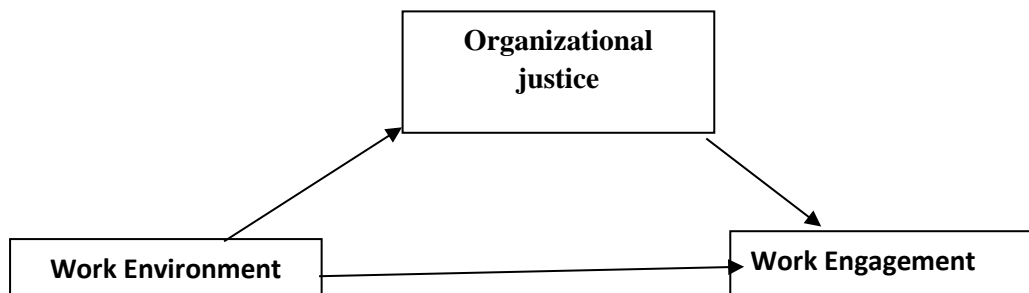

Figure 2: The mediating relationship model Organizational Justice on Work Environment and Work Engagement.

In the service industry, few empirical studies have investigated the connections between distributive justice, procedural justice, the work environment, and employee engagement, compared to the large body of literature on organizational justice. Employees' views of fairness in the workplace are likely to be influenced by several factors, according to Greenberg (1990). Gaining a grasp of the elements that impact various views of justice in the context of an organization might provide significant information about organizational justice. The purpose of this research is to see how these factors

interact with one another and how they affect the service industry.

7. HYPOTHESIS BUILDING:

While research has extensively explored Organizational Justice, Work Engagement, and Work Environment, most studies have been limited to specific organizations. There is a lack of empirical evidence examining the relationship between these constructs, particularly in the context of the Indian service sector. Additionally, the mediating role of organizational justice between work environment

and work engagement remains largely unexplored. This study aims to investigate how these conceptual factors influence individual behavior within Indian service sector organizations.

Work Environment and Work Engagement- Working professionals typically spend more time in their organization than in any other setting. Research suggests that the work environment, alongside factors such as rewards and work-life balance, significantly influences work engagement. Additionally, it has been noted that the work environment also impacts employees' psychological well-being, which in turn affects their work engagement, performance, and productivity. Previous studies have shown that the work environment can be a key determinant of engagement levels among employees. According to research by Miles (2001) and Harter et al. (2001), the work environment can foster work engagement in several ways, a notion further supported by the studies of Lazauskaite-Zabielske (2018) and Patrick and Sunil (2019b). This leads to the first hypothesis**.** H1: Work Environment positively influences Work Engagement in the Indian service sector organizations**.**

H2: Work Environment and Organizational justice

Organizational Justice is a critical factor that plays a significant role in enhancing performance, employee satisfaction, and boosting work engagement by fostering a positive work environment. The impact of organizational justice on employee performance and satisfaction is particularly noticeable when linked with rewards and recognition programs, in addition to other organizational benefits (distributive justice). However, consistency in fairness, including the methods, procedures, and processes used to determine outcomes (procedural justice), as well as fairness in interpersonal treatment within the work environment (interactional justice), is essential. A fair organizational system motivates employees to produce better results, contributing to a positive work environment, increased productivity, and organizational citizenship behavior (Ghazi, 2017). The connection between perceptions of procedural fairness and the quality of the work climate is vital for organizations, as the positive relationship

between procedural justice and employees' role efficacy helps create a positive work environment where employees perceive the procedures as fair (Agarwal and Bose, 2011). Moreover, a fair work environment is crucial for reducing stress and promoting positive outcomes related to work engagement, which includes better balancing job demands among employees leads to the second hypothesis that: H2: Work Environment positively influences organizational justice in the Indian service sector organizations

