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Impacts of Organizational Justice on the Wellbeing of Employees in Nigeria

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Abstract:

Employees' wellbeing has generated research interest amongst researchers, practitioners and employers who have varied diverse factors to enhance wellbeing in the work environment. This is because the wellbeing of the employee largely determines many positive outcomes the organisation. The study examined the impacts of four components of Organizational Justice on Employees Wellbeing. It varied the ability of the components of distributive, procedural, interactional and informative justice to predict the outcome of wellbeing in the workplace. The study employed a survey design; sampling 350 participants with mean age of 31.2, from both private and public organisations to evaluate the predictions that organisational justice will have impact on the employees' wellbeing in the organisation. With Colquitt Organizational Justice Scale and Work Place Wellbeing Scale to measure organisational justice and employees' workplace wellbeing, the study found distributive and interactive justice to be significant predictors of workplace wellbeing accounting for 16.5% and 17.6% of the variability in workplace wellbeing respectively using Multiple Linear Regression Analysis. The Analysis found the prediction of workplace wellbeing by procedural and informational justice to be insignificant while the interaction prediction of workplace wellbeing by all four forms of organisational justice was insignificant as well. The study highlighted the need for managers to enhance justice system in the organisation and a perception of justice from by the employee so as to enhance positive organisational behaviours and wellbeing in general.

Keywords: Workplace wellbeing, employees, organizational justice

1. Introduction

Wellbeing amongst employed workers has generated significant interest by organisational practitioners, labour unions and employees themselves. Nigerian has witnessed series of strike actions by workers in most relevant sectors which include health and education, often targeted at improvement of the wellbeing of these workers. More so, the rate of turnover in organisation suggests that employees' wellbeing has not been satisfactory. Hence, research interest into the possible factors that influences the wellbeing of workers cannot be overemphasized. The wellbeing of an employee is hinged on happiness, satisfaction and functioning well at work. The emphasis of employee wellbeing is beyond the absence of diseases rather a broader scope to encompass physical, emotional, mental and social aspect of work (Simone, 2014). Wellbeing is a constructive mental, physical and social condition that functions as major indicator for psychological and physical health (Zafar, Khalid, Mahnoor, Tanveer, Nauman, Muhammad & Shamsa, 2016). Researchers (Hagelstam, 2017; Keeman, Naswall, Malinen, Kuntz, 2017) have associated wellbeing with physical and psychological health where a poor state of wellbeing is identified with deterioration in physical or psychological health (Hagelstam, 2017) and positive organisational attitudes (Keeman et al, 2017) and much as performance and overall organisational productivity.

Previous studies into the wellbeing of employees have focused more on rising job demands or basically stress-bound jobs (Page & Vella-Brodick, 2008). Whereas, little has been done on the impacts organisational justice may procure on the wellbeing of employees. This is peculiar most especially in the Nigerian context where indices of corrupt practices have been high and rising (Sunday & Kim, 2018) and can be attributed to the poor justice system in its organisations. Most institutions particularly government owned corporation have experienced some degrees of unfairness in recruitment, disbursement of funds, promotions and many other disciplinary procedures (Ghasi, Ogbuabor & Onodugo, 2020). For

instance, the recent global pandemic, COVID-19 led to the disbursement of palliatives to families whose sustenance is deficient during the course of the pandemic. While the government reported to have reached about a 130 million families, majority of the residents around the F.C.T reported that not to have received any palliatives whether cash or material.

Meanwhile, the relevance of maintaining the wellbeing of employees is basically hinged on work environment factors which may include the justice system in their respective organisation. Caesens, Stinglhamber, Demoulin and Wilde (2017) have shown that employees' wellbeing can be enhanced by perceived organisational support and organisational dehumanization. Hence it is feasible that the organisation has some consequences as perceived by employees that affects their wellbeing. More so, a key feature in organisational justice research has been the perception of justice by the employees in an organisation most especially amongst subordinate employees (Greenberg, 1988; Cropanzano, Rupp & Gilliland, 2007). Byrne and Cropanzano (2000) defined organizational justice as the extent of people's perception of fairness in an organisation. Byrne and Cropanzano, (2000) argued that organisational justice is a multi-foci construct where an employee see justice as coming from either the organisation or their supervisor. Byrne (2000) further argued that employees personify the organisation and they distinguish between whether they feel the organisation or supervisors have treated them fairly (interactional), use fair procedures (procedural), or allocate rewards or assignments fairly (distributive justice). Therefore, interaction, procedures and distribution are forms in which organisational justice is perceived. Colquitt (2001) argued that there is a fourth form of organisational justice, informational justice which assess perception of fairness in the dissemination of information.

