

## JUSTICE AND SUCCESS: HOW TO COMBINE THESE ISSUES IN TEAMWORK?

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**Purpose:** Temporary teams are created to perform a specific task, e.g., to implement a project or solve a problem. They are dissolved when the goal is achieved or the set time has elapsed. The study's primary purpose was to identify the most critical challenges managers should pay attention to manage temporary teams effectively and fairly.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The study covered 110 managers from medium and large enterprises - all having practical experience in the functioning of temporary teams. The study adopted a modified Colquitt scale and used the importance-performance analysis technique.

**Findings:** Factors influencing the sense of fair treatment among participants of this type of team were identified. Experienced managers assessed: the impact of each of these factors on the success of the temporary team and the degree of difficulty involved in providing each of these factors. On this basis, eight challenges for managers have been identified, i.e. factors which, on the one hand, are very important and, on the other hand, difficult to ensure.

**Research limitations/implications:** The potential limitation of the study concerns the fact that it covers enterprises from the high-tech industry. Employees of public organizations or other industries may perceive justice differently. The research considered two variables that may affect the success of temporary teams' work. A different type and/or a more significant number of variables may contribute to a better understanding of this issue and the holistic approach. Elements related to relations, as well as ethical and moral issues, are worth paying attention to. It seems that the last ones belong to the commonly emphasized matters; hence they can be perceived as functioning, obligatory, and as relating somewhat to the individual leaders-team members relations, while those seen as more difficult as relating to relations within the group or between the leaders and the whole group.

**Originality/value:** We see value in relating the issue of equity to interim teams and identifying challenges to its application by managers.

**Keywords:** organizational justice, team performance, temporary teams, success, managers perception.

**Category of the paper:** Research paper.

## 1. Introduction

Recognizing that employees' attitudes and actions matter for the functioning of organizations in the modern world, attention is increasingly being paid to the individual level in the context of organizational behavior. The importance of fairness is emphasized (Song et al., 2012; Suifan, 2019; Unterhitzberger, Bryde, 2019, Wu et al., 2017), which influences motivation, job satisfaction, well-being at work and organizational commitment, etc. that is so valuable today (Ambrose et al., 2021; Bensemmane et al., 2018).

This points to the importance of the manager as the person who is "the most visible and relevant interpreter and communicator of policies, systems and practices that affect employees" (Frenkel, Bednall, 2016, p. 21). Thus, on the perception of fairness and interpretation of how they are treated in the organization.

At the same time, teamwork is indicated as a desirable, necessary activity in relation, among other things, to achieving set goals, innovation, expanding knowledge and gaining competitive advantage (Chen et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2015, Tröster et al., 2014). While the literature on teamwork and permanent teams is ubiquitous, relatively few publications on temporary teams are (Lv, Feng, 2021). It is difficult to understand why, since they are frequently invoked and have many characteristics that significantly distinguish them from permanent teams (Zapata et al., 2017, Burke, Morley, 2022).

People participating in the work of temporary teams have to deal with many specific problems, such as, for example, being appointed to work in a team urgently (because a problem suddenly appeared), lack of time to get to know each other and integration with other team members, working under solid time pressure, the need to reconcile basic (existing) duties with new tasks, prioritize what needs to be done ASAP – they regular tasks or new duties, etc. This can lead to a feeling of unfair treatment among members of temporary teams. Even if everybody is aware of "new situation", not everybody can switch to the new role the same way. This, in turn, could have a negative impact on the team's performance.

Previous research on organizational justice has focused mainly on managing subordinates who experience a sense of unfairness, as this feeling is justifiably conceived as a problem for employee performance (Reb et al., 2019). For this reason, most justice research has heavily focused on how perceptions of fairness can be controlled or how unwanted consequences can be alleviated (Kurdoglu, 2020). There is a lack of research to show managers how fair management can contribute to the success of a temporary team or organization.

The paper aims to answer the following research question:

RQ: What factors (referred to as challenges) should managers focus on to ensure the temporary teams work effectively and fairly?

The study offers a new framework for efficient and fair management of temporary teams because:

1. refers to the individual behavior of employees but also as team members,
2. combines justice with efficiency,
3. takes into account the point of view of managers (people who have a tangible impact on justice) and not employees (people who only judge whether they are treated fairly),
4. two criteria are integrated to evaluate the actions and decisions: the importance of the factor and the degree of difficulty in providing it.

This study is structured as follows. The next section presents the theoretical background to explore the issue of temporary teams and justice in the organization. The following part depicts the research methodology, including developing a research tool, sampling and data collection. The next part is the presentation of the findings. The final section discusses the results, identified limitations and recommendations for future research.

## 2. Background

### 2.1. Temporary teams

The concept of temporary teams comes from temporary organizations. Also, the project as a complex social construct is considered a temporary organization (Unterhitzberger , Bryde, 2019). Therefore, it is assumed that project teams are a variation of temporary teams.