H3: Organizational justice and Work Engagement

Organizational justice refers to employees' perceptions of fairness within their organizations (Adams, 1965). It specifically focuses on how employees assess whether they have been treated fairly in their jobs and how these assessments influence various work-related outcomes (Moorman, 1991). The concept of organizational justice has been widely used to predict employee attitudes and behaviors, such as job satisfaction, turnover intention, organizational commitment (Lee et al., 2017; Halbesleben, 2010), organizational citizenship, extra-role behavior, and work engagement (Saygılı, 2017). However, research also highlights that perceived unfairness at work can negatively impact employee well-being and performance, while perceived fairness can boost employee functioning and well-being. Additionally, perceived fairness is believed to motivate work engagement (Tyler and Blader, 2003), potentially by prompting employees to "give back" to the organization after being treated fairly (Saks, 2006). More recently, Strom, Sears, and Kelly (2014) confirmed the positive link between fairness (both procedural and distributive) and work engagement. Nevertheless, there is limited empirical research exploring the relationship between organizational justice and work engagement within Indian service sector organizations. This study draws on evidence from organizational justice research and the job demands-resources model to explore these connections. We propose the following hypothesis.

H3. Organisational justice positively influences work Engagement in the Indian service sector organizations.

Research in organizational behavior has concentrated on exploring the mediating role of organizational justice in various workplace relationships. Positive correlations have been found between the sub-dimensions of organizational justice and work engagement (Sharma and Yadav, 2018). Organizational justice plays a key role in influencing the relationship between attitudes and behaviors, which ultimately enhances work engagement (Halbesleben, 2010), making it particularly relevant in the context of the work environment. The work environment affects employees' psychological well-being, which, in turn, impacts work engagement. Organizational practices such as fairness contribute to work engagement and mediate relationships with constructs like self-leadership (Park et al., 2016), trust (Sunil and Patrick, 2019), knowledge sharing (Akram et al., 2020), perceived organizational support and identification (Arnéguy et al., 2018), and organizational commitment (Hosgorur et al., 2017). However, there is limited empirical evidence regarding the mediating role of organizational justice in the relationship between work environment and work engagement. Therefore, it is essential to explore the relationship between work environment and work engagement with organizational justice as a mediator. **This deals to**

H4. Organisational justice does not mediate the relationship between work environments and work Engagement.in the Indian Service sector organisations

8. METHODOLOGY

A stratified disproportionate sampling method was used to select respondents and organizations within the Indian Service Sector across India. The eligibility criteria for participation included a minimum of 24 months of work experience and at least 12 months of experience with the current organization. Three reliable, valid, and standardized scales were used to gather data from respondents. A total of 1650 questionnaires were distributed, with 1200 fully completed responses received, resulting in a 72.2% response rate. At least 50 respondents were surveyed by each company. The author personally visited the organizations to collect data by meeting the respondents and distributing the questionnaires.

9. MEASURING TOOLS

Three standardized, valid and reliable structured questionnaires were adopted to collect primary data from the respondents. All questionnaires were used for the study after gaining permission from the authors.

Table 1: Indicating the Cronbach Alpha reliability for each of the scales for the present sample n=1650

Instrument	Author	No. of items	Cronbach Alpha (Original Author)
Work Engagement	Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004	17	0.93
Work Environment	Harold Andrew Patrick,2014	32	0.57
Organisational Justice	Niehoff and Moorman	15	0.90

Work Environment and Organizational Justice items were answered using a Likert five -point scale, wherein 1 represented "Strongly Disagree" and 5 represented "Strongly Agree". However, Work Engagement (UWES), were answered using 7-point scale, where 0 represented "Never" and '6' represents "Always" i.e., (every day) that best indicates to how repeatedly you feel that way. Data was treated using SPSS version 20. The demographics of the sample are presented in frequencies and percentages. Descriptive statistics (Mean and Standard Deviation -SD), are presented for the variables under investigation. Pearson's product-moment correlation establishing the strength of relationships is presented. T-test and ANOVA indicating differences across demographics of the variables under investigation are presented. The influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable is measured using classical linear regression analysis. Path analysis using SEM and Sobel's test is presented for testing the author's proposed mediating model. To determine mediation, the indirect effects of variables were computed through the procedure explained by (Preacher and Hayes, 2009). SPSS's Sobel test was used for estimating the indirect effect in the simple mediating model.