An unfair justice poses serious detrimental consequences to employees and their activities in an organisation. Research has shown that a poor justice system can lead to lower level of employee attitudinal outcomes such as job involvement (Ebeh, Njoku, Ikpeazu & Nwiana-Ana, 2017) and organisational commitment (Khshi, Kumar & Rani, 2009) amongst others. These findings suggest that the justice system in an organisation can influence employee reactions to an extent. Therefore, the study is purposed to uncover the impacts dimensions of organisational justice has on the wellbeing of employees in Nigeria.

2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical basis of this paper stems from the proposition of Adams (1965) equity theory which hinge on the assumption that employees evaluate the ratio of the effort invested into a job and output received from the job then compares the ratio with the input to output ratio of a referent. The theory believes that when the ratio differ, inequity is experienced which in turn causes a conflict situation that elicits stress, low commitment and other work outcome. The theory of equity according to Bahrami, Montazeralfaraj, Gazar and Tafti (2014) posits that individuals are satisfied when outcomes (benefits) are distributed on the basis of skills and efforts (contributions) and when the ratio of employees input to output equals the ratio of inputs to outcomes. Accordingly, the equity model asserts that the degree of input the employee makes to their job is influenced by the perception of factors surrounding the job. Hence, it is postulated that a perception of justice causes equity and would enhance wellbeing. Meanwhile, a perception of injustice will lead to inequity and poor wellbeing and hence put the organisation at risk of unfavourable outcomes from the employee.

3. Literature Review

Researchers (e.g., Muchinzky, 2003) emphasized that some workplace attitudes such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment can be an indicator for the overall wellbeing of employees. Other studies (Krekel, Ward & Neve, 2019; Keeman et al, 2017; Bryson, Forth & Stokes, 2015; Hagelstam, 2017) have found wellbeing to exert significant effect on the attitudes and performance of employee in an organisation as well as their productivity. Krekel et al (2019) added that employees' wellbeing is suitable for the profitability of organisations. It appears the wellbeing of employees is an essential aspect for supervisors and managers to put into consideration to gain maximum output from her employees. Kerkel et al (2019) further observed that in making the wellbeing of employees a priority in organisation, the organisation serves to benefit more than the expense it procured in ensuring that staff wellbeing is achieved. It has been revealed that a flexible work environment enhances the wellbeing of employees which in turn affects employee's health and wellbeing (Joyce, Pabayo, Critchley, & Bambra, 2010). Joyce et al (2010) emphasized that flexible working arrangements favours the worker most especially those dictated by the employer (e.g. fixed term contracts or mandatory overtime). The study evaluated the effects of six different types of flexible working arrangements; self-scheduling, flexible time, overtime, gradual retirement, involuntary part-time and fixed term contract. The findings reveals that flexible working interventions that increase control and choice (such as self-scheduling or gradual/partial retirement) are likely to have a positive effect on health outcomes. In contrast interventions that were motivated by organisational interest such as fixed term contract and voluntary part-time employment, found equivocal or negative health effects.

Researchers (e.g., Ajala & Bolarinwa, 2015; Singh, 2005; Moliner, Martinez-Tur, Pierro, Ramos, & Cropanzano, 2005; Lawson, Noblet, & Rodwell, 2009) have as well understudied the possible impacts organisational justice may exert on the general or psychological wellbeing of employees. Ajala & Bolarinwa (2015)'s study conducted amongst local government staff in Ogun state examined the effects of organisational justice on the psychological wellbeing of the staff. Their findings revealed a significant joint predictive power of interactional, distributive and procedural justice on psychological wellbeing. The findings further showed that distributive, procedural and interactional justice all had a significant positive relationship with psychological wellbeing. Moliner et al (2005) proposed that organisational justice promotes well-being at work which leads to low burn-out and high work engagement. The studies of Moliner et al (2005) basically evaluated organisational justice and extra role customer service among contact employees working in Spanish service sectors. The

study's result of structural equations modelling supported the importance of the mediating role of the positive side of well-being at work (engagement) in the relationship between organisational justice and extra role customer service.

Another study aimed at uncovering dimensions to enhancing the wellbeing of Police staff, examined the relevance of work characteristics and organisational justice on wellbeing (Lawson et al, 2009). The study only had 1.4 % of its participant as officers who have worked for the police force for less than 12 months. The psychological health of the police officers and their job satisfaction rate were used as indices for the wellbeing of officers. In the study, the four justice dimensions failed to account for additional variance when examining psychological health, none of the four forms of justice (distributive, procedural, interactional and informative) demonstrated significant main effects when regressed against psychological health. However distributive, procedural, interactional and informational justice was significantly associated with job satisfaction.

