Organizational Justice in Higher Educations
Keadilan Organisasi di Pendidikan Tinggi
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Abstract
Organizational Justice has been the main theme adopted in many studies in the last 30 years. Organizational justice is defined as workers’ perceptions of what is fair and unjust in the organization. In recent decades, private and public tertiary education has developed well, but both have differences in the context of funding or operations. Thus there are differences that affect the organizational justice system within the tertiary education institution. Meanwhile, research examining the difference of organizational justice between these two types of higher educations is still few. This paper is then aimed to explain the difference of organizational justice among higher educations based on preliminary empirical studies and normative reviews on relevant documents. This paper is also a prescription for empirical studies in understanding organizational justice at two types higher educations.

Keywords: Organizational Justice, higher education.

Abstrak

Kata Kunci: Keadilan Organisasi, Pendidikan Tinggi

INTRODUCTION

The development of technology and information in current days has dramatically changed various living aspects of worldwide community. Twenty-first century is known with the age of knowledge and information. Many economical, social, political and cultural activities are always influenced by the development of knowledge and technology. It is said then that human and knowledge are main capitals of a nation to survive within a global competition. Dealing with this competition, community put their expectation to higher educations to provide them with future generations who are capable of thinking logically, communicating fluently, and staying adaptive to various changes (Jian-xin & Hong-zhi, 2010). Cranfield & Taylor (2008) explained that higher educations were encountering their primary challenge, namely global economic change. Higher educations have realized a fact that in current days, every part of the world is connected to each other where education, creativity and innovation are becoming the most essential things in the community (Birgeneau, 2005). Scoot (2005) asserted that there are two attributes of globalization, respectively: (1) The emergence of knowledge society. The improvement of information and communication technologies triggers what so called cultural revolution; and (2) The acceleration and innovation may lead to uncertainty on individual identity, social bonding and gender role, and work and career.

The age of knowledge economic truly requires individuals to be skilled in all levels to keep them adaptive with the change (Powel & Snellman, 2004). High expectation on higher educations may produce great demand for transformation in organization or personal. Within academic reformation context, higher educations have changed their curricula and learning process. At institutional level, both role and position of leaders, managers and administrators are fortified through the involvement of academic staffs into managerial context (Taylor, 2006; Santiago et al., 2008). In resource management context, academic staffs play important role in improving organizational performance. Therefore, organization applies effective management to create more convenient work place. This concept has been applied by many kinds of organizations, either public or private. Also in higher educations, effective organization management would be quite influential to the quality of education delivery. Human resource in higher educations is an asset that must be managed properly. One factor
influencing human resource quality in higher educations is organizational justice. Since the introduction of this concept by Wendel French in 1964, organizational justice has been attended by various studies for more than 30 years. Main reason of this phenomenon is that justice is one of human's essential needs used to create a social harmony. Positive perception on the justice in a social relationship context would lead to satisfaction and patience, whereas negative perception only produces a chaos in community. Justice influences not only individuals but also community. Therefore, a social institutions are responsible to create a situation where people can live together and have a positive interaction. In consistent with this issue, Konovsky (2000) asserted that justice and fairness are considered as main value (core value) of an organization. Rawls (1999) explained that justice is first virtue of social institution or also considered as truth of systems of thought. By this statement, organizational justice represents a concept highly attended by many studies in the fields of industrial psychology, human resource management, and organizational behavior (Bakhshi et.al., 2009). This concept emerges when organization comes to realize the importance of its primary resource, respectively organizational members/workers who want to be treated in just and fair (Tahsen & Akhtar, 2015).

Organizational justice can be defined as a perception by members/workers of organization about what is fair and unfair in the organization where they work with (Gracia et.al, 2015; Ajala, 2016). Indeed, justice can influence factors that determine the success rate of organization. Skarlicki & Folger (1997) reviewed some researches and found that when manager treated unjustly organizational members, then anger, bad response and vengeance, were usual consequences. Kim (2009) suggested that workers who perceived unfairly treated by management tended to redefine their communal relationship with organization. When workers are fairly treated, they show commitment, trust, and satisfaction, and maintain reciprocal relationship. Miller et.al. (2011) added that justice was important organizational topic because it unified different entities and created a stable social structure.