10. RESPONDENTS PROFILE

All the respondents had a minimum of 24 months of work experience in the Indian Service sector and 12 months in the same organization. The sample distribution consisted of male (70.8%) and (29.2%) female respondents. Most of the respondents by postgraduates (74.2%). followed by graduates (12.7%) and professional degree (12.5%). (54.6%) of the respondents were married and (45.2%) were single. Most respondents were in the age group of 26-30 years (52.4%) followed by 31-40 years (23.8%).

11. RESULTS

The aim of the study was to explore the relationship between organizational justice, work environment, and work engagement within the Indian service sector, specifically examining whether organizational justice mediates the relationship between work environment and work engagement. The findings revealed statistically significant correlations between the constructions of work engagement, work environment, and organizational justice. Additionally, organizational justice was found to mediate the relationship between work environment and work engagement. The data collected were approximately normally distributed based on skewness and kurtosis, and parametric tests were subsequently applied for data analysis.

Work Engagement: The skewness and kurtosis were found to be within the range of -3 to +3 indicating normal distribution of the data. The dimension dedication was found to have a mean value of 5.13, followed by Vigor (4.98), and absorption with a mean value of 4.88 on a scale ranging from 0 to 6. The overall work engagement was found to have a mean value of 4.996 with a standard deviation of 1.388.

Work Environment: The skewness and kurtosis were found to be within the range of -3 to +3 indicating normal distribution of the data. The dimension peer cohesiveness was found to have a mean value of 3.55, followed by managerial support (3.40), ethical (3.39), work practices (3.34), commitment (3.33), autonomy (3.31), social responsibility (3.19), role clarity (2.88) and stress (2.68) on a scale ranging from 1 to 5. The overall work environment had a mean of 3.23 and standard deviation .882.

Organizational Justice: The skewness and kurtosis were found to be within the range of -3 to +3 indicating normal distribution of the data. The dimension distributional justice had a mean value of 3.32 and procedural justice with a mean value of 3.25. The overall organizational justice had a mean of 3.29 and standard deviation .886.

Table 2 Indicating Descriptive Statistics, Skewness and Kurtosis for the work engagement dimensions

	Mean		Std. Deviation		
	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
Dedication	5.1327	.04530	1.56928	-.930	-.038
Vigor	4.9882	.03616	1.25266	-.719	.132
Absorption	4.8899	.03885	1.34568	-.646	-.116

Authors Source

Table 3 Indicating Descriptive Statistics, Skewness and Kurtosis for the work environment dimensions

	Mean		Std. Deviation		
	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
Peer Cohesiveness	3.5592	.02217	.76805	-.899	1.095
Manager Support	3.4028	.02305	.79985	-.382	-.178
Ethical	3.3967	.02549	.88310	-.340	-.362
Work Practices	3.3433	.02456	.85089	-.277	-.465
Commitment	3.3304	.03026	1.04815	-.375	-.443
Autonomy	3.3137	.02365	.81941	-.307	-.270
Social Responsibility	3.1900	.02833	.98153	-.260	-.589
Role Clarity	2.8869	.02602	.90145	-.064	-.745
Stress	2.6867	.02567	.88935	.008	-.761

Authors Source

Table 4 Indicating Descriptive Statistics, Skewness and Kurtosis for distributive and procedural justice

	Mean		Std. Deviation		
	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
Distributive Justice	3.3268	.02491	.86284	-.510	-.242
Procedural Justice	3.2582	.02628	.91042	-.413	-.346

Authors Source

Hypothesis H1: Work Environment does not influence Work Engagement in the Indian service sector organizations.

Work Environment and its dimension significantly influence work engagement of employees in Indian service sector organizations. Work environment has a standardized path coefficient at (0.468**) of the variance and significantly predicts work engagement at (P value, 0.001) level. Which means the more conducive the work environment, there will be higher level of work engagement in their organization and jobs individuals perform. Directional hypothesis 1 is accepted. 'Work environment does significantly influence 'work engagement '

Hypothesis H2: Work Environment does not influence organizational justice in the Indian service sector organizations.

