



**INTERACTIONAL JUSTICE AND EMPLOYEE ATTITUDE OF DEPOSIT MONEY BANK IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The study examined the relationship between interactional justice and employee attitude of Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State. The study adopted a cross sectional survey research design that solicited responses from employees of Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State. Primary data was collected using self-administered questionnaire. The population of the study comprised 202 employees from 18 Deposit Money Banks operational in Rivers State. A sample size of 134 was determined using the Taro Yamen sample size formula. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 23.0. The study findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between interactional justice and all the measures of employee attitude of Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State. The study concluded that interactional justice bears a significant influence on employee attitude of Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State. The study recommended that Deposit Money Banks should promote interactional justice. Interactional justice should therefore be promoted through treatment of employees with politeness, respect and dignity by their supervisors and other organizational leaders. This way, organizations will not only benefit from a committed workforce, but also improve employee relations and thereby minimize the consequences of retributive justice emanating from employee workplace deviance actions.*

**Keywords:** *Interactional Justice, Job Satisfaction, Job Commitment, Employee Engagement*

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## INTRODUCTION

The primary apprehension of an employee is if they were being treated fair within organization or their perception of fairness or justice. Forret and Love (2008) suggest that there are considerable evidences of linkages between perceptions on outcomes. A number of research suggest that diminished justice and trust deficit negatively affect an employee's set of job satisfaction and commitment with business (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). There are certain evidences that internal organizational trust climate has a subsequent impact on employees' attitudes towards work. Researchers introduce different facets of organizational justice in their respective work (Thibaut & Walker, 1975).

Attitudes exhibited by employees can directly affect the atmosphere within an organisation. An environment that is professional, fair and conducive for work needs to be created by an employer in order to keep employees motivated. If this environment is created, the employees are likely to work hard and successfully complete each assignment as expected of them. An attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998). Attitude describes the way an employee feels inside. These are an employee's feelings toward his employer, his co-workers and his position within the organisation. All employees have attitudes toward their working environment and this is greatly affected by their perception of justice.

Fairness has been the topic that attaches people's attention historically. Social-level fairness concerns the impartiality and rationality of social order while the organizational-level fairness concerns certain aspects of organization management, like distribution and incentives, which exerts great influence on the

effectiveness and competition of the organization. The perception of fairness can be seen as a motive for people's behavior in organization. It has been proved that the perception of fairness can give rise to positive feelings and behaviors of employees, like job satisfaction, trust and organization citizenship behavior and so on (Liu, Long & Li, 2003). So it is of great theoretical and practical significance to study fairness. Previously most of the studies have focused on the study of distributive and procedural justice. And researchers have become more and more interested in interactional justice, which emphasizes the relationship quality between leaders and subordinates. To our knowledge, leaders, as key characters in the organization, play an important role in influencing the attitudes and behaviors of employees as well as the operation of the organization. So the good relationship between leaders and subordinates can yield many expected or unexpected positive outcomes. That is to say, as one of the indicators of leader-subordinate relationship, interactional justice may play a unique part in organization. This study therefore examined the relationship between interactional justice and employee attitude of Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State.

This study was guided by the following research question:

- What is the relationship between interactional justice and job commitment in Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State?
- What is the relationship between interactional justice and job satisfaction in Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State?
- What is the relationship between interactional justice and employee engagement in Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State?



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework for interactional justice and employee attitude**

**Source: Author's Desk Research, 2019**

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Adams Equity Theory

According to Adams (1965) individuals compare the effort they spent and the result they obtained with the effort others in the same workplace spent and the result they obtained. This situation is important for the organizational justice perception of a person who is a member of an organization. According to Guerrero, Andersen and Afifi (2007) Equity theory acknowledges that subtle and variable individual factors affect each person's assessment and perception of their relationship with their relational partners. This theory proposes that a person's motivation is based on what he or she considers being fair when compared to others (Redmond, 2010). As noted by Gogia (2010) when applied to the workplace, Equity Theory focuses on an employee's work-compensation relationship or exchange relationship as well as employee's attempt to minimize any sense of unfairness that might result. Equity theory as developed by Adams (1965), considers motivation as the result of a comparison of a worker's perceived outcomes and inputs to the outcomes and inputs of a referent other (Vinchur & Koppes, 2011).

Equity theory has been widely applied to business settings by industrial psychologists to describe the relationship between an employee's motivation and

his or her perception of equitable or inequitable treatment (Vinchur & Koppes, 2011). In a business setting, the relevant dyadic relationship is that between employee and employer. Equity theory assumes that employees seek to maintain an equitable ratio between the inputs they bring to the relationship and the outcomes they receive from it (Adams, 1965). According to Redmond (2013) Adams equity theory makes practical sense for instance it is reasonable to assume that most people do compare their inputs and outcomes relative to others.