The first person who put forward the concept of temporary organizations and structures was Warren G. Bennis. It happened in 1965. More and more scholars are now studying temporary organizations or structures (Lv, Feng, 2021a). Burke and Morley (2016), based on the results of a systematic literature review, identified five leading research areas related to temporary organization. They were presented together with the substantive themes in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

*Research areas related to temporary organizations*

<b>Research on:</b>				
1	2	3	4	5
<b>individual/team attributes and interior processes</b>	<b>task attributes</b>	<b>tensions with permanent organization</b>	<b>networks and organizational fields</b>	<b>outcomes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ coordination processes</li> <li>▪ leadership</li> <li>▪ cognitive incongruence</li> <li>▪ team tenure and turnover</li> <li>▪ temporal phenomena</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ exogeneity and temporal limitation</li> <li>▪ uncertainty and ambiguity</li> <li>▪ complexity</li> <li>▪ uniqueness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ autonomy and embeddedness</li> <li>▪ learning and knowledge transfer</li> <li>▪ human resource management</li> <li>▪ resource dependence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ networks and institutional embeddedness</li> <li>▪ network routines and path dependence</li> <li>▪ project ecologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ temporary organization versus permanent organization perspectives</li> </ul>

Source: (Burke , Morley, 2016).

The essence of the temporary organization is usually explained using four basic concepts: (1) time, (2) task, (3) team and (4) transformation. In temporary organizations, time can be envisaged as a linear section of a continuous-time flow that is cut out and thus made predictable and plannable. Temporary organizations have an ex-ante determined termination point, fixed either by a specific date or by the attainment of a predefined state or condition, resulting in them being described as transient, of limited duration, or subject to 'institutionalized termination' (Burke, Morley, 2016). The presence of a task, something that needs attention, is the main reason for creating a temporary organization. The emphasis on the task can be compared to the emphasis on goals and the repeated revision of goals in permanent organizations. The team focuses on interpersonal relationships, how teams can function by building engagement, and how they connect with the surrounding environment through legitimation processes. Transformation is the primary goal of temporary organizations; something must be achieved in terms of transition before success can be declared. In permanent organizations, the emphasis is on production, not transition. When transition becomes necessary as part of a permanent organization, temporary organizations are often created to deal with it (Lundin, Söderholm, 1995). It is worth noting that the concept of temporary organization is not limited to the functioning of specific temporary structures within traditional permanent organizations (e.g. enterprises). More recently, scholars are drawing attention to alternative configurations of temporary organizations: inter-organizational project ventures and project-based organizations (Burke, Morley, 2016, 2022).

Temporary teams (understood as temporary structures within organizations) are commonly used in modern enterprises (Lv, Feng, 2021a; Tyssen et al., 2013). They are assembled to finish a specific task in a finite timeframe (Altschuller, Benbunan-Fich, 2010). The most significant difference between the teams of permanent ones is that it is known in advance that when the task is completed, the team will be disbanded. The second characteristic of temporary teams is that after completing the task (and disbanding the team), some members can remain together with each other and other members of teams maybe never get together (Tannenbaum et al., 2012). These features imply the specificity of temporary teams. For example, they often do not have enough time to develop roles and norms, establish deeper trust, develop communication patterns, and resolve sources of deep-lying conflict (Saunders, Ahuja, 2006).

There are many types of temporary teams. The literature on the subject describes, among others, the following:

- 1) project teams (working on highly skilled projects) and ad hoc teams (problem-solving teams, typically with seasoned professionals) (Saunders, Ahuja, 2006);
- 2) virtual teams and traditional teams (Panteli, Duncan, 2004),
- 3) short-time teams and long-time teams (Bakker et al., 2013),
- 4) teams driven by expected events and teams driven by unexpected events (Jacobsson, Hällgren, 2016).

It is widely reported that temporary teams can generate a positive impact on the performance of different organizational processes, such as increased individual involvement, better problem-

solving, creative solutions and effective implementation of decisions (Jugend, da Silva, 2012; Maciejovsky et al., 2013; Maylor, Turkulainen, 2019; Sydow et al., 2004, Zapata et al., 2017). This applies to enterprises and other organizations, e.g., from the public sector (Stipp et al., 2018).

With regard to temporary teams, previous research has demonstrated some significant problems. The teams tended to experience less cooperation between the parties involved, more relational conflict, and fewer regulatory strategies than ongoing or functional teams (Bakker et al., 2013). Lichtarski (2008) identified six critical barriers of temporary structures' development, i.e. competence regulation problem, boundaries among projects, low acceptance of multi-subordination and heterarchy, lack of opportunities for safety needs fulfilment, complex and changeable nature of project, structure and problems with knowledge creation and exchange.

## 2.2. Organizational justice

Organizational justice addresses the issue of fairness in an organization. As Japsen and Rodwell note (2009), it refers to how employees judge whether something is fair or unfair. Thus, factors taken into account by employees can be considered essential. However, as Greenberg writes (Zhang et al., 2019), such an approach is subjective, calculated and egocentric. Therefore in the case of organizational justice, it is worth to base on the designated criteria. Those proposed in the source literature have been defined based on knowledge about human behavior in the organization and the conducted research. It should be added that they all relate to the decision-making process. At the same time, these criteria relate to different aspects/areas of this process.