Work Environment and its dimension significantly influence work engagement of employees in Indian service sector organizations. Work environment a standardized path coefficient at (0.855**) of the variance and significantly predicts organizational justice at (P value, 0.001). A positive work environment is due to procedural justice and fairness at workplace. The directional hypothesis is accepted 'work environment does significantly influence 'organizational justice.

H3: Organisational justice positively influences work engagement in the Indian service sector organizations.

Organizational justice significantly influences work engagement of employees in Indian service sector organizations. Organizational justice is a standardized path coefficient at (0.459**) of the variance and significantly predicts organizational justice at(P value,0 .001). Whenever there is fairness and equality at workplace it leads to higher level of work engagement. The directional hypothesis is accepted, 'Organizational justice does significantly influence 'work engagement'.

H4: Organizational justice does not mediate the relationship between work environment and work engagement

The result for dimensions mediating organizational justice indicates that work environment and work engagement have an indirect effect of (0.250**). Percentage of the total effect that is mediated by organizational justice is the path work environment influencing work engagement is significant at .001 levels. This shows the mediating effect of organizational justice on a path between work environment and work engagement is significant at 0.001 level (refer table and figure)

Table 5 Structural Equation Modeling Results with maximum likelihood estimates of standardized path coefficients.

Dependent variable	Path	Independent Variable	Standardized path coefficient	P value
Work Engagement	<---	Work Envt	0.468**	.001
Org Justice	<---	Work Envt	0.855**	.001
Work Engagement	<---	Org Justice	0.459**	.001
Work Engagement	<---	Work Envt	0.250**	.001

*Significant at 0.05 level, **significant at 0.01 level- Authors Source

**Table 6** Sobel, Aroian and Goodman Test Statistics for Mediation Testing

Mediation Testing Test	Test Statistics	p-value
Sobel test	**6.663**	0.000
Aroian test	**6.661**	0.000
Goodman test	**6.665**	0.000

Authors Source

Sobel's test and path analysis were used to assess the significance of organizational justice as a mediator, with the results showing a significant mediating effect (p-value < .01). The mediating paths are illustrated in Figure 1. The percentage of the total effect mediated by organizational justice along the path from work environment to work engagement is significant at the .001 level (refer to Table 5). This demonstrates that organizational justice significantly mediates the relationship between work environment and work engagement. Therefore, work environment influences work engagement indirectly through organizational justice. The test confirms that organizational justice plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between work environment and work engagement. As a result, the null hypothesis 4 is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is supported, affirming that organizational justice mediates this relationship.

Figure 2: Indicates the conceptual model tested
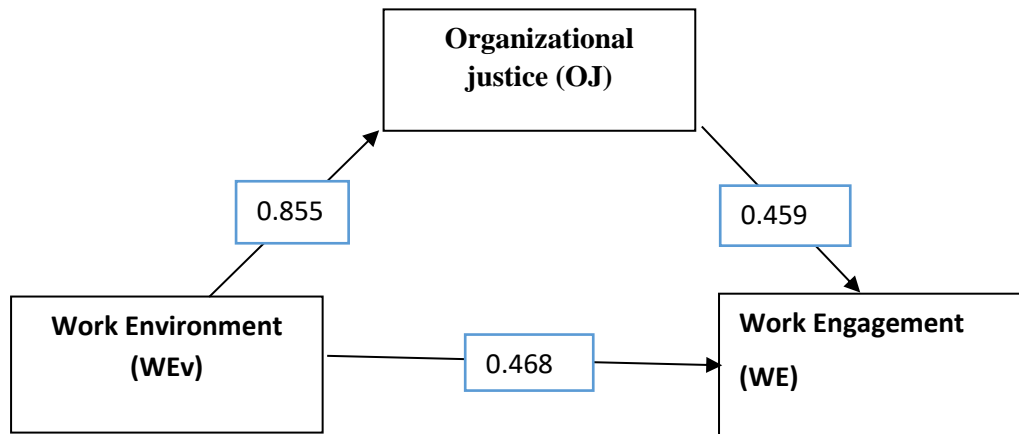
Figure 3: Indicating the direct and mediating paths between WEv and OJ; OJ and WE; WEv and WE ; WEv-OJ:-WE. Source: The Author's

Table 7: Structural Equation Modeling Results with maximum likelihood estimates of standardized path coefficients for dimensions of work environment, and dimensions of organizational justice.

