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A Study of the Relationship between Interactional Justice and Organizational Survival in the Fast-food Restaurants

Titus Nezekolizibe

Student, Department of Management, University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

Abstract:

This study investigates the relationship between interactional justice and organizational survival in the fast-food restaurants located in Yenagoa, Bayelsa state. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. The target population consist of selected fast-food restaurants in Yenagoa, Bayelsa state, Nigeria which are registered with the Bayelsa state ministry of commerce and tourism. The study adopted a simple random sampling technique and Taro Yamen's formula was adopted to determine the sample size which gave us 188. Primary and secondary data were used for the study. The primary data were collected with the aid of structured questionnaire on a five likert scale while secondary data were obtained through interviews with the employees. After carrying out data cleansing, a total of 178 questionnaires which were responded to were found usable for the research work. Spearman rank order correlation coefficient version 20.0 was used to analyses the hypotheses. The findings of the study showed that a significant relationship exist between the dimension of interactional justice (interpersonal justice) and the measures of organizational survival (goal accomplishment and resource acquisition). The study finally recommended that employers in fast-food restaurant business should exhibit respect, politeness and fairness towards employees when dealing with them.

Keywords: *Interactional justice, interpersonal justice, fast-food restaurants, organizational survival.*

1. Introduction

Organizational survival is a relative term which is being conceptualized by organizations differently. Organization has multiple goals or functions to achieve and also exist in an environment beclouded with unpredictable inputs. Organizations are social system and several parties have their stake in organizations, hence, they do not exist in isolation. For an organization to survive, it must have the capacity to adapt, maintain itself and grow, regardless of the particular function it fulfils (Khanka, 2008). Greenberg (1987) suggested that a surviving organization depends on employees' performance which is directly affected by individual job satisfaction at workplace and their commitment to the organization. Organizational survival is critical to the fortune of any organization. In order to achieve increased and sustainable business result, organizations need to execute strategy and engage employees justifiably. Engaging employees to perform means that the management of the organization owes a duty to create the needed conducive working environment which results in job satisfaction, organizational commitment and high performance. No organization can survive when its human resources are not fairly treated, leadership is biased and there is distrust on the management.

The concept of organizational survival equally applies to all forms of business establishment including fast food restaurant business. If the management of any fast food restaurant must survive the high level of competition in the business environment, it must treat their employees fairly to gain their commitment which translates into high productivity, profitability, and sustainability to mention but few. According to Richard et al (2009) organizational survival captures organizational performance plus the myriad internal performance outcomes normally associated with more efficient or successful operations and their external measures that relate to considerations that are broader than those simply associated with economic valuation(either by shareholders, managers or customers) such as corporate social responsibility.

In spite of the well known facts as laid down by authorities in the field, that business establishments must strategize and engage its employees meaningfully and justifiably, the problem of organizational survival continue to exist, leading to disloyalty and distrust in the workplace.

Interactional justice looks at the perception of individuals in the organization, regarding how management treats them when taking decisions. Interactional justice has two subcategories; interpersonal justice and informational justice. Interpersonal justice deals with the dignity and respect towards employee by his manager and subordinates and this has a resultant effect on the organizations survival. Informational justice on the other hand deals with the explanations provided to people that convey information about why procedures were used in a certain way or why outcomes were distributed in a certain fashion (Sam, 2006). This equally has a resultant effect on the survival of an organization. It is established that perception of fairness or unfairness generates behaviours and attitudes that may have detrimental effects on organizational survival. The social exchange theory and the norms of reciprocity asserts that employees perform both them in-role and extra role activities to reciprocate fair treatment they receive from organizational leaders by making the

efforts to improve the survival of the organization (Fryxell and Gordon, 1989). Greenberg (1987, suggested that employees are concerned about matters of justice and this justice influences job attitude like job satisfaction, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour.

A study was conducted by Akinyele and Fasogbon (2007) on impact of strategic planning on organizational performance and survival. The result showed that strategic planning enhances better organizational performance, which in the long run has impact on its survival and that strategic planning intensity is determined by managerial environmental and organizational factors. Also, a study was carried out by Edward and John (2010) on Legitimacy, strategy and resources in the survival of community-based organizations. The result revealed that although, cultivating resources is the surest path to survival, organizations that build their legitimacy will be in a better position to compensate for structural resource deficit.

However, even with the submissions by different authors/scholars from different parts of the world on how to ensure organizational survival, the issue of employee perception about unfair treatment, lack of dignity and respect still exist, thereby hindering the survival of organizations such as fast food restaurants. This has necessitated the motive for this investigation.

