

# Influence of Perceived Organizational Justice on Empowerment, Organizational Commitment and Turnover Intention in the Hospital Nurses

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## Abstract

**Background/Objectives:** The purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of perceived organizational justice on empowerment, organizational commitment and turnover intention in the hospital nurses in Korea. **Methods/Statistical Analysis:** A self-reported questionnaire was completed by three hundred hospital nurses in general hospital after hearing the purpose of the study. The instruments of the questionnaire consisted of organizational justice, empowerment, organizational commitment, and turnover intention measured by a five point Likert scale. The data were analyzed using SPSS version 22.0 and AMOS 21.0 program. Technical statistics, Pearson's correlation coefficients, Cronbach's alpha, and EFA were done. **Findings:** The path model was analyzed to evaluate the hypothesis and overall fit measures. The model's overall fit measures were  $X^2 = 122.765$ , d.f. = 23,  $p = .000$ , GFI = .914, AGFI = .832, RMR = .031, NFI = .872, IFI = .893, CFI = .892. Model evaluation measure of overall fit is desirable when GFI, CFI, NFI, and IFI are above .9, AGFI above .8, and RMR below .05. While NFI, IFI, and CFI values in this study were somewhat lower, because RMR, GFI, and AGFI values were high, it was deemed acceptable without a revised model. Organizational justice had a positive direct effect on empowerment ( $r = .446$ ,  $p = .004$ ) and organizational commitment ( $r = .608$ ,  $p = .004$ ) and a negative direct effect on turnover intention ( $r = -.357$ ,  $p = .004$ ). Empowerment had a notable direct effect on organizational commitment ( $r = .213$ ,  $p = .007$ ), but no notable direct effect on turnover intention ( $r = .097$ ,  $p = .155$ ). Organizational commitment had a negative effect on turnover intention ( $r = -.381$ ,  $p = .004$ ). Organizational justice had an indirect effect on organizational commitment and turnover intention. Empowerment, too, had an indirect effect on turnover intention. Organizational justice, followed by organizational commitment, had the most overall effect on turnover intention, and both were negative effects. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), which explains external and internal variables, was examined. The value of  $R^2$  for empowerment was .199 (19.9%), organizational commitment's  $R^2$  was .530 (53%), and turnover intention's  $R^2$  was .407 (40.7%). This study shows that, as the nurses' perception of organizational justice becomes greater, empowerment and organizational commitment are heightened while turnover intention goes down. **Improvements:** Therefore, for effective hospital human resources management, nursing organizations and hospital organizations must change the design and system of the organization so that the nurses' perception of organizational justice will become greater.

**Keywords:** Empowerment, Nurses, Organizational Commitment, Organizational Justice, Turnover Intention

## 1. Introduction

With the opening and globalization of the medical market, supersizing and specialization of medical institutions, and oversupply of medical services, competition among

hospitals in Korea has become fiercer than ever<sup>1</sup>. Consequently, hospitals have endeavored in responding to both the needs of the patients and the changes in the medical market. In order to rise above other hospitals, each hospital is searching for strategies in differentiation,

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specialization, and centralization. To improve the service quality and overall efficiency, however, an organization must strengthen its inner capacity by promoting desirable value systems and behavior patterns among service providers.

As a hospital relies heavily on its human resources, it must perceive its members' psychological characters, motive-induced behavior and value changes. Otherwise innovative attempts will face limitations. Organizational justice is an important concept for inducing positive attitudes among the members to maximize the organization's product.

Organizational justice refers to the organization members' perception of fairness regarding procedures and decisions within the organization. They then respond through a certain attitude and conduct toward the organization according to the compensation and treatment they receive<sup>2</sup>.

Organizational justice can be classified into three categories. Distributive justice is the members' perception of fairness related to allocation of products such as wages paid through a decision conferring procedure, promotions, and recognition within the organization. Procedural justice refers to the perception of fairness in the processes through which members are compensated for their investment by way of wages, promotions, and evaluations. Interactional justice is concerned with the quality of interaction that members receive while engaged in a decision conferring procedure.