In a study conducted into the moderating effects of power distance and collectivism on organisational justice, Singh (2005) as well examined the relationship between organisational Justice (procedural justice, distributive justice, informational justice and interpersonal justice) and the well-being of employees of a manufacturing firm in Bayan Barn, Penang. The finding revealed that only distributive justice and interactional Justice were positively related to the employee's well-being. A study investigated employees' positivity in terms of positive organisational behaviours. In the study, Pan, Chen, Hao, and Bi (2018) examined the effects organisational justice has on the organisational positive behaviours of employees. Pan et al (2018) conducted a survey and a situation experiment with staffs of a manufacturing-type enterprise. The study found more positive behaviours to be associated with distributive justice than distributive injustice. More negative organisational behaviours were associated with distributive injustice than distributive justice. Procedural justice has a more powerful effect on positive organisational behaviour of employees. Overall, organisational justice had more effect on positive organisational behaviour than on negative organisational behaviour. The results further confirmed that, the distributive justice and procedural justice had significant effects on the pros and cons of employees' positive organizational behaviour. The difference of interaction level between the distributive justice and procedural justice was significant. Furthermore, the results of the path analysis show that organizational Justice has stronger indirect impact on positive organizational behaviour of employees than direct effect.

Furthermore, other studies which has proven that organisational justice affects employee factors, suggest that organisational justice can as well exerts effect on the wellbeing of employees. One of such studies conducted in the Canadian health sector, examined the role of organisational justice, burnout and commitment in the absenteeism of employees (Chenevert, Jourdan, Cole & Banville, 2013). Chenevert et al (2013) deployed structural equation method in testing the model. The results revealed procedural and interactional justice had an indirect effect in exhaustion through distributive justice. More so, it was found that distributive injustice is directly linked to short-term absence through exhaustion. By contrast, the relationship between distributive injustice and long-term absence can be explained by two mediating variables, namely, exhaustion and psychosomatic complaints. Another study by Bakhshi, Kumar and Rani (2009) to examine organisational justice perceptions as predictor of job satisfaction and organisational commitment utilised 128 employees working in medical college. The study found distributive justice to be significantly relevant to job satisfaction whereas procedural justice was not found to be significantly related to organizational commitment.

Similarly in an indigenous study, Richards, Ethelbert, Ikpeazu, & Lebari (2017) examined the role of organisational justice on the organisational commitment and job involvement of casual workers from 2 oil servicing companies in Omuku, Rivers State. The study sampled more males than females with the age range of 24 to 52 years. The study found that there was a statistically significant difference between employees who reported justice and those who reported injustice by their organisation on organisational commitment and job involvement. Richard et al (2017) further found that casual employees who reported presence of justice reported slightly higher levels of organisational commitment, than their colleagues who reported injustice. In a related study, Ajala (2017) found a strong relationship between the three dimensions of organisational justice and job satisfaction in his studies. The level of job satisfaction was highly influenced by the perceived existence of organisational justice at the workplace. Organisational justice can as well affect employee's turnover. Chukwu (2019) examined the influence of organisational justice on turnover intention of employees in food and beverage industry in Nigeria. Findings revealed that fairness in procedure and process of getting reward, fairness in distribution of outcomes such as reward, fairness in personal treatment of employees received from authority figures and entrenchment of justice in organisation has significant influence on employee's turnover intention. More so the level of justice in organisation could exert similar influence on work engagement. Ohiorenoya and Osaruwmen (2019)'s study amongst tertiary institutions in Edo state examined this phenomena. The concept of work engagement entails hyperactivity and dedication to work which implies that wellbeing is attained to a significant extent to engage employees (Ohiorenoya&Osaruwmen, 2019; Simone, 2014). In the study with a sample size of 401 staff of tertiary institutions, distributive, procedural and interactional justice were found to positively impact the engagement levels of employees(Ohiorenoya&Osaruwmen, 2019).