1.1. Purpose of the Study

The study investigates how interactional justice affects organizational survival in fast-food restaurants. Specifically, the study intends to:

1. Determine the relationship between interpersonal justice and goal accomplishment in fast food restaurants.
2. Determine the relationship between interpersonal justice and resource acquisition in fast food restaurants

1.2. Research Questions

For the purpose of this research, the following research questions are introduced:

1. To what extent is the relationship between interpersonal justice and goal accomplishment in fast food restaurants?
2. To what extent is the relationship between interpersonal justice and resource acquisition in fast food restaurants

1.3. Research Hypotheses

In order to answer the questions put forward, and based on the literature reviewed, the researcher proposed the following null hypotheses:

- HO1: There is no significant relationship between interpersonal justice and goal accomplishment in fast food restaurants.
- HO2: There is no significant relationship between interpersonal justice and resource acquisition in fast food restaurants.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1. Interactional Justice

According to Cohen, Charosh and Spector (2011) as quoted in Zara (2012), interactional justice is responsible for various important organizational outcomes. Also, quoted in the same author was Mikula et al (1990). He submitted that majority of negative perceptions prevailing at the workplace have been found to emerge out of the situations and dealings that carry the sense of unequal and unfair treatment and hence, interactional justice is most influential as compared to the procedural and distributive justices.

No normal human being would be happy to contribute meaningfully towards organizational success when he feels ill-treated. Research has shown that most employees in the business world are willing to work and produce expected and desired results for their organizations if, and only when they feel, the organization treat them fairly, listen to their plights, give them the opportunity to showcase their strengths, and that is why Milukat et al (1990) confirmed that such treatments in which the managers do not care for the dignity of the employees, be harsh to them and indulge in the breach of trust, are denoted as unfair interactions. According to Leventhal et al (1980), the requisites for employee's perception of fairness are the procedures that are consistent, provide the information, equitable, based on rules, allow voice and are bias free.

2.1.1. Interpersonal Justice

In the words of Colquitt (2011) as quoted in Prathamesh; interpersonal justice reflects the degree to which people are treated with politeness, dignity and respect by authorities and third parties involved in executing procedures or determining outcomes. In order to underscore the relevance of interpersonal justice in an organization, wood (1992) also quoted by Prathamesh opined that sustainable competitive advantage – success of an organization depends on managing and retaining employees. He went further to submit that to retain an employee in the competitive world, a manager has to be very informative as well as respectful towards his employees. The degree of respect accorded to an employee is capable of influencing his commitment towards the organization. Treatment by supervisors vice-a-vise interpersonal justice means respect, dignity, motivation, encouragement, etcetera given to an employee in an organization. According to Ishak and Alam (2009), interpersonal justice focuses on presence of justice in social interactions that take place between individuals and others (especially supervisors) in the organization. Bies⁴ and Moag (1986), quoted in Cindy and Zapata-phelon (2008), submitted that interpersonal justice is fostered when authorities adhere to specific rules of fair interpersonal communication- rules that were derived from studies of communication during recruitment efforts. They went further to specifically submit that authorities should treat others with respect and should refrain from making improper statement (see also Greenberg, 1993). Colquitt (2001) while identifying measures reflecting each component of organizational justice also highlighted the following items relating to interpersonal justice, with reference to Bies and Moag (1986): (1) Has (he/she) treated you in a polite manner? (2) Has

(he/she) treated you with dignity? (3) Has (he/she) treated you with respect? (4) Has (he/she) refrained from improper remarks or comment?

2.2. Organizational Survival

In the words of Bartuseviciene and Sakalyte (2013), survival oriented companies are concerned with output, sales quality, creation of value added, innovation, cost reduction. He further said that it measures the degree to which a business achieves its goals or the way outputs interact with the economic and social environment. Zheng (2010) quoted by the aforementioned authors opined that, survival determines the policy objectives of the organization or the degree to which an organization realizes its own goals. This implies that for an organization to survive, management must be innovative and capable of producing the desired goods and services to customers at a reduced cost. Customers should derive satisfaction and value in using the organization's produce and services. According to Heilman and Kennedy (2011), organizational survival helps to assess the progress towards mission fulfillment and goals accomplishment. According to the submission of Khan, Khan and Ali (2012), organizational survival is critical to the success of any economy and that it is based on the integration of the goals of the organization and the employees.