Members have an increased motivation and participate actively for the organizational goal when they are compensated fairly through correct evaluations of their effort and achievement within the organization. When organizational commitment decreases, however, members secede from the organization or intend to secede, and conflict may arise.

Nurses look after patients' health and lives while dealing with irregular day and night shifts. Because of such work conditions, nurses have higher demands for organizational justice in hospitals. When such demands are not satisfied, their work motivation and morale decrease, producing negative effects on innovative goals set by the hospital management.

An organization can achieve great results by helping its members feel that their work is valuable so that they would autonomously dedicate themselves to its goal. One way to bring out members' autonomous and creative participation is empowerment<sup>3</sup>. Members put in spontaneous efforts to achieve organizational goals

when they perceive to be compensated fairly. Empowered nurses are responsible, declare intentions autonomously, promote their patients' health with self-efficacy and confidence and commit themselves to the organization, uniting their value belief and organizational goals<sup>4</sup>.

People are less attracted to their employment when inadequately compensated and are thus more likely to leave it. As a result, well-managed hospitals constantly strive to create an environment where nurses voluntarily contribute to the organization based on organizational justice. The concept of organizational justice may determine the members' attitude and is an important factor for the organization's success. However, there is little research on organizational justice perceived by nurses. Particularly, there is no research on the effect of perceived organizational justice on empowerment, organizational commitment, and turnover intention of nurses.

This study aims to identify the level of organizational justice perceived by nurses and to understand the relationship between organizational justice and empowerment, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. By examining the effect of perceived organizational justice on empowerment, organizational commitment, and turnover intention of nurses, this study purports to provide foundational material for an effective hospital human resource management strategy.

## 1.1 The Purpose of the Study

This study identifies the level of organizational justice, empowerment, organizational commitment, and turnover intention of nurses. It also identifies the correlation between organizational justice and empowerment, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. By identifying the effect of perceived organizational justice on empowerment, organizational commitment, and turnover intention of nurses, this study provides foundational material for an effective hospital human resource management strategy.

Concrete purposes are as follows:

- Understand the level of organizational justice perceived by nurses, empowerment, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.
- Understand the level of organizational justice, empowerment, organizational commitment, and turnover intention, based on nurses' general characteristics.
- Understand the correlation between organizational justice perceived by nurses and empowerment,

- organizational commitment, and turnover intention.
- Understand the effect of organizational justice perceived by nurses on empowerment, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1 Design

This study is a path analysis which, after constructing a path model and collecting materials from the respondents, examines both the overall fit measure of the model and the hypothetical path in order to understand the causal relationship between organizational justice and empowerment, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.

### 2.2 Respondents

The respondents of the sample are nurses employed by “G” General Hospital in “G” City, who have agreed to it after hearing the purpose of the study. Three hundred copies of the questionnaire were distributed, of which 285 responses were returned. Seven were excluded for inadequacy, and 278 were analyzed. The number of respondents was based<sup>1</sup>, which reported that the number of samples should be 200-400 at minimum in a multivariate statistical analysis.

### 2.3 Study Instruments

#### 2.3.1 Organizational Justice

##### 2.3.1.1 Distributive Justice

An instrument developed<sup>5</sup>, as revised and supplement<sup>6</sup>, was used. Five items were created in this instrument. A 5-point Likert scale was used, ranging from “strongly disagree” (1 point) to “strongly agree” (5 points). This means that the higher the points are, the greater the perception of distributive justice is. In the study<sup>6</sup>, the Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient for the sample was .91. This study’s Cronbach’s alpha was .931.

##### 2.3.1.2 Procedural Justice

An instrument developed by Moorman, as revised and supplemented was used. Seven items were created in this instrument. A 5-point Likert scale was used, ranging from “strongly disagree” (1 point) to “strongly agree” (5 points). This means that the higher the points are, the greater the perception of procedural justice is. In the study the

Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient for the sample was .9. This study’s Cronbach’s alpha was .955.

