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Development and Validity of the Japanese Version of the Organizational Justice Scale

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Abstract: Organizational justice has recently attracted attention as a predictor of employee mental and physical health. However, the lack of a Japanese translation of the original English-language organizational justice scale (OJS) has precluded its application in Japan. The present study aimed to develop Japanese version of the measure of organizational justice. We translated the original questionnaire, which is comprised of 20 items, from English to Japanese. The OJS is made up of four distinct dimensions: procedural, distributive, interpersonal and information justice. A total of 229 employees responded to the Japanese version of the OJS (OJS-J), the effort-reward imbalance (ERI) model and the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10). To assess construct validity, we recorded job satisfaction using the visual analog scale (VAS). Our exploratory factor analysis supported the four-factor structure model of OJS-J. Correlation coefficients between the OJS-J and ERI, K10 and VAS were statistically significant, indicating a reasonable degree of construct validity. Obtained internal consistency was markedly high (Cronbach's alpha was 0.96), and test-retest reliability as analyzed with an intraclass correlation coefficient was 0.91. These results suggest that the OJS-J is a reliable and valid measure that may be suitable for use as a predictor of employee health in the Japanese work place.

Key words: Organizational justice, Validity, Reliability

Intoroduction

With administrative costs on the rise, mental disorders have become a cause for concern in many industrialized countries. Organizational injustice affects organizational citizenship behavior and commitment[1, 2], prompting managers to consider new ways to minimize the impact on individual employees and the organization as a whole[3].

Organizational justice has attracted attention as a potential predictor of employee health. The term, "organizational justice" was defined by Greenberg to refer to subjective perceptions of fairness in organizations, and this sense of justice is reflected in several different facets of employees' working lives, such as in perceptions regarding fairness of resource distributions and decision-making[4]. In recent decades, many studies outside of Japan have suggested that perceived low organizational justice increases the risk of health problems in the workplace[5]. Several reports further suggest an association between low procedural and interpersonal justice and cardiovascular disease[6, 7]. Further, minor psychiatric disorders have also been associated with perceived low levels of justice in the workplace[8]. Elovainio *et al*. found that a low evaluation of self-reported health was associated with a negative perception of justice in the workplace. Further, these authors also found that organizational justice was directly related to absence from work due to sickness and indirectly related to employee turnover rate[7]. Several reviews and books have also reported on the usefulness of the concept organizational justice in other respects[5, 9, 10].

These previous findings highlight both the importance of research into organizational justice and the adoption of suitable measures derived therefrom.

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However, research on this subject in Japan has been precluded by the lack of an organizational justice scale (OJS) in Japanese. At present, the only available Japanese version of an OJS is the Japanese translation of a modified version[8] of Moorman's scale[2] (Inoue *et al*., in press)[11]. However, Moorman's scale has been criticized for measuring only procedural and interactional justice (a composite scale of interpersonal and informational justice), but not distributive justice or informational justice, as well as for the fact that several items under the interactional justice subscale appear closely related to procedural justice. In contrast, the OJS developed by Colquitt in 2001, a self-reported 20-item questionnaire, is designed to measure all four dimensions with a clear factor-based validity[10]. Here, to develop a valid and reliable Japanese version of the organizational justice scale (OJS-J), we translated Colquitt's OJS into Japanese and validated the translation among a group of manufacturing industry employees.

The OJS may prove a valuable tool for assessing employee health, and may be generalized for use in companies and organizations across many occupational fields[10].

Methods

Participants

All participants were full-time workers at two large manufacturing companies in Kanagawa Prefecture, including researchers, machine operators, and office workers. Workers who returned the completed questionnaire, conducted on an anonymous basis, along with written informed consent were included in the study sample. Responses were obtained from 300 of the 398 full-time employees in the companies included in the study (response rate=75.4%). Of these, the 229 who provided complete responses, except for the participant profile section, were ultimately enrolled in the present study. Our study protocol was approved by the human research ethics committee of Kitasato University School of Medicine (Kanagawa, Japan).