They are the basis for distinguishing three main types of justice (Andrews et al., 2008). The first type is *distributive justice*. It relates to the outcome of the process, the perception of fairness of the decisions outcomes and resource allocation<sup>1</sup>. As indicated by Cropanzano and Gilliland (2007) three allocation rules can be applied within it, i.e. equality (to each the same), justice (to each by contributions), and need (to each in accordance with the most urgency)<sup>2</sup>. The second is *procedural justice*. It refers to controlling the decision-making process and the integrity in making decisions. According to Leventhal, it is essential to follow Six Principles for this kind of justice (Przęczek et al., 2020): consistency (procedures must be consistent), impartiality (procedures must treat all employees the same way), accuracy (when implementing procedures, it is required that decision-makers read all the information relevant to the implementation of the procedure and use it correctly in the process), the possibility of repair (procedures must include the possibility to appeal against a decision or other mechanism correcting wrong decisions), participation (all interested parties should be able to participate in the process) and ethics (all decisions should be based on moral and ethical principles acceptable by employees). At the same time, it is worth adding that employees "choose" those that are important to them from these principles. This means that employees can assess fairness considering other criteria (relevant to them). Thus, the results of their perception may be

different in the same organization, that is, in one company, employees may indicate a different level of procedural fairness. The third type is *interactive justice*. It concerns mutual relations between persons or between persons and social groups participating in the process. In the workplace, on the one hand, they relate to communication (honesty, promptness, accuracy) and participation, on the other hand, they are related to the way of treating subordinates (regarding respect, tolerance and openness – see: Chang et al., 2020, p. 286). That is why some authors, like Greenberg (1990), make an additional distinction between informational and interpersonal justice. As Chang et al. (2020) write, even if a manager has taken care to communicate when making a particular decision (informational justice), a subordinate may still feel unfair if the superior treats him or her in a rude manner (interpersonal justice).

Considering the meta-analyses carried out<sup>3</sup> concerning justice in the organization, it can be noted that the considerations covered three issues, i.e. (Przęczek et al., 2020; Silva, Caetano, 2016; Wolfe, Lawson, 2020):

1. The effects of justice, including indications for pro-social and pro-organizational attitudes of the employees, their commitment to work, productivity, and a positive impact on health.
2. Antecedents justice. As shown by Silva and Caetano (2016), about 77% of empirical research concerns such antecedents as: allocation (20%), procedural (15%) or situational (17%) criteria, and organizational features (12%). Some analyzes cover both causes and outcomes of justice, and about 60% of research include the effects of justice, that is: satisfaction (17%), commitment (15%), turnover and trust (12%).
3. Method of measurement and conceptualization.

The authors of the analyses focused mainly on distributive and procedural justice<sup>4</sup> as well as the perspective of employees. The leading role of these three identified issues related to justice is also indicated by other authors, e.g. (Cugueró-Escofet, Fortin, 2014; Hastings, Finegan, 2011; Magnan, Martin, 2019).

A limited number of analyses relating to team<sup>5</sup>, also considering their type (see Table 2) should be emphasized.

**Table 2.**

*Number of publications in the EBSCO database related to justice by team type<sup>6</sup>*

Team type	Number of publications in database	Number of articles included in the analysis*
Temporary teams	1	1
Project teams	6	1
Ad hoc teams	2	-
Development team	8	3
Short-time teams	0	-
Virtual teams	5	1
Teams driven by expected events	0	-

\* Results were verified according to the following criteria: scientific journal, English language, duplication, subject matter.

Source: Own study.

It can be seen that procedural justice and the employees' perspective were primarily analyzed in these studies. Of course, the aftermath of this kind of justice has been studied. The positive impact on the involvement of project team members strengthening of reflectivity in teamwork, which favors this type of team's productivity, efficiency and creativity was mentioned. It was established that the reflectivity of the team<sup>8</sup> is enhanced by the perception of being treated fairly (Lee , Sukoco, 2011). This enables unlearning, which contributes to changes and innovation, which is essential - also under stressful conditions. By contrast, Akgün et al. (2010) showed that joint problem-solving, knowledge expansion and information sharing in the case of *new development teams* facilitate the detection of errors and their repair, learning in a team and favours the speed of decisions and responsibility of actions.

In many analyzed articles, their authors treat procedural fairness as an atmosphere of procedural justice, i.e. collective perception of fairness of applied procedures. In this approach, internal relations between team members are taken into account: mutual treatment, quality of cooperation and communication. The factors that determine them are searched for.

Dayan and Colak (2008) indicated the importance of functional diversity, team size, team stability and collectivism for the level of procedural fairness, thus achieving success (creativity, speed of product launch) by the team programmers. According to the results of these authors' research, the latter two have a positive effect on the climate of justice, while the second has a negative effect, and the first requires a moderate level.

Ganesh (2011) drew attention to the need to design team tasks, which he related to the interdependence of tasks. At the same time, he considered participatory security, i.e., participation in decision-making at every stage of the process (allocation of resources, distribution of rewards, etc.) as necessary, as an opportunity to express one's opinions without feeling threatened (fears related to expressing opinions; their consequences).

Wu et al. (2019) wrote about trusting managers as a possible outcome of team members' perceptions of procedural fairness. For its creation, they emphasized the need for managers to act according to designated and known norms and rules and not introduce new ones on their own.

