



Using Instant Messaging for Collaboration: A Study of the Relationships Among Organizational Trust, Justice, and Spirituality

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Abstract. Enterprises must use human resource management to create the difference in the fierce competition of today's business environment. Employees are an enterprise's most important assets, and it is important for administrators to grasp the psychology of their staff. Modern technology provided by mobile instant messaging (IM) has created a communication revolution, creating a culture of "texting rather than talking" through the use of smart phone mobile applications, such as WhatsApp, Line, and WeChat. Therefore, it is important for researchers to consider the influence of IM on work relationships and communication. This study explores the relationships between organizational trust, organizational justice, and organizational spirituality in the context of IM communication. Structural equation modeling was used to analyze questionnaire data, showing that organizational spirituality predicted organizational trust and organizational justice. The findings suggested that organizations should utilize the benefits of IM, create an organizational justice strategy, offer better human resource management, and create an environment in which employees' organizational spirituality can be enhanced.

Keywords: Instant messaging · Organizational trust · Organizational justice
Organizational spirituality

1 Introduction

Modern enterprises must satisfy their customers in order to survive. In competitive markets, high quality goods and services are not enough to sustain an advantage, so enterprises must look to innovation. Currently, more than 30 billion people use smartphones, and instant messaging (IM) has become a primary activity among smartphone utilities (Embrain 2014; Smith 2015). The convenient application of IM has already been extensively employed in industry, for example, chat groups and direct messaging may be used during collaboration. Research has shown that technology use has beneficial effects on relationships and satisfaction with life (Reinecke and Trepte 2014). Technology could offer similar beneficial effects in work relationships. Human resources are the most important assets in an organization, only people cannot lack the advantage that cannot replace in enterprises either. Internal marketing has recently become an important strategy in business administration. Executives know that

employing satisfactory staff may increase customer satisfaction. For this reason, it is important for employers to understand their staff's ideas and attitudes.

Many researchers have investigated satisfaction, commitment, and identification to understand whether an employee's positive view of their company has influenced their performance and efficiency. Organizational trust began to receive the attention of researchers in the 1990s. Organizational trust can be defined as the trust a member of staff has for their colleagues, executives, and organization. The more organizational trust an employee has, the more they may be willing to contribute to the organization. In addition, organizational justice theory has received attention in the literature in the last ten years. This posits that justice within an organization can be distributive, procedural, or interactional and if an employee assesses organizational activities as unjust, then they may be more suspicious of the enterprise in the future.

Organizational spirituality is a new topic. Originating from the concept of spirituality in religious groups, it explains staff's inner life, the energy they devote to enterprises, and the meaning they find in work and in their community. The effects of a technology communication tool such as IM on organizational spirituality would offer value to studies on work collaboration. To date, there has been no discussion of the relationships between organizational, organizational justice, and organizational spirituality, which have been addressed by the current study.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Organizational Trust

When conceptualized as a psychological state, trust has been defined in terms of several interrelated cognitive processes and orientations (Blau 1964). Trust can be characterized as a set of socially learned and socially confirmed expectations that people have of each other, of the organizations and institutions in which they work, and of the natural and moral social orders that form fundamental understandings in their lives. Several organizational researchers have argued that it is useful to conceptualize trust in terms of individual choice behavior in various trust dilemma situations (Meyer 1994). The accumulation of social capital requires a significant amount of trust within and between all levels of an organization (Sashittal et al. 1998).

2.2 Organizational Justice

Organizational justice was first described by Greenberg (1990), who defined it as an individual's perception of, and reaction to, fairness in an organization. Much earlier, Adam (Adams 1965) proposed equity theory, in which conditions of unfairness are said to create tension within a person, which he or she will attempt to resolve. The concept of justice is one important variable in organizational behavior. Organizational justice has been defined as the processes and procedures has measured, regular and is said to be present when staff view their leaders as impartial, sincere, and logical (Niehoff et al. 1993).

2.3 Organizational Spirituality

Interest in spirituality and religion has grown considerably in scientific and professional communities over the past three decades. However, the bulk of this interest has focused on the relation of religion and spirituality to general health and well-being (Ashmos and Duchon 2000). Inner life is the strength that an individual produces from the inside, which they may rely on to overcome personal challenges, and the values through which they perceive themselves. When engaged in meaningful work, staff feel that they are making a contribution to society that affirms the value and meaning of their life. Individuals may find a sense of community in linking with each other through work, and cooperating with each other may encourage a sense of mutuality between peers.