Measures

Development of the Japanese version of the OJS

The organizational justice questionnaire developed by Colquitt (2001) is a self-reported questionnaire which uses Likert scale responses to indicate degree of organizational justice (Table 1). The scale explores four domains: procedural justice (seven items), distributive justice (four items), interpersonal justice (four items), and informational justice (five items). Procedural justice denotes justice in the decision-making process, distributive justice denotes justice in effort and rewards, interpersonal justice denotes justice in how superiors treat subordinates, and informational justice denotes justice in subordinates being appropriately informed regarding evaluation by their superiors. A previous study has suggested that this four-factor form of the questionnaire is better than one-, two-, or three-factor models. Response options are delivered on a Likert scale with possible responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with higher scores indicating a higher level of perceived organizational justice[9].

The OJS was translated into Japanese by a Japanese occupational physician and a psychologist licensed by Colquitt. The translations were discussed with a third party (three occupational physicians), and a final version was agreed upon by consensus. The Japanese translation was then back-translated by a bilingual American trans-

Table 1. Organizational Justice Scale

Procedural Justice
The followning items refer to the procedures used to arrive at your (outcome). To what extent:
1. Have you been able to express your views and feelings during those procedures?
2. Have you had influence over the (outcome) arrived at by those procedures?
3. Have those procedures been applied consistently?
4. Have those procedures been free of bias?
5. Have those procedures been based on accurate information?
6. Have you been able to appeal the (outcome) arrived at by those procedures?
7. Have those procedures upheld ethical and moral standards?
Distributive Justice
The following items refer to your (outcome). To what extent:
1. Does your (outcome) reflect the effort you have put into your work?
2. Is your (outcome) appropriate for the work you have completed?
3. Does your (outcome) reflect what you have contributed to the organization?
4. Is your (outcome) justified, given your performance?
Interpersonal Justice
The following items refer to (the authority figure who enacted the procedure). To what extent:
1. Has (he/she) treated you in a polite manner?
2. Has (he/she) treated you with dignity?
3. Has (he/she) treated you with respect?
4. Has (he/she) refrained from improper remarks or comments?
Informational Justice
The following items refer to (the authority figure who enacted the procedure). To what extent:
1. Has (he/she) been candid in (his/her) communications with you?
2. Has (he/she) explained the procedures throughly?
3. Were (his/her) explanations regarding the procedures reasonable?
4. Has (he/she) communicated details in a timely manner?
5. Has (he/she) seemed to tailor (his/her) communications to individuals' specific needs?

All items use a 5-point scale with anchors of 1 (to a small extent) and 5 (to a large extent).

lator into English. This back-translated version was compared by Colquitt with the original English version and confirmed as being the same as the original questionnaire, both conceptually and linguistically.

Other measures

Other measures used to assess construct validity of the OJS-J included the effort-reward imbalance (ERI) model, the Kessler psychological distress scale (K10), and using the visual analog scale (VAS) for assessment of satisfaction with work environment and with job.

The ERI model is a theoretical concept proposed by Siegrist that assesses adverse health effects sustained due to workplace stress. The model defines stress at work as an imbalance between high effort expended and low reward received, and the reliability and validity of the Japanese version of the ERI model has already been proven[13]. The ERI questionnaire contains 23 Likert-scale items, consisting of 2 extrinsic components (6 items for extrinsic [situational] effort and 11 items for occupational reward [money, respect, and stability]) and 1 intrinsic component (6 items for over-commitment). The present study, ERI ratio was treated as a continuous variable, with values greater than 1 denoting placement in the high-risk group and each subscale of the three rewards-at work dimensions was used separately, as well as the effort scale.

The ERI model provides an estimate of how satisfied an individual is with organizational outcomes (salary level, promotions received, etc.). In contrast, many previous justice studies have measured satisfaction based on outcomes of decision-making processes, such as a salary level, promotions received, and performance evolution. The ERI model and the organizational model were both particularly promising in this respect, as they have been shown to predict reduced health as well as reduced commitment and motivation towards working. We therefore determined that ERI and organizational justice, particularly the distributive justice subscale, were similar in several respect. Additionally, previous studies have demonstrated that both organizational justice and ERI are able to predict risk of health and sickness absence, and low organizational justice was considered to be associated with a high ERI ratio[9, 10, 17].