Likewise, Valentine (2018) stresses the importance of the division of labour within and between task forces (role structures, i.e. clarity of tasks, interdependence between members) as well as the sense of the possibility to enforce justice (i.e. the perception that authorities will be able to act fairly, taking into account the potential of others cheating) in terms of the result of work. It should be added that the author formulated these conclusions searching for conditions conducive to coordination and extra-role behaviours in temporary teams. Indicated conditions were considered important due to the specific nature of the teams. According to Valentine, the time factor is vital for effective teamwork in the context of relational social exchange, which favours, inter alia, trust. Temporary teams "do not have" that time. They are also characterized by the low responsibility of their members and their low motivation.

Also the specifics of virtual teams (i.e., characterized by geographical dispersion of members and based on the use of information technology) - as indicated by Hakonen and Lipponen (2008) - promotes particular sensitivity to the perception of justice. Taking care of it enables reducing the feeling of uncertainty and identification with the team in the conditions of rare encounters and direct communication.

The role of managers in the work of teams can be noticed. On the one hand, in their creation, on the other - in their functioning, relating to organizational aspects (e.g., division of tasks, adoption of rules as well as compliance to them) and social aspects (concerning own credibility and shaping relationships in the team). For this reason, summing up, it is worth pointing to the proposals formulated by Akgün et al. (2010, pp 1105-1106) for project team managers:

- "Establish a psychologically safe environment, where team members are safe to interact with each other without feeling punished, to exchange knowledge, skills, and feelings during the interactions.
- Respect and listen to everybody's ideas and oppositions during the project and try to understand why they are sometimes in opposition.
- Promote cooperation and mutual interaction between members to complete task requirements.
- Define team members' task boundaries and clarify norms and project goals.
- Seed an external focus on developing information about customers and competitors.
- Set knowledge-questioning values by facilitating team members to try out new ideas and seek out new ways to do things”.

### **3. Methods**

#### **3.1. Goal, questions and tasks**

The main goal of the research was to determine factors (referred to as challenges) that managers should focus on to ensure the temporary teams work effectively and fairly.

Therefore, four detailed research questions were posed:

RQ1: What factors impact the sense of justice among temporary team members?

RQ2: Which factors influencing the sense of justice among temporary team members do managers consider essential for the success of temporary teams?

RQ3: Which factors influencing the sense of justice among temporary team members do managers consider difficult to implement?

RQ4: Which factors are challenging for managers, i.e., are important and also difficult to implement?



Answering these research questions and achieving the primary goal of the study requires the implementation of four tasks:

- T1: Identification of factors influencing the sense of justice among temporary team members.
- T2: Assessment of these factors impact the temporary team's success.
- T3: Assessment of the difficulty in providing each of these factors in practice.
- T4: Defining challenges for managers. Identification of factors characterized by both a high impact on the success of temporary teams and a high difficulty in providing them.

### 3.2. Measures

It was decided to use in the research one of the most valued and most frequently used (Jepsen, Rodwell, 2009; Kiersch, Byrne, 2015; Le, Pan, 2021; Özsahin, Yürür, 2018; Zapata et al., 2017) tool for measuring the sense of justice, i.e., the Colquitt scale (2001). This scale includes 20 items and comprises four subscales corresponding to the types of justice: procedural, distributive, informational, and interactive. However, some modifications were introduced in this set, which adjusted the scale to the specifics of the research conducted. At the same time, the number of 20 factors included in the Colquitt questionnaire was kept.

Respondents were asked to consider to what extent each of these factors positively influences the success of the temporary team and then what the level of difficulty related to the implementation of this factor. In both cases, a 7-point rating scale was used, in which "1" meant the lowest rating (no impact on the team's success / no difficulties with providing a given factor), and "7" was the highest rating (very strong impact on the team's success / very high level of difficulty related to the provision of a given factor). It was assumed that the results would be interpreted according to the guidelines in Table 3.

**Table 3.**

*Interpretation of the results*

Assessment of the significance (impact on the temporary team success)		Assessment of the degree of difficulty	
<i>Evaluation value</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Evaluation value</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<6,7>	very important	<6,7>	very difficult
<5,6)	important	<5,6)	difficult
<4,5)	rather important	<4,5)	rather difficult
<3,4)	rather unimportant	<3,4)	rather easy
<2,3)	not important	<2,3)	easy
<1,2)	not important at all	<1,2)	very easy

Source: Own study.

### 3.3. Participants

The study covered senior and middle-level managers from medium and large high-tech enterprises. The condition the respondents had to meet was a practical experience in the functioning of temporary teams.

The sampling operator was the Bisnode Base. The selection of the sample was random. Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) was used to collect the information.

The study was carried out in June and July 2021. It was conducted following the "ESOMAR International Code of Conduct for Market and Social Research" and the provisions on personal data protection.

Information from 110 respondents was collected as a result of the interviews. The most significant number of responding managers worked in the electronics and automotive industries. In total, they accounted for 73% of the research sample.

Most respondents were managers responsible for the entire enterprise or several departments (20%). The rest were people handling: production, sales, human resources, maintenance, marketing, finance, research and development, supply and quality.

### **3.4. Method of analyzes**

To perform the first task, an appropriately modified Colquitt scale was used. The reliability of the created scale was assessed using Cronbach's alpha test.

The second and third tasks were carried out based on a survey. The arithmetic mean was used to analyze the obtained results.