##### 2.3.1.3 Interactional Justice

An instrument developed by Moorman, as revised and supplemented by Ha-gyeom Kim, was used. Six items were created in this instrument. A 5-point Likert scale was used, ranging from “strongly disagree” (1 point) to “strongly agree” (5 points). This means that the higher the points are, the greater the positive perception of interaction justice is. In<sup>6</sup>, the Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient for the sample was .88. This study’s Cronbach’s alpha was .918.

##### 2.3.2 Empowerment

An instrument developed by<sup>7</sup> was used. This instrument consisted of four areas (meaning, competence, self determination, and impact). Three items were created for each area. A 5-point Likert scale was used, ranging from “strongly disagree” (1 point) to “strongly agree” (5 points). This means that the higher the points are, the greater the positive perception of empowerment is. in<sup>7</sup> the Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient was .72. This study’s Cronbach’s alpha was .874.

##### 2.3.3 Organizational Commitment

In order to measure organizational commitment, OCQ (Organizational Commitment Questionnaire) developed<sup>8</sup> was used. Fifteen items were created in this instrument. A 5-point Likert scale was used, ranging from “strongly disagree” (1 point) to “strongly agree” (5 points). This means that the higher the points are, the greater the positive perception of organizational commitment is. In<sup>8</sup>, the Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient was .89. This study’s Cronbach’s alpha was .887.

##### 2.3.4 Turnover Intention

An instrument developed by Lawer, as revised and supplemented by<sup>9</sup>, was used. Four items were created in this instrument. A 5-point Likert scale was used, ranging from “strongly disagree” (1 point) to “strongly agree” (5 points). This means that the higher the points are, the greater the perception of turnover intention is. In<sup>9</sup> the Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient was .88. This study’s Cronbach’s alpha was .851.

## 2.4 Analysis Methods

IBM SPSS Statistics Version 22 was used in analyzing the collected material. Technical statistics, Person's correlation coefficients, Cronbach's alpha, and EFA were done. AMOS 21.0 was used for the model evaluation. To evaluate overall fit measures of the model, chi-square ( $X^2$ ), Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit Index (AGFI), Comparative-Fit Index (CFI), Root-Mean-Square Residual (RMSR or RMR), Normed-Fit

Index (NFI), and Incremental-Fit Index (IFI) were used.

## 3. Results of the Study

### 3.1 General Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1 explains the general characteristics of the respondents. A total of 278 nurses' data were analyzed.

Table 2 gives the average, standard deviation, and

**Table 1.** General characteristics of the study subjects

Category	Classification	Number	%	M±SD
Age	≤25	90	32.6	29.60±5.83
	26-30	86	31.2	
	31-35	45	16.3	
	≥36	55	19.9	
Marital status	Married	180	65.2	
	Single	96	34.8	
Education	College	103	38.3	
	University	81	30.1	
	RN-BSN	59	21.9	
	Master degree	26	9.7	
Average monthly compensation (Korean Won)	≤150 million Won	10	3.6	
	150-250 million Won	146	53.3	
	250-350 million Won	100	36.5	
	≥350 million Won	18	6.6	
Position	Regular nurse	231	85.9	
	Head nurse	38	14.1	
Area of work	Ward	131	48.0	
	Special ward	111	40.7	
	Outpatient	31	11.4	
Total clinical experience	≤1 year	31	11.3	87.02±68.97(months)
	1-3 years	60	21.9	
	3-6 years	52	19.0	
	6-10 years	52	19.0	
	≥10 years	79	28.8	
Current employment duration	≤1 year	39	14.2	74.96±62.81(months)
	1-3 years	69	25.1	
	3-6 years	59	21.5	
	6-10 years	43	15.6	
	≥10 years	65	23.6	
Shift of department	Yes.	126	46.3	
	No.	146	53.7	
Transfer history	Yes.	56	20.1	
	No.	222	79.9	
Expected future employment term	≤1 year	27	11.3	68.79±61.22(months)
	1-3 years	67	28.2	
	3-6 years	81	34.0	
	6-10 years	43	18.1	
	≥10 years	20	8.4	
Shift of duty	Third shift	201	74.7	
	Second shift	19	7.1	
	Daytime shift	49	18.2	
Job satisfaction	Very satisfied	82	30.5	
	Average	149	55.4	
	Dissatisfied	38	14.1	