Evidence has been found linking organizational justice with distressing psychological conditions such as depression[7]. The K10 was developed to assess symptoms of depression over the preceding one-month period[14], and the corresponding Japanese version has been well validated[15]. The scale consists of 10 items describing experienced symptoms of depression, with five-point Likert scale response options, ranging from 1 (never [experience]) to 5 (always [experience]). The sum of the item scores is used as an indicator of levels of psychological distress.

The correlation between organizational justice and work satisfaction has been shown previously[16]. Here, a one-dimensional VAS with ten levels of evaluation was used to assess satisfaction with one's job and working environment. Participants were asked to rate their job satisfaction, ranging from "never satisfied" (0 mm) to "completely satisfied" (100 mm), with a higher final score indicating greater satisfaction.

Statistical analysis

Factor structure of the OJS-J

In the present study, we compared a four-factor model to one-, two-, and three-factor models used in a previous study[10]. The one-factor model included all the items listed in Table 1, indicative of greater organizational justice; the two-factor model included distributive justice as one factor and procedural justice as the other, with procedural justice subsuming interpersonal and informational justice; and the three-factor model included distributive, procedural, and interactional justice (combining interpersonal justice and informational justice). A confirmatory factor analysis was carried out to ensure that the factor structure of the translated OJS was the same as that of the original OJS subscales. Model fitness was assessed using the following fit indices: goodness of fit index (GFI), adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), consistent Akaike's information criterion (CAIC), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and comparative fit index (CFI).

Reliability of the OJS-J

Internal consistency of the scales was assessed using Cronbach's α. Test-retest reliability was assessed using the interclass correlation coefficient (ICC) in a sub-sample of 36 respondents who completed the OJS on two separate occasions with a 1-wk interval between surveys.

Construct validity of the OJS-J

Construct validity of the OJS-J was assessed by calculating Pearson's correlation coefficients for each OJS-J subscale with the ERI and its subscales, psychological distress (K10), and satisfaction with one's job and work environment.

All analyses were carried out with SPSS version 17.0 (SPSS Japan Inc., Tokyo, Japan), and confirmatory factor analyses were performed with Amos version 5 (SPSS Japan Inc.).

Results

Demographic characteristics of the participants are

shown in Table 2. The average participant age (mean age[SD]=44.3 yr [± 10.73]) was older than the national average, and the ratio of female participants (20.5%) was less than the national average across all industries (41.6%, as recorded in White Paper on Labor, Japan). Participants' occupations included office worker, clerk, technical staff, researcher and others.

Factor structure of the OJS-J

Table 3 shows the fit indices of the one-, two-, three-factor and four-factor models and they were: GFI=0.428, 0.511, 0.661, 0.817; AGFI=0.294, 0.392, 0.574, 0.766; RMSEA=0.223, 0.183, 0.141, 0.097; χ^2=2,101.688, 1,460.128, 918,774, 513.797; CAIC=2,359.037, 1,723.910, 1,195.424, 809.748 and CFI=0.583, 0.721, 0.838, 0.924. Factor analysis showed that the four-factor model was the best among the four models, and confirmatory factor analysis results and the path diagram of the four factor model are shown in Fig. 1. All path coefficients were significant.

Reliability of the OJS-J

The reliability of the OJS was evaluated in terms of internal consistency reliability and test-retest reliability. Internal consistency reliability, as assessed using Cronbach's α, was 0.91 for procedural justice, 0.96 for distributive justice, 0.94 for human relations justice, 0.93 for informational justice, for total value of 0.96. All inter-

Table 2. Participant profiles

Characteristics	n (%)*
Sex	
Male	180 (78.6)
Female	47 (20.5)
Missing	2 (0.9)
Age	44.3 ± 10.73
Occupation	
Manager	70 (30.6)
Non-Manager	145 (63.3)
Office worker	30 (13.1)
Clerk	30 (13.1)
Technical staff	62 (27.1)
Researcher	16 (7.0)
Other	7 (3.1)
Missing	8 (3.5)
Education	
Junior high school	11 (4.8)
High school	86 (37.6)
College	62 (27.1)
Vocational school	17 (7.4)
Graduate degree or higher	37 (16.2)
Other	13 (5.7)
Missing	3 (1.3)
Full-time employee	229 (100.0)

*Plus-minus values are means ± SD.