In order to achieve the fourth objective, empirical data was also taken into account. However, the importance-performance analysis (IPA) was used in this case. This business research technique was developed as a marketing tool to examine and suggest solutions to management decisions. Although initially developed for marketing purposes, its application has been extended to various fields, including food services, education, banking, public administration, e-business, and science. In its typical application, IPA involves assessing different aspects of an organization's features regarding customer perceptions of performance and importance. Typically, such features are represented in a 2x2 grid, where each quadrant can be divided among specific suggestions.

## **4. Results and discussion**

### **Task1: Identification of factors influencing the sense of justice among temporary team members**

The Colquitt scale was used as a starting point for determining the factors influencing the sense of justice. However, some changes have been made to it. They aimed to:

1. Adjust the scale to the character of respondents that were the managers. The early Colquitt scale was mainly used for employee opinion surveys.
2. Take into account the character of the functioning of temporary teams. A person who is a member of the temporary team belongs both to this team and to an organizational unit in a permanent organizational structure. This can lead to the need to meet more

responsibilities and be subordinate to two different superiors. Collaboration in a team also means that the result of work depends both on the employee's individual commitment and the involvement of other team members. If it is a new form of cooperation for a team member (other than the current one, e.g. an individual workplace), one can also speak of a feeling of being in a new situation. Undoubtedly, it is also characterized by a lower level of routine.

Due to the fact that the employees perform both the tasks of their job and the team's, in the case of interactive justice, one item was added related to the treatment of a team member by the managers and employees (colleagues) from the organizational unit in which they work on a daily basis (X16) and procedural fairness items regarding voluntary participation in the temporary team (X1) as well as the possibility of completing the task (X9). In this type of justice, based on the item from the Colquitt scale regarding "influence over the results arrived at by those procedures" and taking into account teamwork, two were distinguished: the possibility of implementing the decisions made (X10) and the impact on the rules (following with the Leventhal participation principle) - X3). The described character of work in a temporary team was the basis for modifying items in distributive justice, i.e., appreciating the effort and performance of the team as a whole (X11 and X12) as well as the individual contribution of each team member (X13). Similarly, in interactive justice, by taking into account two directions of the relationship: inside the team (between its members - X14) and the leaders with the team (X15).

The strong point of the above set is that it includes 4 most important types of organizational justice, which makes it holistic.

A complete list of justice measure items is presented in Table 4.

**Table 4.**

*Justice measure items of temporary teams*

No	Measure items	Type of organizational justice
X1	Rules governing functioning of the temporary team give each person the right to accept or refuse working in a task team	procedural
X2	These rules enable each team member to express his views and feelings about the functioning of the team	
X3	These rules may be modified at the request of members of the temporary team	
X4	These rules are not biased - they do not favour anyone and do not discriminate against anyone	
X5	These rules are consistently applied to each team member	
X6	These rules were established on the basis of a thorough analysis taking into account the specifics of the temporary team	
X7	These rules allow team members to appeal against decisions made in the team or concerning its functioning	
X8	These rules are consistent with the ethical and moral standards adopted by the members of this team	
X9	These rules make the task force able to complete the task (by selecting the right employees, availability of the necessary resources, etc.)	
X10	These rules ensure a high probability that the decisions made by the team will be implemented	

Cont. table 4.

X11	The task force (as a whole) is appreciated, materially and immaterially, according to the effort put into the task	distributive
X12	The task force (as a whole) is valued materially and immaterially according to the results achieved	
X13	Each member of the temporary team is valued (materially and immaterially) according to their contribution to the team's work	
X14	Relationships between all members of the temporary team are based on mutual respect (manifested by the lack of non-constructive criticism, spite, etc.)	interpersonal
X15	Each participant in a temporary team is treated with respect by the leader of that team	
X16	Participation in the task team does not have a negative impact on the employee's relationship with both the manager and other employees of the organizational unit with which he is permanently associated	
X17	The leader of the temporary team is honest and open with team members	informational
X18	Rules governing the functioning of the temporary team are understood by and fully communicated (and explained) to team members	
X19	The information needed for the work of the temporary team is provided exactly on time	
X20	A temporary team leader will customize communication to suit individual needs of members of the temporary team	

Source: Own study based on (Colquitt, 2001).

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to test the reliability of the latent constructs (Table 5). Only in one case does the construct's reliability proves too low ( $\alpha = 0.64$ ). However, satisfactory reliability was achieved after removing the factor (i.e., X16), satisfactory reliability was achieved. For this reason, in further analysis, not 20 but 19 factors were considered.

**Table 5.***Reliability of constructs*

Type of justice	The importance	The difficulty
Procedural justice	0,71	0,81
Distributive justice	0,87	0,84
Interpersonal justice	0,64 /0,74*	0,77
Informational justice	0,72	0,70

\* before the removal of factor X16 / after the removal of factor X16.

Source: Own study.

**Task 2: Assessment of the influence of each factor on the temporary team's success**

As part of the survey, the respondents assessed the importance of each of the previously identified factors (impact on the temporary team's success). The obtained results are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6.***Assessment of the significance of justice measure items for the success of the temporary team*

Measure items (the explanation of the symbols is shown in table 4)	The impact assessment on the success of the temporary team
X17	6,00
X18	5,99
X15	5,97
X19	5,91
X14	5,85
X20	5,75
X2	5,70
X9	5,70
X5	5,57
X11	5,49
X3	5,42
X12	5,40
X6	5,37
X4	5,33
X13	5,33
X8	5,26
X1	5,03
X10	5,00
X7	4,78

Source: Own study.