Meanwhile, the studies of Ghasi et al (2020) still suggested that Nigerian organisations are challenged by their justice system. Ghasi et al (2020) conducted a study on the perceptions and predictors of organisational justice among healthcare professionals in academic hospital in south-eastern Nigeria which revealed moderate to high perception of different dimensions of organisational justice. Health professionals had moderate perception of distribute justice, high perception of interactional justice moderate perception of procedural justice. In essence, the study will uncover the impacts organisational justice has on the wellbeing of employees in Nigeria based on the following hypothetical statements as under listed;

- Distributive justice would have a significant predictive effect on workplace wellbeing
- Procedural justice would have a significant predictive effect on workplace wellbeing
- Interactional justice would have a significant predictive effect on workplace wellbeing
- Informational justice would have a significant predictive effect on workplace wellbeing
- There would be a significant predictive interaction effect of the four dimensions of organisational justice on the wellbeing of employees.

4. Method

4.1. Design

The study's design is a survey design which seeks to ascertain the effects of an independent variable on the dependent variable. The independent variable is organisational justice and the dependent variable is employees' wellbeing. Organisational justice was measured at four levels; distributive, interactional, procedural and informative justice.

4.2. Participants

The study utilized two hundred and ninety-five (295) employees from both private and public organisations in Nigeria to participate in the study. These organisations include; Zenith bank, Jos High Court, Jos University Teaching Hospital (JUTH), Government secondary School west of mines, and NASCO Food. The participants were selected via the convenient sampling method. Majority of the participants (155) were male representing 52.5% of the sample and 140(47.5%) were female; 175 (59.3%) participants were from public sector and 120 (40.7%) from private sector. They were comprised of 65 (22.0%) medical practitioners, 34 (11.5%) legal practitioners, 118 (40%) teachers, 48 (16.3%) accountants and 30 (10.2%) military personnel. Their mean of was 31.2 years. While majority, 182 (61.1%) were contract staff, only 113(38.9%) were permanent staff.

4.3. Instrument

The study adopted Organizational Justice Scale originally developed by Colquitts (2001) to measure organisational justice. The scale contains 20 items; which comprise of 7 procedural justice items (Cronbach alpha=0.84), 4 distributive justice items (Cronbach alpha=0.86), 4 interactional justice items (Cronbach's alpha =0.92) and 5 informational justice items (Cronbach's =0.91). A sample item is 'Does he or she (the supervisor) treat you in a polite manner' scored on a five-point Likert scale (1= to a very small extent, to 5= to a very large extent). Employees' wellbeing was measured with a Workplace Wellbeing Scale developed by the Black Dog Institute. The scale has 31 items scored on a four point scale (1=not at all and 4= extremely) to measure wellbeing based on four criterions; work satisfaction, organisational respect for the employee, employee care and intrusion of work into private life. The scale is scored from low through medium, to high. For work satisfaction, a score of 0-11 is low, while 12-30 is medium, and 31-40 is high. For organisational respect, a score of 0-7 is low, 8-21 is medium, and 22-28 is high. For employer care, a score of 0-7 is low, 8-21 is medium and 22-28 is high. For Intrusion of work into private life, a score of 0-5 is low, 6-17 is medium and 18-26 is high. A sample item asks 'Do you feel personally connected to your organisations values'.

4.4. Procedure

A consent forms was used to inform the organisations and their employees about all aspects of the questionnaires and reassure employees that there were no right or wrong answers and that they should answer questions as honestly as possible. The researchers employed the 3 research assistants in administering the instrument presented in a questionnaire. The researchers trained the research assistants to confidentiality and proper answering of the questionnaires. The researchers made an appointment with the manager of each organisation. An introduction was done and the consent form was presented as identification. As applicable to convenient sampling, only employees available and willing to participate were given the questionnaire to complete. A total of 350 questionnaires were administered, only 299 was answer correctly and return, while 38 was incorrectly completed as a result it was not included in the analysis, while 14 was not returned.

4.5. Method of Data Analysis

The data collected for the study was analysed using Multiple Linear Regression analysis to test the hypothesis in the study. The analysis was run using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 23.0.

5. Results

Multiple linear regression analysis was deployed to test the hypothesis in the studies at 0.05 significance level.

R	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson
.084	4.468	6	291	0.0005	1.684

Table 1: Model Summary of Regression Model 1

Results of the regression model revealed that the coefficient of determination $R^2 = 0.084$, $F(6, 291) = 4.468$, $D.W = 1.684$ (5% level of significance). This showed that the model can be held for 8.4% variability change of employees' wellbeing. The F-statistic (ANOVA) of the model had a closeness of fit which means that the model is statistically significant at 5% ($p \leq 0.05$) level of significance. The Durbin-Watson value of 1.684 shows that autocorrelation between the variables under consideration are statistically significant.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	70.539	3.680		19.170	.000
Distributive justice	.781	.379	.155	2.063	.040
Procedural justice	-.010	.279	-.003	-.035	.972
Interactive justice	.935	.396	.176	2.361	.019
Informational justice	-.231	.302	-.050	-.765	.445
Interaction	.002	.001	.099	1.723	.086