Research about organizational justice in higher educations is still very few. Recalling a fact that higher educations play important role for national development and also that justice is important for organization management, therefore, conceptual articulation must be conducted. The goal of articulating organizational justice concept is to provide theoretical
bases for next research on organizational justice in higher educations. The urgency of this writing is described as following: (1) to review researches about organizational justice; (2) to formulate the importance of organizational justice in the management of higher educations; and (3) to investigate the difference of organizational justice concept between public and private higher educations.

**METHOD OF REVIEW**

Method used to conduct the review refers to Cama et.al. (2016) who suggested that review must involve a set of systematic phases. The phases include: (1) searching; (2) screening; (3) data extraction; (4) synthesis; and (5) reporting and dissemination. The following is the explanation of each phase of review process.

**Searching**

Identification is conducted to search journals and documents suitable for the review. The results are those matching with the scope of review related with issues such as: (1) organizational justice, (2) public and private higher educations, and (3) factors differentiating organizational justice at public and private higher educations.

**Screening**

Journals and documents relevant to the scope of review are subjected to a screening in order to obtain materials to be reviewed. Journals and documents selected are those containing with information that helps the author to develop argumentation framework of organizational justice in public and private higher educations.

**Data Extraction**

Data extraction is a process to collect the data from journals or documents reviewed. After screening them based on their suitability with the scope of review, then the selected journals and documents are subjected to examination to extract important information from them. There are two extraction processes. First, the observed variables, objects, and conclusion are extracted from the journals. Second, data or premises as the base for argumentation framework are extracted from relevant documents.

**Synthesis**

Synthesis is a process to rearrange the extracted data to produce propositions connecting to each other to develop an argumentation building in form of description and prescription. Description represents a description about the concept observed, while prescription refers to a guidance about the concept reviewed.
Reporting and Dissemination

Final phase is reporting and dissemination. Reporting is the writing of result of comprehensive review, while dissemination is the publication of this writing.

DISCUSSION

Organizational Justice Concept

Before analyzing organizational justice concept in the context of management of higher educations, organizational justice must be defined first. This definition helps the author to understand the limit of organizational justice scope and the fundamental consideration of essence, characteristic, and structure of organizational justice. It may help identifying the role of organizational justice in the management of higher educations. The following is some definitions of organizational justice:

1. Organizational justice is the perception of workers about just and fair behavior they accept at work. Organizational justice comprises of 3 components such as distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice (Ravangard et.al., 2013).

2. Organizational justice is about the perception of individuals or group of individuals about just treatment from organization and the reaction from the organization to this perception (Choi, 2011).

3. Organizational justice is workers’ method of determining whether they receive fair treatment at work. This determination is very important because it may affect workers’ behavior to workmates (Gosh et.al., 2014).

4. Organizational justice can be defined as the combination between the justice of procedures (procedural justice), used by the principal to determine allocation and distribution of output, and the justice of allocation and distribution of output (distributive justice) (Colquitt et.al., 2002).

5. Organizational justice can be defined as the perception of workers about how should they be treated with justice and fairness (Elovaino et.al., 2005).

The definitions above bring along few important things related with essence and structure of organizational justice. Related with the essence, justice talks about equivalency or equality of treatment accepted by someone from others, either in terms of the distribution of resource or the process of achieving outputs or developing interaction. Meanwhile, the structure of organizational justice, as said by Colquitt et.al. (2002), is comprised of 3 components, namely distributive justice,
procedural justice and interactional justice. Choi (2014) asserted that organizational justice was a multidimensional concept in which every aspect must be defined separately. It was also said that dimensions of organizational justice were independent concepts either in their definition or operational. Cohen-Charash & Spector (2001), through their result of meta-analysis, have concluded that three dimensions of organizational justice (distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice) are interrelated to each other but perceived differently in organization. From historical aspect, organizational justice's dimensions are not shown up simultaneously. Early development of organizational justice study can be traced through Adams’ Theory of Equity. This theory is focused more on distributive justice, precisely on how organization distributes the resource in a just way. The concept of justice develops further with the come of procedural justice concept. Bies & Moag (1986), after their research on justice, developed third dimension of organizational justice, namely interactional justice. The most ultimate development is brought by Greenberg (1993) who said that interactional justice is sorted into two separated parts, namely interpersonal justice and informational justice.