Dependent variable	Path	Independent Variable	Standardized path coefficient	P value
Procedural	<---	Ethical	0.525**	0.001
Distributive Justice	<---	Ethical	0.517**	0.001
Procedural	<---	Autonomy	0.317**	0.001
Distributive Justice	<---	Autonomy	0.446**	0.001
Procedural	<---	Stress	0.052**	0.002
Distributive Justice	<---	Stress	0.032**	0.002
Procedural	<---	Work practices	0.045**	0.002
Distributive Justice	<---	Work practices	0.175**	0.001
Procedural	<---	Mgr support	0.578**	0.001

Distributive Justice	<---	Mgr support	0.681**	0.001
Procedural	<---	Commitment	0.418**	0.001
Distributive Justice	<---	commitment	0.520**	0.001
Procedural	<---	Role clarity	0.298**	0.001
Distributive Justice	<---	Role clarity	0.389**	0.001
Procedural	<---	Social responsibility	0.289**	0.001
Distributive Justice	<---	Social responsibility	0.204**	0.001
Procedural	<---	Peer cohesiveness	0.23**	0.001
Distributive Justice	<---	Peer cohesiveness	0.198**	0.001

Authors Source

Results reported clearly indicate that hypotheses with respect to relationship between work environment, organizational justice and work engagement are supported as the corresponding path coefficients are found to be significantly different from zero (p<.01). The paths corresponding to relationship between dimensions of work environment, organizational justice and work engagement were reported as statistically significant, except for the path from stress to absorption.

Table 8: Structural Equation Modeling Results with maximum likelihood estimates of standardized path coefficients for dimensions of work environment, and dimensions of organizational justice.

Dependent variable	Path	Independent Variable	Standardized path coefficient	P value
Vigor	<---	Procedural	0.607**	0.001
Dedication	<---	Procedural	0.543**	0.001
Absorption	<---	Procedural	0.492**	0.001
Vigor	<---	Distributive justice	0.5**	0.001
Dedication	<---	Distributive justice	0.357**	0.001
Absorption	<---	Distributive justice	0.583**	0.001
Vigor	<---	Ethical	0.586**	0.001
Dedication	<---	Ethical	0.868**	0.001
Absorption	<---	Ethical	0.667**	0.001
Vigor	<---	Autonomy	0.317**	0.001
Dedication	<---	Autonomy	0.446**	0.001
Absorption	<---	Autonomy	0.341**	0.001
Vigor	<---	Stress	0.083**	0.002
Dedication	<---	Stress	0.094**	0.002
Absorption	<---	Stress	-0.03	0.316
Vigor	<---	Work practices	0.089**	0.002
Dedication	<---	Work practices	0.132**	0.001
Absorption	<---	Work practices	0.067*	0.033
Vigor	<---	Mgr support	0.421**	0.001
Dedication	<---	Mgr support	0.607**	0.001
Absorption	<---	Mgr support	0.442**	0.001

Vigor	<---	Commitment	0.478**	0.001
Dedication	<---	Commitment	0.597**	0.001
Absorption	<---	Commitment	0.306**	0.001
Vigor	<---	Role clarity	0.381**	0.001
Dedication	<---	Role clarity	0.513**	0.001
Absorption	<---	Role clarity	0.332**	0.001
Vigor	<---	Social responsibility	0.25**	0.001
Dedication	<---	Social responsibility	0.246**	0.001
Absorption	<---	Social responsibility	0.193**	0.001
Vigor	<---	Peer cohesiveness	0.205**	0.001
Dedication	<---	Peer cohesiveness	0.213**	0.001
Absorption	<---	Peer cohesiveness	0.148**	0.001

**significant at 0.01 level, *significant at 0.05 level, Authors Source

12. DISCUSSION:

It is well established that organizations that treat their employees well tend to be more effective. Organizational justice is closely linked to job performance at various levels—individual, team, and organizational—including both task and contextual performance. Maslach et al. (2001) noted that value conflicts can lead to burnout. Therefore, it is crucial for organizations to ensure that organizational values are maintained within the work environment to reduce burnout and foster higher levels of engagement.