The average assessment of the importance of each of the analyzed factors was higher than 4. On this basis, it can be concluded that, according to the surveyed managers, all factors presented in the table have an impact on the temporary team's success. Similar results, indicating the importance of all types of equity for project success, were obtained by (Shafi et al., 2021). The most critical element was the honest and open communication leaders with team members (6.0). This factor (as the only one) was defined as very important. As many as 17 other factors were indicated as critical. Among them, the highest scores were given to the comprehensible and complete presentation (explanation) of rules of the functioning of the team to team members (5.99), treating all team members with respect (5.97) and access to the information team members need when they need it (5.91).

The least important factor was allowing temporary team members to appeal against the decisions made in the team or those made regarding the team's functioning. The average score for this item was 4.78. It was the only factor that was identified as somewhat important.

When analyzing the results, it can be noticed that communication issues prevailed among the most important factors. This applies not only to the thorough explanation of the rules of the team functioning, but also to their understanding by those who are to cooperate in it; timely provision of information and adaptation of communication methods to the individual needs of employees. This observation is consistent with the results of other studies in which communication management is indicated in source literature as an element of key importance for the success of project teams' work (Boerner et al., 2012; Chiaburu, Lim, 2008; Muszyńska, 2017; Resick et al., 2014; Shafi et al., 2021).

The second important issue proved to be both the leaders treatment of team members and team members among themselves<sup>1</sup>. It is worth adding that among the principles of procedural fairness, the first to be mentioned is the one that is related to the above issues: the possibility of expressing one's own opinions, views and feelings. Only after those the principles that focus on success, such as: selecting team members, availability of necessary resources, consistency in applying the rules, appreciating the work, and impartiality, appear. Interestingly, as the least important, managers indicated voluntary cooperation in the temporary team, the adoption of rules enabling the implementation of decisions, or an appeal against the decision. Such observation provides the basis for many questions, including: Are managers not aware of the relationship between a voluntary decision regarding participation in a team and the dynamics of working in it? Or maybe the result is due to the popularity of inviting employees to teamwork? Is it related to managers confidence in the implementation of advanced solutions? Or maybe they were the subject of the teams' work that the surveyed managers had to cope within the first place? And will the solution be implemented by other units? Finally, did they not have to face situations of contesting the decisions made? Do they consider them unacceptable? Or do they understand the team's success in the context of a collective (democratic decision) and not an individual?

### **Task 3: Assessment of the difficulty in providing each of the factor in practice**

The respondents were also asked to estimate the degree of difficulty associated with providing each item included in the study. The results obtained in this way are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7.**

*Assessment of the degree of difficulty in implementation justice measure items*

Measure items (the explanation of the symbols is shown in table 4)	Assessment of the degree of difficulty in implementation the factor
X19	4,17
X13	4,15
X11	4,10
X20	4,09
X3	3,97
X7	3,89
X1	3,87
X9	3,85
X10	3,84
X5	3,78
X6	3,78
X12	3,72
X14	3,69
X2	3,55
X4	3,45
X18	3,33
X8	3,22
X15	3,13
X17	3,12

Source: Own study.

The difficulty of providing each of the examined factors was rated significantly lower than the degree of their importance. Only 4 items were considered rather important. Providing team members with temporary access to the information they need when they need it was indicated as the most challenging element to implement (4, 17). Appreciating each person in a team according to their contribution to the team's work (4, 15) was described as only slightly easier. Further, recognition of the team's work according to the effort put into the task (4.10) as well as the adaptation of the ways of communication between the leaders and the team members to the individual needs of team members (4.09) were listed.

All other items were considered relatively easy. The factor identified as the easiest to implement was ensuring honest and open communication between the leaders and team members. The average difficulty rating for this issue was 3.12.

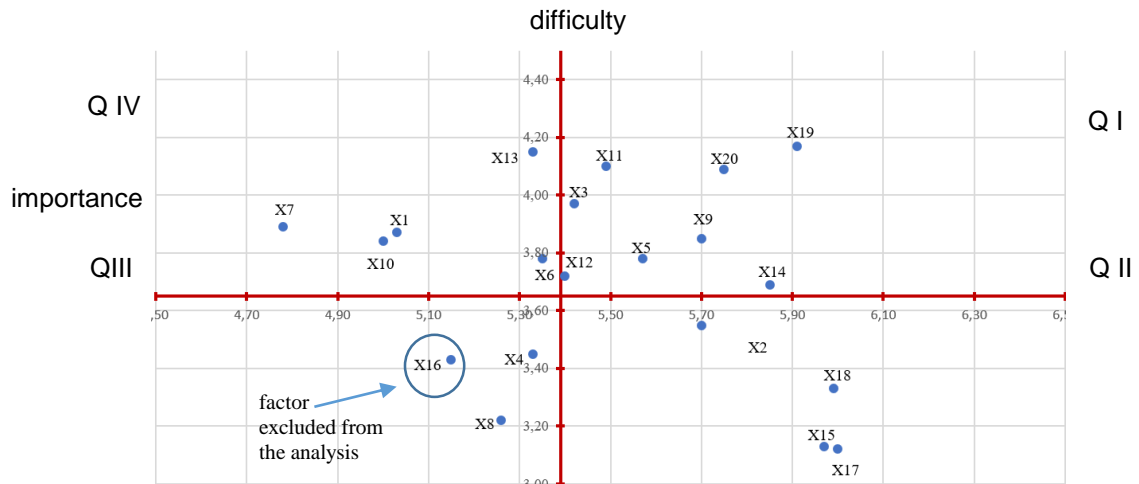
In this case, the crucial element for the success of temporary teams was determined as the easiest (the last one in the ranking), i.e., openness and honesty of the leaders with team members. Individual treatment was also seen as simple to implement. Issues related to the appreciation of each person in the team, voluntary work in a temporary team, and appealing against decisions were assessed as difficult. It is worth recalling that they have been indicated as essential for success.