2.4 Organizational Trust, Organizational Justice, and Organizational Spirituality

Understanding organizational trust and organizational justice through review of the relevant literature may provide some explanation of organizational spirituality. Many findings have confirmed that increasing organizational trust can improve performance in whole enterprises (Liu and Ding 2012; Mitchell et al. 2012; Nambudiri 2012; Wong et al. 2012). The current research has addressed the following hypotheses:

H1: Organizational trust has a significant influence on organizational spirituality.

H2: Organizational justice has a significant influence on organizational spirituality.

2.5 IM and Work Collaboration

Previous studies have investigated whether automatic feedback systems improved organizational performance better than face-to-face feedback. Certain studies have suggested that workplace performance may be enhanced by electronically-mediated communication, which may be valuable, as it allows employees to self-disclose (Valkenburg and Peter 2007). Employees may take advantage of electronic communication by engaging actively in self-presentation through IM and text messaging (Reid and Reid 2010).

3 Research Design

3.1 Research Structure

The theoretical model upon which this research has been based is as follows.

3.2 Participants

A questionnaire was administered to small and medium-sized enterprises in Taiwan using IM (mostly Line) as a communication instrument. Of the 500 questionnaires sent, 210 responses were received, giving a response rate of 42%.

3.3 Research Tool

Organizational trust has two dimensions: cognitive and affective, while organizational justice has three: distributive, procedural, and interactional justice. Organizational spirituality refers to an employee’s inner life, community, and their sense of meaningful work. In order to examine the reliability and validity of each assumption, AMOS version 20.0 was used (Fig. 1).

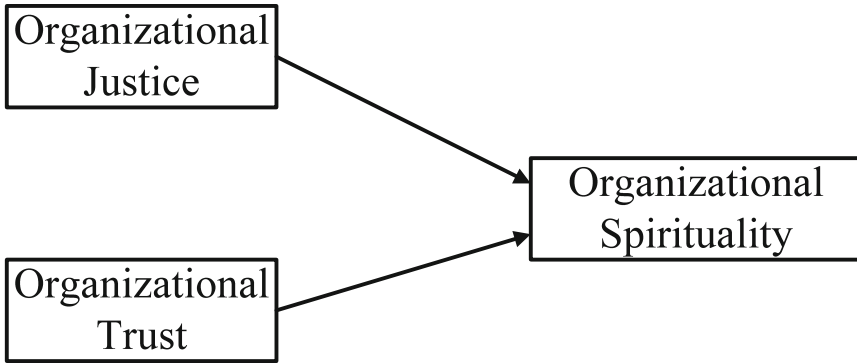


Fig. 1. Research structure chart

4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted for organizational trust, organizational justice, and organizational spirituality under the effects of IM. This showed the composite reliability of organizational trust (0.8673), organizational justice (0.8294), and organizational spirituality (0.9154), and the average variances extracted in each were 0.7657, 0.6214, and 0.7836, respectively. Convergent validity of the three constructs was very good, and comparing the square root of the average variance extracted and all correlations showed discriminant validity (Table 1 and Fig. 2).

Table 1. AVE & correlation

	Organizational Justice	Organizational Trust	Organizational Spirituality
Organizational Justice	0.7882		
Organizational Trust	0.6081	0.8750	
Organizational Spirituality	0.6511	0.5693	0.8852