2.2.1. Goal Accomplishment

Every organization is in existence to attain one or more set goals. It therefore, means that the relevance of goal setting in an organization has made it imperative for it to be considered as one of the criteria for measuring the survival of an organization. According to Khanka (2008), the goal attainment approach of organizational survival assumes that: Organizations must have ultimate goals to attain, such goals have to be identified and clearly defined to aid understanding, the goals must be few enough to a manageable size, there must be a consensus on these goals by all concerned and the goals must be measured. Extending his work, Khanka further said "Profit maximization, high productivity, employees' high morale, providing efficient service, etc. may be examples of goals attainment criteria. Considering the relevance of goal attainment as criteria for survival, Tong, Powell, Marino and Tony (2008) submitted in their findings that Chief Executive Officer (CEOs) in organizations need to stretch their goal list while keeping a clear priority order among these goals in order to capitalize on industrial magnificence. According to Cunningham (2001), the rational goal approach focuses on the organizations ability to achieve its goals. Tansik (1973) quoted in Tong et al (2007) said that organizational goals are in essence benchmarks used to evaluate the survival of organizational behavior and attained outcomes.

2.2.2. Resource Acquisition

As discussed above goal attainment as a criterion of organizational survival is not the only criteria for measuring the survival of an organization. While goals focus on outputs, organization should also be viewed from the perspective of its ability to acquire inputs (resources), process that inputs, channel the outputs and maintain the stability and balance. (Khanka, 2008). This approach of measuring the survival of an organization could also be called "System approach" or input-through put-output approach. According to Cunningham (2001), the systems resource model defines the organization as a network of interrelated systems. Extending his view, he opined that the outputs of one subsystem may become the input of another subsystem; the organizational system functions effectively to the degree that its subsystems are in harmony and are coordinated to work together. According to Chorpade and Julsingha (1971) and Yutchman, Ephraim and Seashore (1967), the value of resources to the decision maker is derived from their utility as (more or less) generalized means for subsystems needs rather than from their attachment to some organizational goal.

3. Methodology

A cross-sectional survey research design was adopted for this work. The researcher used the descriptive analytical method to determine the relationship between interactional justice and organizational survival in the fast-food restaurants. Eight (8) registered fast-food restaurants with Bayelsa state ministry of commerce and tourism with a combined target population of 357 were selected for the study. Taro yamen's formula was used to arrive at a sample size of one hundred and eighty-eight (188) employees for the research. A simple random sampling technique was adopted to compose the sample of employees from the 8 selected fast-food restaurants in yenagoa, Bayelsa state. Data for the study were collected using structured questionnaires in which 188 questionnaires were administered. The researcher was able to retrieve 182, out of which 178 were usable. Interview method was also adopted to extract relevant information from the employees. The items of the instrument used for the data collection were responded on a 5-point likert scale of Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Neutral(N) Agree(A) and Strongly Agree(SA) developed by Sania and Siraj (2013). The Cronbach Alpha for the variables were; Interpersonal justice (.991), Resource acquisition (.983), Goal accomplishment (.864). Special Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was the main statistical tool for the analysis and spearman's rank order correlation for used to test the research hypotheses.

4. Results

Demographic Analysis

		GENDER			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MALE	45	25.3	25.3	25.3
	FEMALE	133	74.7	74.7	100.0
	Total	178	100.0	100.0	

Table 1: Showing gender distribution of respondents
Source: Research survey (SPSS output) 2015

Table 1 reveal the gender distribution of male and female respondents. Out of the 178 respondents in the study, 25.3% were male while 74.7% were female which shows that there are more female employees than male in the fast-food restaurants operating in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

AGE					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-20years	39	21.9	21.9	21.9
	21-30years	136	76.4	76.4	98.3
	31-40years	3	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	178	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: showing age of the respondents
Source: Research survey data (SPSS output) 2015

Table 2 above illustrates the age bracket for the respondents. Out of 178 respondents, 39 employees representing 21.9% are within the age limit of 18-20years, 136 employees with 76.4% fall within the age bracket of 21-30 years and 3 employees representing 1.7% are within the bracket of 31-40 years. The above representations explain the fact that respondents within the age limit of 21-30 years have more population in the fast-food restaurants operating in Yenagoa.

Academic qualification					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	FSLC	4	2.2	2.2	2.2
	SSCE	156	87.6	87.6	89.9
	HND/OND	6	3.4	3.4	93.3
	B.SC	12	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	178	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: showing academic qualifications of respondents
Source: Research survey data (SPSS output) 2015

Table 3 above reveal the academic qualification of respondents. 4 of the respondents representing 2.2% possess a FSLC, 156 respondents representing 87.6% possess SSCE, 6 representing 3.4% have HND/OND. While 12 respondents representing 6.7% hold B, Sc. This depicts clearly that holders of SSCE are more, compared to those with FSLC, HND/OND and B.Sc.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	LESS THAN 1YEAR	70	39.3	39.3	39.3
	1-2YEARS	78	43.8	43.8	83.1
	2-3YEARS	16	9.0	9.0	92.1
	3-4YEARS	14	7.9	7.9	100.0
	Total	178	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: showing the working experience of respondents
Source: Research survey (SPSS output) 2015