### Interactional Justice

As discussed in the previous section, interpersonal justice was an advancement made by Leventhal (as cited in Wan, Sulaiman & Omar, 2012) from the voice construct that was suggested by Folger (Wan *et al.*, 2012). Voice construct is meant to evaluate if one's view and thinking is being heard and considered as significant within procedures. Historically, this dimension is initially coined as interactional justice which was introduced by Bies and Moag (1986). Their works found that people would like to be treated with respect and trust in regards to the outcome and procedure in an organization. Next, Gauri (2013) and Belanger (2007) had reported that Greenberg (2010) argued interactional justice can be further segregated into two separate parts, which are the interpersonal and informational justice in 1993. He defined

interpersonal justice as showing concern for individuals regarding the distributive outcome they receive (Hamlett 2014).

Some social science academic material such as Greenberg (2010) also mentioned that it is the common value and attribute of people that they deserve to be treated in a polite, honest and caring manner and it wouldn't be fair if this basic expectation is not being fulfilled. As mentioned, interpersonal justice could be seen as a downstream dimension of distributive and procedural justice. Distributive justice refers to the outcome of allocation. Then procedural justice justifies the procedure to determine the outcome of allocation, while, interpersonal justice suggested that people evaluate and perceive fairness based on the communication and treatment behaviour of their superiors. Similarly, Tam (1998) also highlighted that most people made fairness judgement based on the manner and communication experience they received. Hamlett (2014) also articulated that interpersonal justice study relates to how employees believe being marginalized from the company's information networks is disrespect and damaging to their dignity.

### **Employee Attitude**

Employee attitude deals with how an organisation behaves. It involves the management directing employees into improving organisational and personal effectiveness. It plays an enormous role in determining the attitudes of employees and their job satisfaction. When employees are happy, it is usually because they are satisfied with their work. This also improves the quality of their work. Attitude and job satisfaction may not fall completely on the management but also on the employees. If employees enjoy their work, they will not need external motivation from management, but instead the satisfaction they attain from completing their work will motivate them (Robbins, 2004).

An attitude is referred to as a hypothetical construct representing an individual's degree of like or dislike for an item. Attitudes are generally positive or negative views of a person, place, thing, or event (Bagherian, Bahaman, Asnarulkhadi & Shamsuddin, A 2009). These views are often referred to as the attitude object. In this instance the attitude object is referred to as the individuals' view of the change and is not a physical entity independent of the individual (Visagie, 2010). An attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour (Eagly & Chaiken 1998). Attitude can be measured and changed as well as influence the individual's emotion and behaviour. Based on the above definitions, it could be cited that attitudes are related to how an individual feel or react towards his surroundings. Also, attitudes can be exhibited by an employee either positively or negatively towards his co-employees.

### **Measures of Employee Attitude**

#### **Job Commitment**

Job commitment has an important place in the study of organizational behaviour. This is in part due to the vast number of works that have found relationships between organizational commitment and attitudes and behaviours in the workplace (Angle & Perry, 1981). Sheldon (1971) defines commitments as being a positive evaluation of the organization and the organizations goals. According to Buchanan (1974) most scholars define commitment as being a bond between an individual (the employee) and the organization (the employer). Meyer and Allen (1991) and Dunham et al (1994) identified three types of commitment; affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Normative commitment is a relatively new aspect of organizational commitment having been defined by Bolon in 1997. *Affective commitment* is defined as the emotional attachment, identification, and

involvement that an employee has with its organization and goals (Mowday *et al.* 1979, Meyer and Allen 1993). *Continuance commitment* is the willingness to remain in an organization because of the investment that the employee has with —non-transferable investments. Non-transferable investments include things such as retirement, relationships with other employees, or things that are special to the organization (Reichers, 1985). *Normative commitment* (Bolon, 1997) is the commitment that a person believes that they have to the organization or their feeling of obligation to their workplace.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is defined as the feelings or a general attitude of an employee in relation to their jobs and the job components such as the working environment, working conditions, equitable rewards and communication with the colleagues (Glisson & Durick, 1998). Many models or theories have been carried out regarding job satisfaction. According to Robbins and Judge (2009), job satisfaction describes a positive feeling about a job, resulting from an evaluation of its characteristics. A person with a high level of job satisfaction holds positive feelings about his or her job, while an unsatisfied person holds negative feelings. Job satisfaction is a pleasurable positive state resulting from ones job and job experience (Locke, 1976). According to Jain, Fauzia Jabeen, Mishra and Gupta. (2007) individuals show pleasurable positive attitudes when they are satisfied with their job.