Table 3. Comparison of a priori organizational justice structure

Structural Model	χ^2	CAIC	GFI	AGFI	RMSEA	CFI
1-factor	2,101.688	2,359.037	0.428	0.294	0.223	0.583
2-factor	1,460.128	1,723.910	0.511	0.392	0.183	0.721
3-factor	918.774	1,195.424	0.661	0.574	0.141	0.838
4-factor	513.797	809.748	0.817	0.766	0.097	0.924
(N=229)						

Table 4. Correlation between OJS-J and other measures

	Procedural Justice	Distributive Justice	Interpersonal Justice	Informational Justice	Total Justice
ERI					
Extrinsic Effort	–0.20**	–0.23**	–0.19**	–0.10	–0.21**
Reward-Salary	0.35***	0.46***	0.34***	0.34***	0.44***
Reward-Esteem	0.45***	0.51***	0.46***	0.45***	0.55***
Reward-Status control	0.23**	0.29***	0.30***	0.21**	0.30***
ERI ratio	–0.34***	–0.39***	–0.34***	–0.29***	–0.40***
K10	–0.18**	–0.26***	–0.25***	–0.15*	–0.24***
VAS job satisfaction					
Satisfaction with work environment	0.35***	0.44***	0.38***	0.42***	0.47***
Satisfaction with job overall	0.32***	0.38***	0.30***	0.32***	0.39***

*p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001.