The conditions of the workplace play a crucial role in determining whether employees choose to stay in the organization. A safe and supportive work environment can attract new candidates for open positions. This finding is supported by various studies (Rees & Rumbles, 2013; Rich et al., 2010; May et al., 2004; Holbeche & Springett, 2003; Harter et al., 2001). A positive work environment indeed contributes to higher levels of work engagement, as also emphasized by Popli and Rizvi (2016), who identified a meaningful workplace environment as a key determinant of work engagement. This engagement reflects an ongoing flow of perceptions and attitudes employees have toward their work environment in relation to themselves. Employee engagement is a significant factor in business success, as engaged employees tend to be more productive, customer-oriented, and profit-generating, making them valuable for retention. According to Gallup, the percentage of "engaged" U.S. workers reached 34.1% in March 2016, the highest since tracking began in 2011. Therefore, it is the responsibility of employers to cultivate a culture and environment that supports employees in making decisions that contribute positively to the business. Organizational justice is considered a key factor in enhancing employee performance within an organization. Research has shown that when employees are treated unfairly, it often leads to a decline in their output as a natural response, resulting in lower engagement levels and potential burnout (Patrick, 2014). Organizational justice significantly impacts employee performance and satisfaction, particularly when linked with rewards and recognition programs, alongside other organizational benefits (distributive justice). In this context, the process of allocating rewards holds more importance than the outcome itself (Lind and Tyler, 1988). Additionally, consistency in fairness, the methods used, and the procedures for determining outcomes (procedural justice) are crucial, as is the fairness in interpersonal treatment that employees receive in the workplace (interactional justice). Effective communication fosters interactional justice, and employees' perceptions of fairness improve when they are involved in decision-making processes. These factors influence outcomes at individual, team, and organizational levels. Research indicates that organizational justice is associated with positive outcomes such as trust, job performance,

satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviors (Colquitt et al., 2013). Therefore, it is vital for organizations to ensure that they treat their employees fairly by making sure both outcomes and processes are equitable and just. By maintaining transparency and fairness in organizational practices, companies can foster greater employee commitment to organizational goals through enhanced engagement. The study suggests that organizational justice has a significant impact on work engagement. The reason for elaborating on the connection between work engagement and organizational justice in this research is that employees' perceptions of justice are crucial for organizations. Depending on their perceptions of justice, employees may behave in various ways. For example, if employees perceive distributive injustice, they may respond negatively to the outcomes of organizational decisions; if they perceive procedural injustice, they may direct their reactions against the entire organization; and if they perceive interactional injustice, their reactions may be aimed at their managers. Such responses can lead to even more negative consequences, particularly in healthcare organizations (Ozer et al., 2017). The study also found that procedural justice had the most significant impact on work engagement, followed by distributive and interactional justice.

Employees who perceive high levels of justice are more likely to act fairly, perform well, and exhibit higher work engagement. Research confirms a significant relationship between organizational justice and work engagement (Sharma and Yadav, 2018; Kim and Park, 2017; Özer et al., 2017). However, when employees have a strong transformational ideology, distributive justice may have a stronger connection to work engagement than procedural justice (Sunil and Patrick, 2021; Sze and Angeline, 2011). Conversely, other studies highlight that procedural and distributive justice (Saks, 2006), procedural and interactional justice (Inoue et al., 2010), or, as observed in this research, all three types of justice (distributive, procedural, and interactional) collectively have a significant relationship with work engagement. When employees perceive low levels of fairness in their work environment, it is likely to lead to disengagement or withdrawal. Organizational justice serves as a key factor influencing work

engagement (Bakker et al., 2012). When organizational justice positively impacts work engagement, organizations benefit from various positive outcomes, including improved job performance, organizational commitment, work motivation, increased self-control, higher co-worker support, and better staff retention (Bakker, Albrecht, and Leiter, 2011; Schaufelli and Salanova, 2007). The current study reinforces the idea that dimensions of work engagement are positively linked with organizational justice, leading to enhanced performance, productivity, and work engagement (Patrick, 2014).