### **Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement is integral to driving successful organisations. Engaged employees are satisfied and feel a sense of attachment to their job and employer. They promote the very best in the organisation to their friends and family and work towards its success. In one of the first published works in this burgeoning field, Kahn (1990) defined employee engagement as

—the harnessing of organisation members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances. This definition is aligned with the In sync Surveys framework, which encompasses the three components of engagement: the Head (cognitive), the Heart (emotional) and the Hand (physical). Modern organizations, especially those in the service sector, need employees who are engaged in their work, who are more proactive, more initiative and give best quality of service to the customers (Bakker & Leiter, 2010). The researchers agree that the engagement of employees depend on their willingness to go the extra mile or in other words to do what goes beyond their job description.

One of the first challenges presented by the literature is the lack of a universal definition of employee engagement. Kahn (1990) defines employee engagement as —the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances. The cognitive aspect of employee engagement concerns employees' beliefs about the organisation, its leaders and working conditions. The emotional aspect concerns how employees feel about each of those three factors and whether they have positive or negative attitudes toward the organisation and its leaders. The physical aspect of employee engagement concerns the physical energies exerted by individuals to accomplish their roles. Thus, according to Kahn (1990), engagement means to be psychologically as well as physically present when occupying and performing an organisational role. Truss *et al.* (2006) define employee engagement simply as- 'passion for work', a psychological state which is seen to encompass the three dimensions of engagement discussed by Kahn (1990), and captures the common theme running through all these definitions.

## **Relationship between Organizational justice and Employee Attitude**

The various psychological literatures on employee attitude contains many claims that organizations that are fair and just in the treatment of their employee experience better employee job performance and job satisfaction (Roch & Shannock, 2006). Organizational justice theory aids in understanding employee attitudes such as perceived organizational support (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) and organizational commitment (McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992). Employees compare the treatment they receive in their place of work with the treatments that others receive, and make judgments about the level of justice in the organization in accordance with their own perceptions (Tang & Sarsfield-Baldwin, 1996). It is believed that these evaluations play a key role in the way members perform their organizational duties and responsibilities. Therefore, the concept of organizational justice is frequently included in studies concerning organizations and management (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001).

Organizations are increasingly relying on their human capital to give them a sustainable competitive edge (Woolridge, 2002). Akanbi & Ofoegbu (2013) argue that organizational justice and Employees attitude are among the most important issues in today's highly competitive business environment. In the last two decades, there has been an increase in the field of research on organizational justice perceptions. A number of studies conducted in different countries and cultures have documented positive relationship between organizational justice perceptions and organizational commitment (Lambert, Hogan, & Griffin, 2007).

From the foregoing discussion, the following hypotheses were stated:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between interactional justice and job commitment in Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between interactional justice and job satisfaction in Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between interactional justice and employee engagement in Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a cross sectional survey research design that solicited responses from employees of Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State. Primary data was collected using self-administered questionnaire. The population of the study comprised 202 employees from 18 Deposit Money Banks operational in Rivers State. A sample size of 134 determined using the Taro Yamen sample size formula. After data cleaning, only data of 112 respondents were finally used for data analysis based. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 23.0.

## **DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

### **Bivariate Analysis**

Test of hypotheses were carried out using the Spearman's rank correlation at a 95% confidence interval. We based on the statistic of Spearman's rank correlation to carry out the analysis. The level of significance 0.05 was adopted as a criterion for the probability of accepting the null hypothesis in ( $p > 0.05$ ) or rejecting the null hypothesis in ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 1: Correlations Matrix for Interactional Justice and Employee Attitude**

			Interactional Justice	Job Commitment	Job Satisfaction	Employee Engagement
Spearman's rho	Interactional Justice	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.735**	.828**	.606**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	112	112	112	112
Job Commitment	Job Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.735**	1.000	.832**	.636**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	112	112	112	112
Job Satisfaction	Job Satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.828**	.832**	1.000	.612**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	112	112	112	112
Employee Engagement	Employee Engagement	Correlation Coefficient	.606**	.636**	.612**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	112	112	112	112

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**Source: Research Data, 2019 (SPSS output, version 23.0)**

Table 1 illustrated the test for the three previously postulated bivariate hypothetical statements.

***H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between interactional justice and job commitment in Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State***

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient (rho) showed that there is a significant relationship between interactional justice and job commitment. The *correlation coefficient* 0.735 confirmed the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it was significant at  $p < 0.000 < 0.01$ . The correlation coefficient represented a very high correlation indicative of a very strong relationship between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there was a significant relationship between interactional justice and job commitment in Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State.