**Distributive Justice.** Distributive justice is suggested based on Adams’ Theory of Equity, and refers to a fairness of output accepted by someone. In this matter, distributive justice represents the perception of members/workers in organization about the output they achieve if compared to the effort they do for achieving this output, or compared to the output accepted by others. What said as output here includes salary, benefit, work status, and other variables accepted by organization if compared to personal attributes such as effort, education background, experience, skill, age, social status, etc. The shorter explanation is that organizational justice is related with distribution of recognition and punishment (Nirmah & Akhiles, 2006) or representing a distribution of organizational resources and recognitions (Blakely et.al., 2005).

**Procedural Justice.** Procedural justice theory was suggested by Thibaut & Walker (1975) based on their observation on individual conflict. Procedural justice involves also the use of proper methods to implement procedures, such as: that any changes must be announced openly; every good performed individual should be given recognition; and the interest of individuals who feel threatened with organizational change must be attended. Procedural
justice was open, which means that the issues of employees’ participation are taken into account when organization decides to make a change (Korsgaard, et.al., 2002). Procedural justice gives opportunity to individuals to contribute inputs to organization which means that everyone can influence final result. Fedor et.al. (2006) suggested that giving opportunity to organizational members toward participating into change process is a form of implementation of a just change. Reaction of organizational members to the change and also to the organization should be more positive after participation. Specifically, procedural justice also influences the openness of organization to individuals who accept the change itself.

**Interactional Justice.** Interactional justice was suggested by Bies & Moag (1986). They change few old patterns used by justice researchers to arrange concepts about justice perception. Bies & Moag concentrate their attention not only to the result or degree of process control, but also to the quality of interpersonal treatment accepted by individual when organizational change procedures are implemented. Such new justice form is collective, and it is called as interactional justice. Until now, interactional justice concept is divided into 2 (two) parts, respectively (1) interpersonal justice and (2) informational justice. Interpersonal justice is indicated by the attributes of courtesy, magnificence, and respect of decision-makers. Informational justice is related with many attributes, such as type of explanation expressed by decision-makers; the discussion of how far is informational justice distributed; being honest in communication; explaining procedures comprehensively; offering logical explanations; giving information in punctual way; and delivering information based on individual needs.

**Public and Private Higher Educations**

Before discerning further about organizational justice difference, firstly the difference between public and private higher educations must be understood. This difference is very important to draw strict conceptual line for the characteristics of both higher educations. Researches about the difference of these two higher educations are still not much. In contrast, the difference between public and private organizations has been examined long ago by Rainey (1997) who explained that both organizations were quite different. The debate of this difference leads to various researches distinguishing characteristics of these two organizations. Macklin et.al. (2006) explained that public sector organization is a type of organization owned and
controlled by government (*government-owned and operated organization*). Public organization gives more focuses on service administration, while private organization focuses more on generating profit or delivers service to community but staying independently from government. Aligning with this statement, Kaur & Lomash (2015) provided similar definition for these two organizations. Public sector organization is owned and funded by government, and always the follower of bureaucratic management. In other hand, private organization is funded by individual entity with majority ownership and applying profit-based management.

The above definitions provide the base for analyzing the characteristics of organization at public and private sectors. Kurlan & Egan (1999) investigated characteristics of public organization as shown by various researches. The characteristics include: focusing on rules and formalization of work, implementing hierarchical order, and having less efficient type of bureaucracy. Based on this difference, McKlin et.al. (2006) found that workers in private organization usually have higher level of stress than their counterparts in public sector. This finding is replicated by Bano & Jha (2012) who found that there is no significant difference of stress level between public and private organizations. Other research giving a prescription that workers at public and private sectors are different is Rashid & Rashid (2012). Their research indicated that workers at public sector are motivated to work because the workload is not heavy and there is a balance between work and family livelihood. Work motivation of workers at private sector develops due to financial reward, career improvement opportunity, and supporting environment. Concerning with the differences between public and private organizations, it can be said that higher educations are also subjected to similar differences, especially related with organizational justice concept.