Research also shows that work engagement positively affects organizational outcomes, such as better job performance, lower psychosocial risks, increased organizational commitment, and reduced turnover intention (Halbesleben, 2010). However, empirical evidence regarding the relationship between work environment, organizational justice, and work engagement remains limited. This study addresses the mediating effect of organizational justice between work environment and work engagement. It suggests that various factors in the work environment—such as work relationships, personal growth, system maintenance, system change, and the ethical climate—affect employees' perceptions of justice. These perceptions, in turn, influence the sub-dimensions of work engagement. Thus, organizational justice plays a mediating role in the relationship between work environment and work engagement. The study further highlights that organizational justice plays a crucial role in mediating work engagement. When organizational justice mediates the relationship between work environment and work engagement, its total mediating effect is significant at the p > 0.001 level. The study also reveals that procedural justice has the greatest influence on vigor (β = .607), while distributive justice significantly influences absorption (β = .583), both at p < .01. This empirical evidence strongly suggests that employees' engagement is influenced by their perceptions of justice in the workplace. The findings underscore that organizations in the Indian service sector experience significant work engagement due to organizational justice. However, Ghosh, Rai, and Sinha's (2014) study on organizational justice and work engagement in Indian public banks found that,

in comparison to procedural justice, distributive and interactional justice play a more influential role in determining work engagement levels. The study noted that distributive justice had the most significant impact, followed by procedural and interactional justice (Ghosh et al., 2014). Similarly, Law (2014) asserted that distributive justice has a stronger relationship with work engagement, as employees' perceptions of fair reward distribution tend to impact their engagement levels more than procedural and interactional justice. In line with this, Ozer et al. (2017) found in their healthcare sector study that procedural justice, particularly in areas such as wages, promotions, and appraisals, was the most influential sub-dimension on work engagement. Employees tend to engage more when they believe these procedures align with ethical and moral standards.

From the perspective of perceived justice and work environment, it is essential for employees who perform well to receive rewards and recognition, as these factors drive motivation and contribute to higher work engagement levels. For better work engagement, it is crucial for immediate supervisors to build trust in the workplace by demonstrating transparency, fairness, and competence (Sunil and Patrick, 2021b). These practices foster strong relationships and elevate work engagement. The key reason for this is the positive relationship between work engagement and organizational outcomes such as improved employee performance, job satisfaction, and work commitment. The primary finding of this research is that increased perceptions of organizational justice, particularly procedural justice, in the Indian service sector positively impact work engagement. When employees perceive higher organizational justice, their intention to stay and organizational commitment rises, which consequently reduces turnover rates. It is recommended that human resource leaders in organizations implement a strong compensation and benefits program as part of their policies to address existing perceptions of injustice and promote fairness in career opportunities, thus supporting employees' perceptions of distributive justice within Indian service sector organizations. The conceptual hypothesis model demonstrates a significant relationship with the constructs, and empirical evidence reveals that the ethical dimension had the most substantial influence on the work engagement sub-dimension of "dedication" ($\beta = .886$, $p < .01$), followed by absorption and vigor. The findings of the current study align with those of Yener et al. (2012). This study also found that both the work environment and organizational justice had a significant impact on the level of work engagement. Organizational justice played a crucial role by mediating the relationship between the work environment and work engagement among employees in Indian service sector organizations. The results emphasize the importance of work environment and organizational justice in fostering higher levels of engagement. To ensure higher employee engagement and retention, Indian service sector organizations should prioritize processes and activities that promote fairness, recognition, and trust within their work environment culture.

13. Practical Implications

Organizational justice is a practice rooted in management's values, behaviors, and interventions, and it is essential to understand how decision-making and behavior influence it. To foster organizational justice, work environment, and work engagement, the study underscores the significance of a positive work environment in shaping employees' perceptions of fairness. This understanding enhances the comprehension of the factors leading to organizational justice and, ultimately, work engagement. Research shows that employees are more engaged not because of employer branding or salary, but because of the justice they perceive within the organization. Organizations must ensure that perceptions of fairness are embedded in their work environment through:

a) Effective organizational communication, which explains decisions to employees and fosters trust between the management and the workforce (Kernan and Hanges, 2002).
b) Employee participation, which affects mood and emotions. When employees experience positive affectivity, both in terms of state and trait, they are more likely to perceive higher levels of interactional, procedural, and distributive justice (Barsky and Kaplan, 2007).
c) Organizational justice as an individual and team-level phenomenon, where employees are influenced

by their colleagues and team dynamics. This can result in team-level perceptions of justice, contributing to a justice climate that promotes higher performance and reduced absenteeism (Li and Cropanzano, 2009; Colquitt, Noe, and Jackson, 2002).

d) Strength development and recognition programs, which engage employees for longer durations, reducing job stress and strain.