**Table 2.** General means and correlation among variable

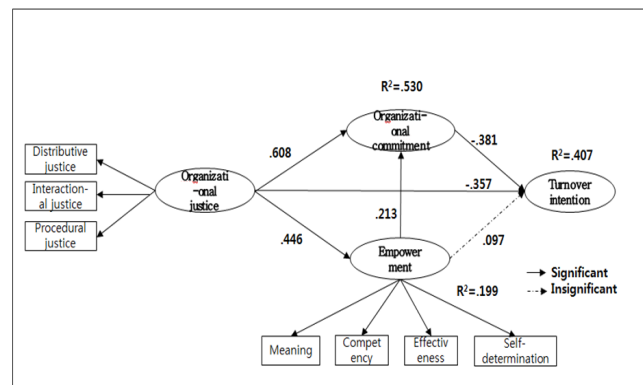
Variable	M±SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Distributive justice	2.88±.69	1										
2. Interactive justice	3.30±.65	.576	1									
3. Procedural justice	2.92±.68	( $<.001$ ) .468	.500	1								
4. Organizational justice	3.03±.55	( $<.001$ ) .795	( $<.001$ ) .831	.835	1							
5. Meaning	3.81±.60	( $<.001$ ) .341	( $<.001$ ) .319	( $<.001$ ) .271	.372	1						
6. Competency	3.57±.59	( $<.001$ ) .189	( $<.001$ ) .165	( $<.001$ ) .198	.225	.597	1					
7. Self-determination	3.45±.59	(.002) .319	(.006) .229	(.001) .340	( $<.001$ ) .362	( $<.001$ ) .437	.645	1				
8. Effectiveness	2.80±.71	( $<.001$ ) .233	( $<.001$ ) .089	( $<.001$ ) .343	( $<.001$ ) .279	( $<.001$ ) .107	.323	.404	1			
9. Empowerment	3.41±.46	( $<.001$ ) .361	(.138) .262	( $<.001$ ) .390	( $<.001$ ) .414	(.076) .693	( $<.001$ ) .840	( $<.001$ ) .819	.649	1		
10. Organizational commitment	3.05±.49	( $<.001$ ) .440	( $<.001$ ) .492	( $<.001$ ) .581	( $<.001$ ) .623	( $<.001$ ) .426	( $<.001$ ) .344	( $<.001$ ) .372	( $<.001$ ) .293	( $<.001$ ) .477	1	
11. Turnover intention	3.46±.77	( $<.001$ ) -.426	( $<.001$ ) -.424	( $<.001$ ) -.404	( $<.001$ ) -.507	( $<.001$ ) -.198	( $<.001$ ) -.142	( $<.001$ ) -.234	( $<.001$ ) -.234	( $<.001$ ) -.273	( $<.001$ ) -.586	1
		( $<.001$ )	( $<.001$ )	( $<.001$ )	( $<.001$ )	.001	.018	( $<.001$ )	( $<.001$ )	( $<.001$ )	( $<.001$ )	

correlation between the items. The organizational justice average was 3.03, the empowerment average 3.41, the organizational commitment average 3.05, and the turnover intention average 3.46. Organizational justice ( $r = -.507, p < .001$ ), empowerment ( $r = -.273, p < .001$ ), and organizational commitment ( $r = -.586, p < .001$ ) had a negative correlation with turnover intention.

### 3.2 Path Model Evaluation

The path model was analyzed to evaluate the hypothesis and overall fit measures. (See Figure 1). The model's overall fit measures were  $X^2 = 122.765, d.f. = 23, p = .000, GFI = .914, AGFI = .832, RMR = .031, NFI = .872, IFI = .893, CFI = .892$ . The model evaluation measure of overall fit is desirable when GFI, CFI, NFI, and IFI are above .9, AGFI above .8, and RMR below .05. While NFI, IFI, and

CFI values in this study were somewhat lower, because RMR, GFI, and AGFI values were high, it was deemed acceptable without a revised model.