Literatures reviewing the difference in the management of public and private higher educations are quite few. These two higher educations are always different regardless the nation where they are founded. But, public higher educations always precede the existence of private higher educations. In other words, private higher educations exist only with the development of a nation and also the demand for human resource with good quality. Fundamental difference between public and private higher educations can be found in the aspects of finance and function. Public higher educations are usually built, managed and funded by
government, while private higher educations are often owned and managed by individual, certain family or corporation, religion institution, and foundation. Private higher educations only receive few, or even nothing at all, of governmental funding, and therefore, their funding source is mostly derived from lecturing cost. The development of public and private higher educations always differs. Public higher educations are founded to serve economical, social, and political needs of the nation, and also built for public interest. In the other hand, private higher educations are developed by the goal of reducing governmental burden of subsidy, and enhancing accessibility of people to higher educations (ADB, 2012).

The presence of private higher educations is a response to the growing demand for accessibility to higher educations while government has limited capacity to satisfy this demand. Da (2007) explained that the emergence of private higher educations in Malaysia has been started since 1997. It was stimulated by the interest to promote democratization into higher education system and also by the fact that the government has limited capacity to provide higher education for people. Similar reason was found in the birth of Indonesia private higher educations in 1945. Sukamoto (2002) described that Universitas Islam Indonesia was the first private higher education in Indonesia and built in 1945. However, this reason is only obvious in the early period of the emergence of public higher educations. The next development is indicated by the privatization of public higher educations. ADB (2012) revealed that privatization of public higher educations have been started since 1990 to 2000s. Indeed, public higher educations were subjected to privatization to change them into more autonomous educational institutions which are independent from governmental bureaucracy and also which would be conducive to create more corporate-like management (Varghese, 2004). Privatization is referred to a managerial practice that applies market strategy (for instance, the management would be self-supported in covering lecturing cost/tuition and lecturer fee). However, the ownership status of the privatized higher educations remains still under public domain. The difference is that public higher educations must finance as many as possible their operational activities. ADB (2012) reported that total of private higher educations are 31% of all higher educations in the world. It is expected that the privatization of higher educations would create autonomous
higher educations and provide education service with better and more distributive quality to the public.

**Organizational Justice in Public and Private Higher Educations**

Empirical researches on the application of organizational justice in two types of higher educations are still few. Although not specifically referred to organizational justice, Hyder & Batool (2013) found that work satisfaction was different among librarians in public and private higher educations. Librarians in public higher educations have higher work satisfaction than those in private higher educations. In other side, private higher educations provide more opportunities for librarians to improve their capacity and career. Taking account this result, it can be said that the justice is truly needed within the context of higher education management. It is proved that there is different perception among librarians about library management at two types of higher educations.

Research on organizational justice in Pakistan context by Malik & Naeem (2011) found that lecturing staffs at private higher educations have perceived justice in more positive ways than public higher educations. Lecturing staffs’ perception on organizational justice is not only influenced by different characteristic of higher educations, but also by demographic factors such as gender, age, rank, marriage status, education, and work experience. Different from the result above, Tahsen & Ahtar (2015) found that there is a significant correlation between organizational justice and trust perceived by lecturers in various higher educations in Punjab Province, Pakistan. It was also shown that no different perception on such aspect between public and private higher educations in Punjab. It is said that justice is a factor determining the trust among lecturers in public and private higher educations. The higher is the perception on organizational justice, then the greater also is the trust on organization.

Very few number of researches on organizational justice in higher educations may not match with the expectation of public or not be consistent with the role of higher educations in the age of knowledge. Whether higher educations are successful or not in satisfying this expectation would depend on the capacity of academic and administrative staffs in a higher education. Cordeiro (2010) mentioned that faculty members play important role to the success of education delivery in higher education. Lecturing staffs and administrative workers are required to produce reliable education service. Mangi et.al. (2011) explained that public and
private higher educations were facing serious problems related with recruitment and with how to improve the quality of academic staffs. Therefore, human resource in higher educations was the main asset to achieve organizational goals.