Table 2: Coefficients of Regression Model 1

Table 2 shows that distributive justice significantly predicted workplace wellbeing ($p=.040$) accounting for 15.5% of the variability in workplace wellbeing. Interactive justice as well significantly predicted workplace wellbeing ($p=.019$) accounting for 17.6% of the variability in workplace wellbeing. Procedural justice did not significantly predict workplace wellbeing ($p=.972$) as well as informative justice ($p=.445$) accounting for only 0.3% and 5% of the variability in workplace wellbeing respectively. Meanwhile, the interaction prediction of all forms of organisational justice for workplace was insignificant ($p=.086$) having accounted for only 9.9% of the variability in workplace wellbeing.

6. Discussion

The results of the study confirmed only two of hypothesis made in the study. It found distributive and interactional justice to be significant predictors of wellbeing in the workplace supporting Moliner et al (2005)'s perspective that organisational justice promotes workplace wellbeing. The study supports the finding that organisational justice is strongly association with job satisfaction of which wellbeing is an essential component (Lawson et al, 2009). Pan et al (2018)'s study was as well supported in that organisational justice can lead to the experience of positive organisational behaviour which includes positivity and happiness (well-being).

However, while two forms of organisational justice predicted wellbeing, some other forms of justice such as procedural as well as the interaction of the forms of justice did not predict the wellbeing of employees in the workplace. The perception of justice by employees in Nigeria in terms distribution of resources, reward and assignments, which encompasses distributive justice affects the employees' wellbeing. More so the degree at which the employee perceives the treatment he/she is being given by superiors and subordinate, which constitutes interaction justice is critical to the employees' wellbeing. This finding supports Ohioyenoye and Osaruwmen (2019), who found distributive and interactional Justice to be an influencing factor for employees' engagement in the tertiary institutions in Edo state. This is based on Simone(2014)'s notion that wellbeing is a core constituent in every activities of employees which includes work engagement. However, the finding does not support Ohioyenoye and Osaruwmen (2019) on the influence of procedural and informational Justice on engagement. Furthermore, the study's finding supports Ajala and Bolarinwa (2015)'s evidence that employee's perception of and reactions to fairness in an organisation, is fundamental to human psychological and social interaction within the workplace. The feeling of justice on promotional decision, assignment of tasks, and allocation of rewards are germane to the psychological well-being of employees.

On the predictive effect of interactional justice, the finding supports Singh (2005) who found interactional justice to be positively related to employees' wellbeing. Hence implying that as employees' perception of interactional justice rise the resultant effect is the rise in wellbeing in the workplace. Furthermore, one plausible reason for non-predictive effect of informational justice on wellbeing is that informational justice represents a structural side of justice and reflects the extent to which decision makers explain and provide adequate justification for their decision (Greenberg, 1988). Furthermore, the study has revealed that while, interactional and distributive justice affects the wellbeing of employees interactional justice had more predictive power. Therefore, organisations can enhance the wellbeing of employees by ensuring justice in terms of interaction with her employees.

In conclusion, the study is relevant to curtail injustice in the workplace which has been shown to trigger aggression on the employees (Fortado, 2001; Neuman, 2000) and is opposing to experiencing wellbeing and negative organisational behaviours (Pan et al, 2018). Employees are more concerned about the quality of interpersonal treatment they receive during the implementation of procedure and outcome. Once the distribution (distributions of wages, salaries, rewards etc.) in the workplace is just and interactional(interpersonal relationship) is fair between employees, wellbeing is assured.

It is henceforth the responsibility of managers to ensure perception of fairness with respect to these aspects in the workplace. Managers can observe her employees' level of perception periodically, probably quarterly and give more attention to employees who perceive low levels of justice on areas they perceive unfairness. Furthermore, to enhance general wellbeing of all her employees, managers can employ a significant degree of fairness in all managerial aspects. Managers or supervisors should always treat the employees with respect; politeness and dignity in the workplace to

enable them have a sense of belonging and therefore contribute up to their maximum fullest. The intent of managers is to ensure that employees are made to feel that they are treated impartially by their organisation in every aspect. Decision makers must always give special attention to issues like safeguarding the psychological and social well-being of workers, allocating monetary resources, policy-making in respect of justice as they affect employees in the organisation. This will make employees show more positive attitude and behaviour towards their work.

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