**Figure 1.** Path analysis.



### 3.3 Casual Relationship and Impact

Table 3 gives the direct, indirect, and overall effects standardized by the path analysis. Organizational justice had a positive direct effect on empowerment ( $r = .446$ ,  $p = .004$ ) and organizational commitment ( $r = .608$ ,  $p = .004$ ) and a negative direct effect on turnover intention ( $r = -.357$ ,  $p = .004$ ). Empowerment had a notable direct effect on organizational commitment ( $r = .213$ ,  $p = .007$ ), but no notable direct effect on turnover intention ( $r = .097$ ,  $p = .155$ ). Organizational commitment had a negative effect on turnover intention ( $r = -.381$ ,  $p = .004$ ). Organizational justice had an indirect effect on organizational commitment and turnover intention. Empowerment, too, had an indirect effect on turnover intention. Organizational justice, followed by organizational commitment, had the most overall effect on turnover intention, and both were negative effects. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), which explains external and internal variables, was examined. The value of  $R^2$  for empowerment was .199 (19.9%), organizational commitment's  $R^2$  was .530 (53%), and turnover intention's  $R^2$  was .407 (40.7%).

## 4. Discussion

An organization's success depends on how it can utilize its human resources effectively. One of the concepts that stand out is organizational justice. This study examines the organizational justice perceived by nurses and investigates the effect of distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice upon empowerment, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. By doing so, it purports to provide foundational material for the hospital human resource management strategy, ultimately promoting the quality of medical services.

The average organizational justice perceived by nurses was 2.97 out of 5.0. Among the three categories, the procedural justice average was the highest at 3.21, followed

by interactive justice (2.87) and distributive justice (2.85). In Park, the respondents were nurses and it used the same instruments as this study's. Its procedural justice average was 2.27, and its distributive justice average was 2.46, both of which were lower than this study's result. Its interactive justice average, however, was 3.02, which was higher than this study's result.

It means that, compared to the procedure and threshold for compensation distribution to nurses which are systematically established, nurses perceive that their wages, promotions, job evaluations, and benefits are relatively low and that mutual understanding is lacking. Therefore, when the nurse services management compensates nurses in various ways according to their efforts, listens to their opinion, and treats them interactively and personably, nurses will dedicate themselves to their organization.

Further, in Kim (employees of manufacturing companies), using the same instrument as this study, the procedural justice average score was 3.03, the interactive justice average 3.34, and the distributive justice 3.25, all of which were higher than this study's.

In organizational justice based on the subjects' general characteristics, there was a notable statistical difference depending on the subjects' age, average monthly compensation, area of work, total clinical field experience, current employment duration, transfer history, expected future employment term, and job satisfaction. With regard to age, the older the subject was, the higher the organizational justice was perceived. With regard to the total clinical field experience and current employment duration, those under one year's experience showed the highest perception of organizational justice, which corresponds to<sup>9</sup>. However, the longer one's current employment duration was, the higher the perception became, which is the opposite<sup>10</sup>. This is the result from instituting various systems and training for new nurses such as preceptor, mentoring, new employee parties, and

**Table 3.** Standardized direct effect, indirect effect and total effect

Exogenous Variable	Endogenous Variable	Direct effect (p)	Indirect effect (p)	Total effect (p)
Organizational justice	Empowerment	.446(.004)		.446(.004)
	Organizational commitment	.608(.004)	.095(.006)	.703(.004)
	Turnover intention	-.357(.004)	-.225(.004)	-.582(.004)
Empowerment	Organizational commitment	.213(.007)		.213(.007)
	Turnover intention	.097(.155)	-.081(.007)	.015(.757)
Organizational commitment	Turnover intention	-.381(.004)		-.381(.004)

counseling. With regard to transfer history, organizational justice was perceived higher with less transfer.

In empowerment based on the subjects' general characteristics, there was a notable statistical difference depending on the subjects' age, marital status, education level, average monthly compensation, position, total clinical field experience, current employment duration, transfer history, form of work, and job satisfaction. Empowerment was higher in the group older than 40 years of age and with more than 10 years of total clinical field experience and current employment, which corresponds to studies showing that the older in age and the longer in work experience are, the higher empowerment is. With regard to positions, it corresponded to study results that head-nurse or higher-position groups have higher empowerment. This is because the higher one's position is, the greater are the responsibility, fulfillment, and autonomy that accompany the work. Because empowerment is not about dividing limited power but about increasing the power, it is important that head nurses or higher supervisory managers give the nurses motivation to increase their power<sup>10</sup>.