Table 4 above, reveal the working experience acquired by each of the respondents in the fast-food restaurants. Out of 178 respondents, 70 respondents representing 39.3% have worked for periods less than 1year, 78 respondents with 43.8% have worked between 1-2years, 16 respondents representing 9.0% have worked for periods ranging from 2-3years, while 14 respondents with 7.9% are said to have served for between 3-4years

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SUPERVISOR	18	10.1	10.1	10.1
	NON SUPERVISOR	160	89.9	89.9	100.0
	Total	178	100.0	100.0	

Table 5: showing the level of employment of respondents
Source: Research survey (SPSS output) 2015

Table 5 above show the level of employment of the respondents in the fast-food restaurants. Out of 178 respondents, 18 respondents representing 10.1% are employed as supervisors, while 160 respondents representing 89.9% are employed as non-supervisors.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	10,000-20,000	160	89.9	89.9	89.9
	21,000-30,000	2	1.1	1.1	91.0
	31,000-40,000	16	9.0	9.0	100.0
	Total	178	100.0	100.0	

Table 6: showing the income of the respondents
Source: Research survey (SPSS output) 2015

Table 6 above show the income earned by employees in the fast-food restaurants. Out of 178 respondents, 160 representing 89.9% earned between 10,000-20,000, 2 respondents representing 1.1% earned between 21,000-30,000, while 16 respondents, representing 9.0% earned between 31,000-40,000. This implies that 16 respondents with 9.0% earn more than the other respondents.

4.1. Bivariate Analysis

Correlation				
			IPJ	GA
Spearman's rho	IPJ	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.887**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	178	178
	GA	Correlation Coefficient	.887**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	178	178
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Table 7: Test of Hypothesis for the relationship between Interpersonal Justice and Goal Accomplishment in fast-food restaurants

A spearman's rank order correlation was run to determine the relationship between interpersonal justice and goal accomplishment. There was a strong positive correlation between interpersonal justice and goal accomplishment which was statistically significant ($r = .887$, $n=178$, $p < 0.01$), therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis which states thus: There is a significant relationship between interpersonal justice and goal accomplishment in fast-food restaurant.

Correlations				
			IPJ	RA
Spearman's rho	IPJ	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.843**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	178	178
	RA	Correlation Coefficient	.843**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	178	178
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Table 8: Test of Hypothesis for the relationship between Interpersonal Justice and Resource Acquisition in fast-food restaurants

A spearman's rank order correlation was run to determine the relationship between interpersonal justice and resource acquisition in fast-food restaurants. There was a strong positive correlation between interpersonal justice and resource acquisition which was statistically significant ($r = .843$, $n=178$, $p < 0.01$), therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis which states thus: There is a significant relationship between interpersonal justice and resource acquisition in fast-food restaurants.

5. Discussion of Findings

Going by the tested hypotheses, discussions on the results revolves round existing literature on interactional justice and organizational survival.

- The first hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between interpersonal justice and goal accomplishment in fast-food restaurants. The bivariate SPSS output shows that there is a significant relationship between interpersonal justice and goal accomplishment in fast-food restaurants. The bivariate SPSS result supports the findings by Bernadin (1995) who postulates that the performance of an organization is the outputs or results of the tasks, because they have the most powerful relationship with the organization's strategic goals, customer's satisfaction and economic involvement. This means that as interpersonal justice increase, goal accomplishment also increase in the fast-food restaurant business.
- The second hypothesis states that; there is no significant relationship between interpersonal justice and resource acquisition in fast-food restaurants. The bivariate output indicates that; there is a significant relationship between interpersonal justice and resource acquisition in fast-food restaurants. This is in conformity with the findings of Ralf and Maimunah (2014) which reveals that interpersonal justice positively correlates with job satisfaction. Also in line with this finding is the submission by Shamaila and Atif (2015) which states that if an employee perceives justice in the organization, he is likely to be indulged in positive words of mouth for his organization and may be seen as defending the organization. It therefore, means that as interpersonal justice increases, resource acquisition also increases in the fast-food restaurant business.

6. Conclusions

Based on the findings above, the following conclusions were arrived at.

The study concludes that interpersonal justice is significantly related to goal accomplishment on the ground that employees in the fast-food restaurants would strive to achieve the organization's goals when they perceive fair treatment from their employers. Interpersonal justice is significantly related to resource acquisition in the fast-food restaurants.

7. Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations were made.

1. Employers in fast –food restaurant business should exhibit respect, politeness and fairness towards employees when dealing with them for retention and improved commitment to the vision and mission of the organization.
2. For the survival of fast-food restaurant business not to be threatened, employers should on regular basis, carry out checks on the loyalty of its staff, because a disgruntled staff cannot be committed to the goals of the organization.

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