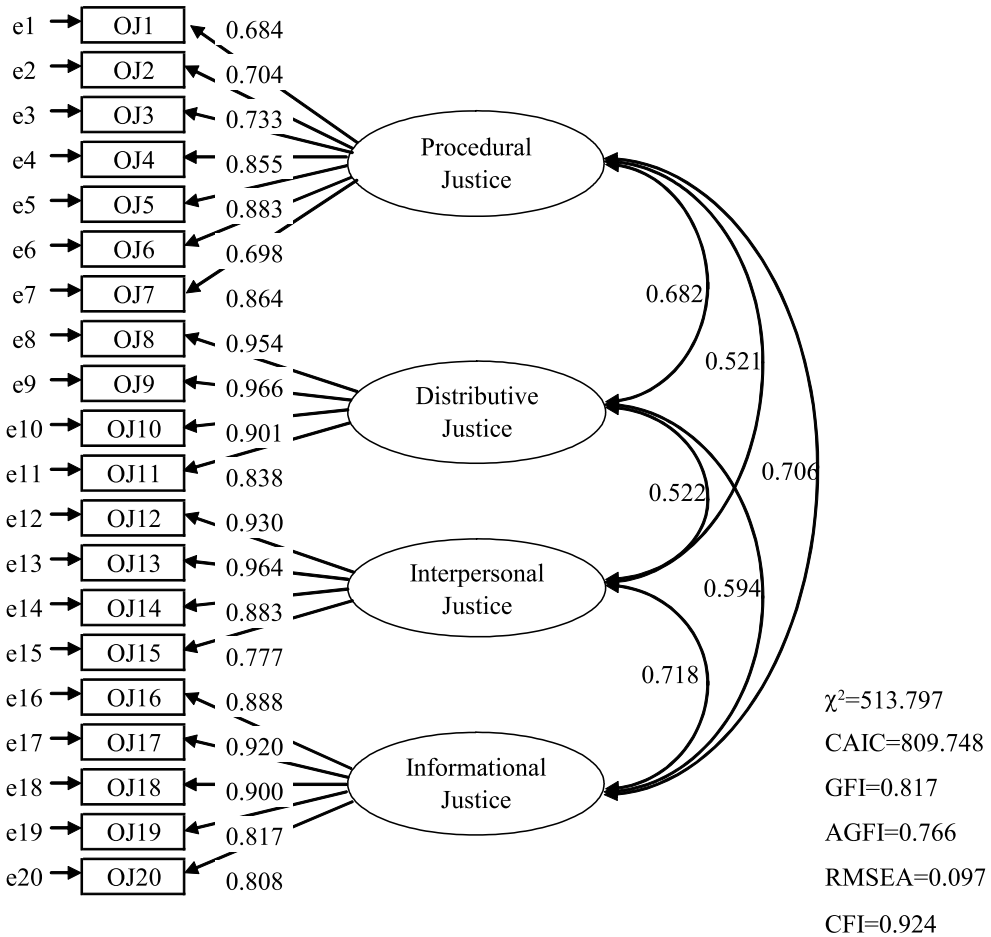

Fig. 1. Result of Confirmatory Factor Analysis.
OJ=Organizational Justice.
All paths from construct to item significant at $p<0.001$.
All correlation coefficients between OJS-J subscale significant at $p<0.001$.

nal consistency reliabilities were significant. Test-retest reliability was determined with ICC by comparing responses to the OJS-J questionnaire among a subsample of the total participants (n=36) after administration on two separate occasions with a one-week interval. Reliability as assessed by this method was found to be 0.91.

Validity of the OJS-J

Correlation coefficients between the OJS-J total and ERI ratio, K10, and VAS score of job satisfaction were –0.40 ($p<0.001$), –0.24 ($p<0.001$), and 0.39 ($p<0.001$), respectively (Table 4), with higher scores indicating a higher level of perceived organizational justice. Further, statistical significance was found for correlation coefficients in nearly all domains. Correlation coefficients for procedural justice, distributive justice, informational justice, and total justice scores were all greater than 0.4 and had a significant positive association with ERI reward-esteem (r=0.45, 0.51, 0.46, 0.45, 0.55, $p<0.001$). Further, the distributive justice and total justice scores also showed positive significance with the ERI reward-salary subscale (r=0.46, 0.44, $p<0.001$).

A significant positive association was found between VAS work environment satisfaction and distributive justice, informational justice, and total justice score (r=0.44, 0.42, 0.47, $p<0.001$).

Discussion

Results from the present study showed that the Japanese version of the OJS-J had high internal consistency and test-retest reliability, as well as acceptable factor-based and construct validity. Cronbach's confidents for all four subscales were greater than 0.90, and the ICC for test-retest reliability with a one-week interval was also greater than 0.90. These reliability coefficients were similar to those reported for the original OJS[4]. Taken together, these findings suggest that all OJS-J subscales are high-

ly reliable with a relatively small measurement error.

Confirmatory factor analysis of the OJS-J items in the present study confirmed that the four-factor model, including procedural justice, distributive justice, interpersonal justice, and informational justice, achieved the best fit for the data. This conclusion was also consistent with the factor structure and theoretical expectations of the original OJS[10]. Values for several goodness-of-fit indicators (GFI, AGFI) and the CFI were moderate. Taken together, these findings indicated that the Japanese version of the OJS had factor-based validity.

We adopted the four-factor model in the present study for several reasons. First, the χ^2 and CAIC values for this particular model were the lowest of the four available models. If there were some candidate models, the least CAIC model was good for the best better log likelihood. Second, among the possible models, the GFI and AGFI were highest for the four-factor model. Even if the GFI and AGFI were recognized as good when they were more than 0.90, we could adopt the model when the model was built based scientific basis. Third, Toyoda suggested that RMSEA, which should be less than 0.10, is the most reliable fit index and is the least affected by degree of freedom[18]. Given that the RMSEA was 0.097 when using the four-factor model in the present study, we opted to use this model. Fourth, the CFI was more than 0.9, and could thus be considered good.