Note: The diagonal number value is the square root of AVE

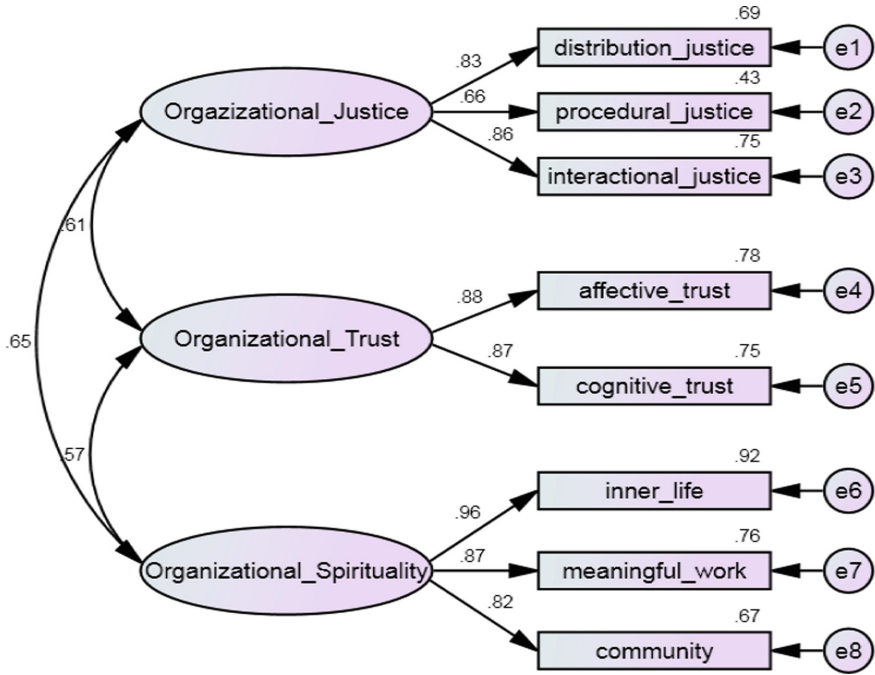


Fig. 2. Confirmatory factor analysis

4.2 Structure Model and Hypothesis

After confirmatory factor analysis, further examination of the hypotheses found that the structure model was a good fit. Chi-square was 20.692, GFI was 0.978, AGFI was 0.952, CFI was 0.978, NNFI was 0.994, IFI was 0.997, and RMSEA was 0.032. All indicators reached the standard number value. In addition, bootstrapping was used to estimate standardized regression coefficients, which were statistically significant, suggesting that both hypotheses were supported (Table 2 and Fig. 3).

Table 2. Standardized regression coefficients and significance

Parameter			Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
Organizational Spirituality	<—	Organizational Justice	.4839***	.2889	.6849	.0007
Organizational Spirituality	<—	Organizational Trust	.2750*	.0619	.4743	.0120
distribution justice	<—	Organizational Justice	.8335	.7330	.9001	.0018
procedural justice	<—	Organizational Justice	.6585	.5573	.7392	.0008
interactional justice	<—	Organizational Justice	.8635	.7883	.9188	.0024
affective trust	<—	Organizational Trust	.8830	.7840	.9622	.0014
cognitive trust	<—	Organizational Trust	.8672	.7931	.9363	.0011
inner life	<—	Spirituality	.9617	.9236	.9911	.0017
meaningful work	<—	Spirituality	.8723	.8064	.9226	.0014
community	<—	Spirituality	.8206	.7284	.9004	.0010

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

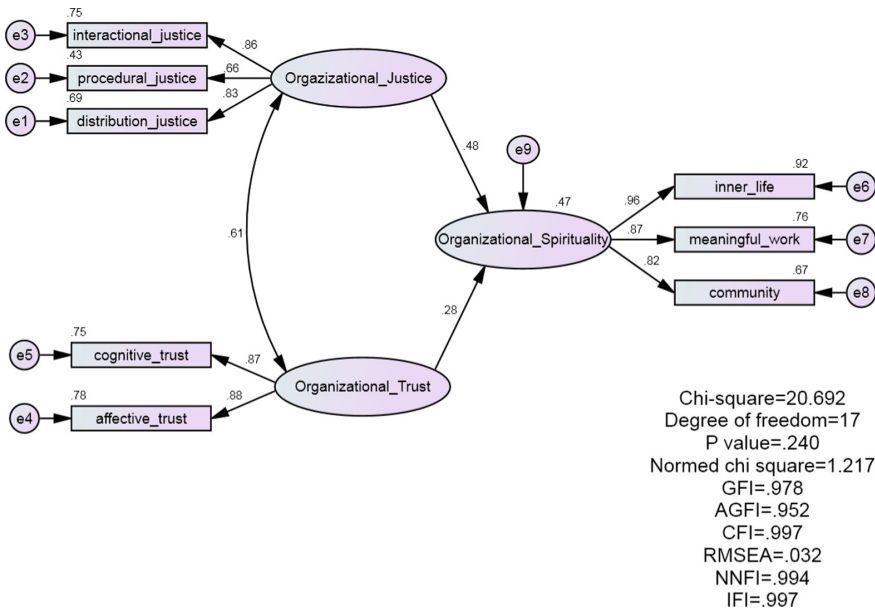


Fig. 3. Structural model

5 Conclusions

Under the advantages of IM, this study showed that organizational trust and organizational justice had a forward significant influence on organizational spirituality. Therefore the hypotheses were supported. The function of organizational justice is important, so enterprises should make efforts to increase it, for example, through the use of IM. In order to improve competitiveness, enterprises should avail themselves of IM technologies and combine strategy with human resource management to strengthen organizational trust, organizational justice, and ultimately, organizational spirituality. It may be helpful for future research to investigate mediators or moderators of the relationships shown in this model.

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