***H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant relationship between interactional justice and job satisfaction in Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State***

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient (rho) showed that there is a significant relationship between interactional justice and job satisfaction. The *correlation coefficient* of 0.928 confirmed the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it was significant at  $p < 0.000 < 0.01$ . The correlation coefficient represented a moderate correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated were hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between interactional justice and job satisfaction in Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State.

***H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant relationship between interactional justice and employee***



### ***engagement in Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State.***

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient ( $\rho$ ) showed that there is a significant relationship between interactional justice and employee engagement. The *correlation* coefficient of 0.606 confirmed the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it was significant at  $p < 0.000 < 0.01$ . The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated was hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between interactional justice and employee engagement in Deposit Money Banks in Rivers State.

### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The examined the relationship between interactional justice and employee engagement. The study findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between interactional justice and employee engagement of Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt. This finding is in line with the views of Greenberg's (2010) work on interpersonal justice, focused on the manner of communication and treatment of supervisor to his subordinate and how this affected resource allocation and decision making within the organization, while informational looks at honesty, and timely explanation and justification on the resource allocation and procedure in deciding the allocation proportion. Therefore, interpersonal justice evolved from interactional justice. Some researchers such as Choi (2011), Georgalis *et al.*, (2014), and Tam (1998) focused in interpersonal justice that also considered the manner of persons being treated by supervisors and thereafter evaluated informational fairness separately. However, some researchers such as Belanger (2007) used the terminology interchangeably.

Additionally, Hamlett (2014) had reported that the interpersonal model could make up the shortcoming

of the gap of distributive justice and procedural justice. One possible scenario that could demonstrate how interpersonal justice make up the gap is, say a long service employee was being relocated to another business outlet that is more remote from the current one without his involvement in the decision-making process (procedural injustice) and no additional incentive or allowance is given (distributive justice) to him. He would have felt anger, disappointment and aggression. And he is likely to go against the decision or merely go along but work with low morale and low organizational commitment. Worst case scenario would be him quitting from the job making a loss to the company. This could have a high negative impact on the organization because. Nevertheless, should the manager of the employee be sensitive and concerned toward the employee. Showing consideration on the view and thinking of the employee and allowing him or her to voice this dissatisfaction with the manager, there is a better chance of reaching a healthy compromise.

Similarly, Bies *et al.*, (as cited by McNabb 2009) suggested that studying the distributive and procedural justice perspective in an organization is not insufficient and should include interactional justice as well. McNabb (2009) and Tam (1998) also mentioned about the 4 criterion of interactional justice which are (1) justification, (2) truthfulness, (3) respect, and (4) propriety. These four criteria should be met to have a person perceive high interpersonal justice while communicating with his superior or other higher authority. According to Belanger (2007), same rule applies with the distributive justice. This is as interpersonal justice has shown correlation with personal level outcomes such as supervisory relationships, organizational citizenship behaviour, and job performance. As mentioned above, Bies (as cited in Belanger 2007) highlighted that judgement of interpersonal justice is usually built from the experience of injustice. Generally, there are four type of interpersonal injustice found which are (1)

derogatory judgement which means make strong disapproval remark, (2) deception that means not telling the truth, (3) invasion of privacy such as making negative comment on personal matter, and (4) disrespect that can goes harm people dignity and self-esteem. Belangar (2007) claimed that past research has proven that there exists significant relationships between interpersonal justice and supervisory relationships, organizational citizenship behaviour and also job performance.

Bies and Moag(1986) support the new expansion to the concept of justice by drawing attention to the importance of interpersonal behaviour during the application of functions and importance of showing respect and value to employees. They have argued that workers believe they have been treated fairly if the organization's officials presented them with correct and complete information and showed rightful reasons for the decisions they made. They have pointed to the importance of this dimension of justice on the grounds that individual's perception of justice was formed mainly on the basis of the intra-organizational interpersonal interactions rather than

the structure of the decision-making process (Aykut, 2007).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study examined the relationship between interactional justice and employee engagement of Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt. Based on results and the findings of the present study, the study concluded that as interactional justice increases, job commitment, job satisfaction and employee engagement also increases among employees of Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt.

Based on the study findings, the study recommended that management of Deposit Money Banks should promote interactional justice. Interactional justice should therefore be promoted through treatment of employees with politeness, respect and dignity by their supervisors and other organizational leaders. This way, organizations will not only benefit from a committed workforce, but also improve employee relations and thereby minimize the consequences of retributive justice emanating from employee workplace deviance actions.

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