**Task 4: Defining challenges for managers. Identification of factors characterized by both a high impact on the success of temporary teams and a high difficulty in providing them**

For the analysis taking into account both the importance and the degree of difficulty related to providing a given factor, an approach modelled on the IPA technique was used. Thus, all factors have been divided into four parts:

- *Quarter I (QI)* - factors that are important and difficult to ensure (challenges for managers).
- *Quarter II (QII)* - factors that are important and easy to provide.
- *Quarter III (QIII)* - factors of less importance and easy to provide.
- *Quarter IV (QIV)* - factors that are less important but difficult to ensure.

The effects are presented in figure 1 and table 8.



Explanations for the symbols: X1 ... X20 are presented in table 4 and table 8.

**Figure 1.** Matrix for factors influencing the feeling of justice among members of temporary teams.

Source: Own study.

There are 8 items in the first quarter, 4 items in the second, 2 in the third, and 5 in the fourth. It should be noted that most of them are the first quarter (QI), i.e., elements that are both important and difficult to implement. Among them, the following aspects should be indicated: communication as in the timing of information transfer (X19), managers individual approach in conversations (X20); appreciation, including more effort, daily work (X11) than results (X12) and participation - the possibility of influencing (X3). The last aspect also corresponds to the elements (X1, X7) of the fourth quarter (QIV): less essential but also challenging to ensure.

**Table 8.**  
*Categorization of the researched factors*

Less important but difficult	Important and difficult
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ X1 Rules governing functioning of the temporary team give each employee the right to accept or refuse working in a task team</li> <li>▪ X6 These rules were established on the basis of a thorough analysis taking into account the specifics of the temporary team</li> <li>▪ X7 These rules allow team members to appeal against decisions made in the team or concerning its functioning</li> <li>▪ X10 These rules ensure a high probability that the decisions made by the team will be implemented</li> <li>▪ X13 Each member of the temporary team is valued (materially and immaterially) according to their contribution to the team's work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ X3 Rules governing functioning of the temporary team may be modified at the request of members of the temporary team</li> <li>▪ X5 These rules are consistently applied to each team member</li> <li>▪ X9 These rules make the task force able to complete the task (by selecting the right employees, availability of the necessary resources, etc.)</li> <li>▪ X11 The task force (as a whole) is appreciated, materially and immaterially, according to the effort put into the task</li> <li>▪ X12 The task force (as a whole) is valued materially and immaterially according to the results achieved</li> <li>▪ X14 Relationships between all members of the temporary team are based on mutual respect (manifested by the lack of non-constructive criticism, spite, etc.)</li> <li>▪ X19 The information needed for the work of the temporary team is provided exactly on time</li> <li>▪ X20 A temporary team leader will customize communication to suit individual needs of members of the temporary team</li> </ul>



Cont. table 8.

Less important and easy	Important and easy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ X4 Rules governing functioning of the temporary team are not biased - they do not favor anyone and do not discriminate against anyone</li> <li>▪ X8 These rules are consistent with the ethical and moral standards adopted by the members of this team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ X2 Rules governing functioning of the temporary team enable each team member to express his views and feelings about the functioning of the team</li> <li>▪ X15 Each participant in a temporary team is treated with respect by the leader of that team</li> <li>▪ X17 The leader of the temporary team is honest and open with team members</li> <li>▪ X18 Rules governing the functioning of the temporary team are understood by and fully communicated (and explained) to team members</li> </ul>

Source: Own study.

Based on the above considerations, it was stated that the most critical leader's task is to manage communication in the team and appreciate participation. The challenges (to which one should pay particular attention) for managers who intend to effectively and fairly manage a team were formulated in relation to the stages of the teams' work. The following were considered as such:

1. Ensuring such principles of creating and functioning of the team (e.g., selecting appropriate employees, availability of the necessary resources, etc.) which will give the team a real chance to complete the assigned task (X9). This will be possible, among other things, by allowing team members to modify these rules when justified (X3).
2. Caring for compliance with the adopted rules of the team's functioning (X5) and consistency in their use:
  - a) it will strengthen the indicated real chance to complete the task,
  - b) it is one of the characteristics of genuine leadership and it has to do with a sense of justice (Kiersch, Byrne, 2015),
  - c) it will influence the atmosphere in the team. In this respect, relationships based on mutual respect must be fostered (X14).