Recalling the fact that human resource is important element in higher education, therefore, good management is needed to motivate individuals to improve their performance and to develop higher loyalty to organization. Dipaola & Guy (2009) declared that educational institutions attempted to apply organizational justice concept to improve professionalism of educators. Aldaihani & Alansari (2016) added that two factors were the base underlining the application of justice concept into educational institutions. These factors are: (1) that justice is a social phenomenon involving various living aspects; and (2) that human resource is important resource of a certain organization. The impact of organizational justice on organizational members has been examined at various organizational types, including educational institutions. In relation with the loyalty of organizational members to their organization, Awang & Ahmad (2015) found that organizational justice was influencing organizational citizenship behavior among academic staffs in Malaysia polytechnic. Lee et.al. (2013) perceived that if organizational members were given opportunity to participate into decision-making process, then it may increase their positive perception about procedural justice, and it was significantly influential to organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).

The impact on organizational behavior may be direct or mediated by other variable. Tahsen & Akhtar (2016) suggested that lecturing staffs in the teaching faculty in Punjab Province, Pakistan, have perceived organizational justice positively and this perception has influenced organizational citizenship behavior mediated by variable of trust on the faculty. It means that trust on organization would mediate correlation between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior. Not only in public sector, organizational justice was also the antecedent of organizational citizenship behavior in private sector. Dally et.al. (2015) asserted that in the context of Korea private workers, distributive, procedural and interactional justices are the antecedent for few dimensions constituting organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). These dimensions include helpful behavior, initiative taking, and loyalty of private workers. Some researches have discovered a similar finding on the correlation

Besides influencing organizational citizenship behavior, justice also influences other factor in educational organization. Ravangard et.al (2013) have examined administrative and financial staffs in Shiraz University of Medical Sciences and found that organizational justice dimensions were also influencing organizational commitment variable. It was concluded that the increase of organizational justice would improve the commitment of staff on organization. Research by Malik & Naem (2011) indicated that all aspects of organizational justice have influenced work satisfaction of lecturing staffs in public and private higher educations in Pakistan. Ghorbani & Jehanshahi (2012) declared that organizational justice has an effect on organizational efficacy and personal factor. Tahseen & Ahtaar (2015) showed that in Pakistan context, all dimensions of organizational justice were very influential to the trust of faculty members on their higher educations.

Gosh et.al (2014) examined employees of India governmental banks and found that the dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior, including distributive and interactional justices, are interrelated to each other. It is also found that both distributive and interactional justices have higher contribution to job engagement than procedural justice. In other hand, distributive justice plays important role in determining the relationship between work and organization (organizational engagement). Wang & Jiang (2015) did a research to see the effect of interactional justice on focus-to-organization (organizational citizenship behavior directed by organization/OCBO) and focus-to-supervisor (organizational citizenship behavior directed by supervisor/OCBS). Wang & Jiang examined public servants in the cities of Chengdu and Deyang in Sichuan Province, China, and found a significant correlation of interpersonal justice variable with OCBO and OCBS mediated by variables of organizational identification and supervisor identification. Thus, it is recommended that managers should not merely make rules but also take into
account whether people have accepted fair interpersonal treatment after the validation of rules.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion presented so far, some conclusions are made from the result of review and these are elaborated in the following:

1. In essence, justice is an equivalency or an equality of treatment accepted by someone from others, either in terms of the distribution of resource or the process of achieving outputs or developing interaction.

There is a difference between public and private higher educations on the aspects of finance and operational. Public higher educations are built to serve economical, social, and political needs of the nation, and also for public interest. In the other hand, private higher educations are founded for reducing governmental burden of subsidy and enhancing accessibility of people to higher educations.

The difference of organizational justice in public and private higher educations is caused by managerial and personal factors. Managerial factor is related with how the organization to treat its members fairly, while personal factor is measured from age, gender, education background, work experience, and rank.

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