In the correlation analysis between the ERI and the OJS-J subscale scores, as expected, scores for all three dimensions of rewards at work (reward from salary, esteem rewards, and status control) were significantly associated with all four subscales of the OJS, while the effort scale was negatively and more weakly associated with the OJS subscales. The correlation coefficient was slightly greater between these three rewards at work and distributive justice. This finding is consistent with the theoretical expectation that distributive justice in the workplace social structure increases rewards at work among individual workers. In contrast, among the three dimensions of rewards at work, esteem reward (psychological rewards from their supervisor and coworkers) were most strongly associated with the OJS-J subscales. High organizational justice may increase positive feedback to among workers at work, and then subsequently increase esteem rewards. These findings further support the construct validity of the OJS-J.

The OJS-J subscales were negatively associated with the K10 score of psychological distress and positively associated with job and work environment satisfaction. Previous studies have shown a link between low organizational justice and psychological distress[7, 19] and between high organizational justice and job satisfaction[19, 20]. Findings from the present study are again consistent with previous findings, supporting the construct validity of the OJS-J. Interestingly, the correlation coefficients between the OJS-J and work environment satisfaction were slightly greater than those between the OJS-J subscales and job satisfaction, possibly because organizational justice could be reflect in a social structure of a workplace or company.

Several limitations to the present study warrant mention. First, lack of organizational justice standard or standardized criteria for measuring job satisfaction in Japan necessitated construct validity assessment. While these concepts are not exactly the same as organizational justice, however, they do share some similarity. Second, participants were overall older than the average Japanese worker, and there were fewer women than are present in the average of Japanese workplace. Generalization of the OJS-J will require further studies in various workplaces around Japan.

In conclusion, we found that our Japanese translation of the OJS had high internal consistency and test-retest reliability, as well as exceptional factor-based and other construct validity, suggesting that the OJS-J is useful for the assessing organizational justice in a Japanese workplace. Further research may still be required to replicate the findings across a broader range of occupations and employers.

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Appendix

日本語版組織公平性尺度

		ほとんどそうではない	あまりそうではない	どちらでもない	まあまあそうだ	全くそうだ
＜手続き公平性＞ あなたの評価(給料・昇進・仕事の役割など)が決定されるまでの手続きについて、当てはまるものを１つ選んで○をつけてください。						
1. 手続きの過程で、あなたの意見や気持ちを示すことができましたか？	1					
2. あなたは、その手続きや評価に何らかの影響を与えることができましたか？	2					
3. 手続きは、いつも一貫していましたか？	3					
4. 手続きは、偏りなく行われましたか？	4					
5. 手続きは、正確な情報に基づいて行われましたか？	5					
6. 手続きや評価に対して、異議を唱えることが許されていましたか？	6					
7. 手続きは、倫理的・道徳的規範に基づいて行われましたか？	7					
＜分配公平性＞ あなたが受けた評価（給料・昇進・仕事の役割など）について、当てはまるものを1つ選んで○をつけてください。						
1. 評価は、あなたが仕事に費やした努力を反映していますか？	1					
2. 評価は、あなたがやり遂げた仕事に見合ったものですか？	2					
3. 評価は、あなたの組織への貢献度を反映していますか？	3					
4. 評価は、あなたの能力に見合ったものですか？	4					

		ほとんどそうではない	あまりそうではない	どちらでもない	まあまあそうだ	全くそうだ
＜対人関係公平性＞ 上司（あなたの評価を決定する権限を持った人）について、当てはまるものを１つ選んで○をつけてください。						
1. 上司は、あなたに礼儀正しく接していますか？	1					
2. 上司は、あなたに誠実に接していますか？	2					
3. 上司は、あなたを尊重していますか？	3					
4. 上司は、不適切な意見や批評を控えていますか？	4					
＜情報公平性＞ 上司（あなたの評価を決定する権限を持った人）について、当てはまるものを１つ選んで○をつけてください。						
1. 上司は、あなたと率直に話をしていますか？	1					
2. 上司は、あなたの評価決定までの手続きについて、十分な説明をしましたか？	2					
3. 手続きに関する上司の説明は、筋が通っていましたか？	3					
4. 上司は適宜、必要な情報を伝えましたか？	4					
5. 上司は、個人のニーズに合わせたコミュニケーションをとっていますか？	5					