During the team's work, particular attention should be paid to the availability (right on time) of information necessary for the team's work (X19). Moreover, individually – to adjust the communication methods with team members to the diverse needs and capabilities (X20).

3. Team members' compensation, material and immaterial, by noticing not only the result obtained (X12), but also the effort invested (X11).

## 5. Conclusions

The sense of fair treatment is an issue that pertains to a person's private life and professional activities. In source literature, there is ample evidence that fairness (more precisely, organizational fairness) also affects business outcomes.

The above study presents the results of research on temporary teams. Factors influencing the sense of fair treatment among participants of this type of team were identified. Experienced managers then assessed: the impact of each of these factors on the success of the temporary team and the degree of difficulty involved in providing each of these factors. On this basis, eight challenges for managers have been identified, i.e. factors which, on the one hand, are very important and, on the other hand, difficult to ensure. These challenges include: (1) ensuring that the team is created in such a way that it has a realistic chance of completing the task, (2) consistent compliance with the adopted rules of the team's functioning, while (3) allowing the possibility of modifying these rules at the request of employees, (4) providing the information needed by team members on time and (5) ensuring relationship based on mutual respect (6) adjusting methods of communication to the needs of team members, appreciating the employees' contribution according to their (7) contribution and (8) achieved results. In the event of disregarding the challenges mentioned above, managers must take into account the emergence of various types of problems, such as, for example, suspension of efforts of team members or withdrawal from the team, deterioration of communication or division (s) of the team (Jordan et al., 2004; Kang et al., 2012).

The study used two different variables simultaneously (i.e. significance and severity). It is worth noting that a different interpretation of each of these variables' values leads to conclusions different when they are taken together. For example, the most crucial factor was honesty in communication between the managers and employees. At the same time, however, this element was assessed as the easiest to achieve; therefore, it was not included in the identified challenges.

Further research should concern methods of formulating the rules of the temporary team's functioning, including the aspect of participation of team members. In the context of this type of team, the sense of lack of time to analyze and modify the rules for each created team is probable. It is easier to rely on pre-established rules than change them each time. Then, it is worth relating the mentioned methods (level of participation/degree of flexibility of changes in rules) to the effectiveness of the task performance. One should also pay attention to elements related to relations as well as ethical and moral issues. It seems that the last ones belong to the commonly emphasized matters; hence they can be perceived as functioning, obligatory, and as relating rather to the individual leaders-team members relations, while those seen as more difficult as relating to relations within the group or between the leaders and the whole group.

One potential limitation of the current study concerns the fact that it covers enterprises from the high-tech industry. Employees of public organizations or other industries may perceive justice differently. There are also other limitations. The research considered two variables that may affect the success of temporary teams' work: the importance of justice and the difficulty of its implementation. A different type and/or a more significant number of variables may contribute to a better understanding of this issue and the holistic

approach. Additionally, organizational culture was omitted from the research. It influences shaping factors recognized in procedural, interpersonal or informational justice. Hence, its implementation in the study could have deepened research and expanded knowledge of using justice in the functioning of temporary teams about their work environment.

Two significant contributions to project management can be identified. First, modifying the Colquitt tool allows for the study of temporary (including project) teams justice. Second, formulating recommendations allows managers to effectively and fairly manage the work of temporary teams (including project teams). The results will contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between justice and teamwork effectiveness.

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## Footnotes

1. It is based on Adams' theory of justice, understood as an assessment of the ratio of the result (the reward received) to the effort.
2. When performance is the goal, rewards are distributed according to each member's relative contribution; equality - when the goal is interpersonal; harmony, each group member receives the same; finally, the need - when the goal is the prosperity and development of members, each member receives enough to meet his needs (Silva, Caetano, 2016).
3. The text is the result of a literature review conducted by the authors in July 2021. The EBSCO database searched for scientific publications with the following phrases: "organizational justice" and "meta-analysis or" systematic review "in the title. articles published in scientific journals and in English were obtained.
4. 66% of the studies were about distribution, 61% of procedures, and about 24% of the studies were about interactive justice (Silva, Caetano, 2016).
5. According to the EBSCO database, the search result for the words in the title of the article: "organizational justice" and "team" is 16 publications. Five of them were analyzed (limitations according to the criteria: scientific journal, English language, elimination of duplicate items, availability). Attention was paid to: interpersonal treatment of team members and procedural fairness (taking into account and appreciating individual contribution to the team's work, adopted rules and their observance) in the context of the consequences of the work of a sports team (Jordan et al., 2004) the impact of procedural fairness on organizational attitudes and behaviour (Kang et al., 2012), showing the possibility of applying this type of justice in a sports team (Ha, Ha, 2015) and the importance of matching the person with the team as well as the supervisor-employee relationship (Zhang et al., 2019). It is worth noting that the search for the words in the title "justice" and: "teams in (the) workplace" / "teams in organization" gave a negative result, i.e. no articles.

6. Search for words in the title: "justice" and type of team.
7. Team reflexivity refers to the extent to which team members collectively reflect on, plan, act, and adapt to their team's objectives, strategies, and processes.
8. Some results of this survey were presented in (Rogala et al., 2022).
9. It is worth noting that the importance of relational issues for team members at individual and group level was demonstrated by Pichler et al. (2016).