By implementing these practices, organizations can promote a fair work environment that enhances work engagement and overall organizational performance. Today, organizations are increasingly focused on boosting employee engagement levels. To achieve this, they must ensure fairness in the workplace, making sure that both outcomes and processes are equitable and just. As part of HR strategy, organizational leaders should prioritize fairness by maintaining consistency in decision-making, fostering transparent communication, and implementing fair reward systems to create a positive work environment. These practices will drive employee performance, recognition, and continuous improvement, all while reinforcing values and perceptions of fairness. Additionally, career development programs, along with recognition and reward systems, must be integrated into the organizational approach. Building trust in the workplace is also crucial by providing regular feedback, acknowledging contributions, and demonstrating positive behaviors. It's important to educate and train immediate supervisors on the impact that perceived injustice can have on employee motivation and commitment. Service sector employees should be treated with respect and dignity, with sensitivity to their personal needs. Furthermore, transparency in performance evaluations and reward systems is essential to foster fairness.

14. LIMITATIONS

The study was conducted within the Indian service sector, which limits its scope. However, the results can still be generalized, as the sample includes respondents from various regions across the country.

The study is based on self-reports, which introduces certain limitations, such as the potential for common method variance (CMV). Nevertheless, Harman's one-factor test showed that CMV did not

significantly impact the results (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Despite the valuable insights gathered from employees across the Indian service sector, the findings cannot be applied universally across different industries and organizations, as they are specific to the service sector in India. Even though the sample was geographically diverse, it remains focused on this sector.

15. FUTURE STUDY

Using qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews, could have enriched the findings and provided a more robust framework for the study. Therefore, future research should consider exploring multinational corporations (MNCs) in the service sector based in India and comparing the data to strengthen the evidence and enhance the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, examining this model in different organizational contexts and across various functional levels would provide further insights.

16. CONCLUSION

The Indian service sector plays a crucial role, not only because it contributes significantly to the country's GDP but also because it creates numerous employment opportunities. There is considerable potential to enhance the sector through human resource practices that foster a sustainable competitive advantage and address challenges related to human capital. This study investigates the positive relationship between employees' perceptions of organizational justice, including distributive and procedural justice, and examines how these perceptions mediate the connection between the work environment and work engagement. Organizational justice focuses on how employees perceive fairness in outcomes and processes within an organization, and it is essential for fostering happy and productive employees. the study results demonstrate that perceived fairness instills a moral obligation that extends beyond employees' emotional responses. Organizational leaders should prioritize and promote fairness in the workplace through practices such as clear organizational communication and encouraging employee involvement and transparent decision-making. These factors create a positive work environment and foster higher levels of work engagement. By implementing organizational

justice practices, trust in the workplace grows, leading to improvements in job performance, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior. At the same time, these practices help reduce employee turnover, increase customer loyalty, and enhance stakeholder value. Senior management should nurture effective managers and implement workplace policies that focus on employee well-being, health, and work/life balance. Organizational justice influences work engagement at both the individual and team levels, impacting outcomes at all organizational levels.

17. KEY TAKE-AWAY

Organizational justice is composed of three key forms: distributive, procedural, and interactional justice. Distributive justice arises when employees perceive outcomes as fair and equitable. Procedural justice refers to the fairness of the processes used to make decisions, while interactional justice emphasizes the way individuals are treated during decision-making. Effective communication plays a critical role in fostering interactional justice. Employees' perceptions of fairness improve when they are involved in the decision-making process. Both state and trait effects also influence how justice is perceived.

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