Organizational commitment perceived by nurses averaged at 3.00 out of 5. This was similar to other studies of nurses in general hospitals and university hospitals using the instrument developed by Mowday, which was also used by this study: 3.00 in<sup>11</sup>. As one's position goes up, recognition and importance of the employee increase, and she can directly contribute to the hospital's mission and vision. The non-clinical employee group had a higher organizational commitment, which coincided with<sup>10</sup>. Non-clinical nurses have higher organizational commitment because, as they mostly perform administrative work rather than directly look after patients, they feel less physical exhaustion and concentrate better on work. As for the expected future employment term, organizational commitment was higher among those with more than 10 years. This shows that those who plan to stay for a prolonged period have a will to contribute spontaneously to fulfill the organizational goal and commit to the organization. As for the form of work, the daytime-shift and second-shift groups had higher organizational commitment than the third-shift nurses. Thus, in order to promote organizational commitment, introducing a variety of forms of work such as the flexible duty and fixed-duty choice system and manpower expansion, while improving work environment.

The subjects in this study had a somewhat high turnover intention, which may be because their hospital is located in a smaller city while most prefer working in big cities. As the turnover intention is the strongest indicator for the actual turnover, the hospital needs measures to understand their turnover intention and to lower it.

With regard to the marital status, the singles group had a higher turnover intention, which coincided with the previous studies. Singles have a stronger desire for new challenges than the married, and have relatively more opportunities for rehire as hospitals prefer young single employees.

Emergency Room (ER) work is highly stressful, as it concerns not only patients of various conditions that are prone to sudden change, but also extremely sensitive family members or guardians. Consequently, ER nurses have a higher turnover intention.

The study found a notable statistical correlation between organizational justice and empowerment, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. Distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactive justice showed a positive correlation to empowerment and organizational commitment and a negative correlation to turnover intention. In<sup>10</sup>, a passive correlation was shown between distributive justice and emotional-commitment, which is low-ranking in organizational commitment; between procedural justice and emotional- and normative-commitments, which are low-ranking in organizational commitment; and between interactive justice and emotional- and normative-commitments, which are low-ranking in organizational commitment. When multiple regression analysis was applied, distributive justice and interactive justice influenced empowerment, and distributive justice had a greater impact than interactive justice.

While it is not easy to compare as not many studies have been done on the relationship between organizational justice and empowerment, this study is supported<sup>12</sup> (public employees of the taxation services), in which distributive justice and interactive justice impact empowerment. A. H. Maslow said levels of human motivation do not arise at the same time but follow the order in hierarchy. With fulfillment of the lower-level motivation, arises the next-level motivation. A multiple regression analysis showed that procedural justice and interactive justice influence organizational commitment, and interactive justice had a greater impact than procedural justice<sup>13,14</sup>. So interactive

justice had the greatest impact on organizational commitment<sup>15,16</sup>.

A multiple regression analysis was employed to examine organizational justice's impact on turnover intention. Distributive justice, interactive justice, and procedural justice influenced turnover intention, the greatest to the least in the respective order<sup>17,18</sup>.

Nurses make up 30-40% of hospital manpower. Their turnover rate, however, increased from 9.8% in 2004 to 17.0% in 2010, and stayed at 16.8% in 2012. The high turnover rate of nurses not only increases the expenses but also lowers both the quality and the quantity of nursing services patients receive, causing the quality of overall medical services to suffer<sup>19,20</sup>.

## 5. Conclusions

This study shows that, as the nurses' perception of organizational justice becomes greater, empowerment and organizational commitment are heightened while turnover intention goes down. Therefore, for effective hospital human resources management, nursing organizations and hospital organizations must change the design and system of the organization so that the nurses' perception of organizational justice will become greater.

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