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Organisational Justice and Innovative Work Behaviour in Bayelsa State Civil Service

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Abstract
The research examined the relationship between organisational justice and innovative work behaviour in the Bayelsa State Civil Service. The objectives of the study were to examine the relationship between organisational justice and its dimensions; procedural, distributive, interactional justice and innovative work behaviour. In order to attain the specified objectives, a cross-sectional survey research desgin was used. Using a stratified proportionate sampling technique and the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for defining sample size, a sample of 377 respondents was drawn from the population of 28,000 employees from across 26 ministries in Bayelsa State. A self-structured questionnaire was used to generate data. Expert judgement was used to ensure face and content validity of the research instrument. The reliability of the instrument was determined using the Cronbach Alpha reliability method. The findings of the study revealed that distributive, procedural, and interactional justice have a strong significant relationship with innovative work behaviour. The research concluded that a just work environment fosters trust, motivation, and employees' propensity to participate in innovative endeavours. It was further recommended that efforts should be made by administrators in the civil service to simplify administrative procedures and reduce excessive bureaucracy that may discourage creativity.

Keywords: Organisational Justice, Interactional Justice, Procedural Justice, Distributive Justice, Innovative work behaviour

I. Introduction

Contemporary public-sector organisations function within a milieu defined by fiscal constrictions, escalating citizen expectations, technological disorder, and heightened need for accountability and transparency. Governments globally face pressure to enhance service delivery, strengthen institutional responsiveness, and offer innovative solutions to societal challenges. Consequently, innovation is becoming more vital for governmental sustainability, the efficacy of public sector operations, and private sector entities (Demircioglu & Audretsch, 2017). As such, innovative work behaviour (IWB) has become a vital component of organisational effectiveness and adaptability in work organisations.

Innovative work behaviours is defined as the deliberate cultivation, advocacy, and depiction of innovative concepts to enhance organisational performance (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010) characterised. In contrast to standard job performance, innovative behaviour necessitates individuals questioning established norms, articulating novel concepts, and taking risks alongside others. Extensive research has demonstrated that innovative work behaviour significantly enhances institutional responsiveness, service quality, and organisational performance (Anderson et al., 2014). Even though there are growing demands for innovation, numerous government organisations persist in functioning within bureaucratic frameworks marked by administrative conservatism, hierarchical dominance, and procedural inflexibility. This engenders a substantial institutional paradox: entities designed to uphold justice, consistency, and accountability may inhibit employee creativity, experimentation, and behavioural adaptability (Adebayo & Oyetunde, 2020). In addition, while several organisational and individual factors have been identified as determinants of innovative work behaviour, increasing scholarly attention suggests that employees' perceptions of equality at work could play a critical part in shaping their willingness to generate, promote, and implement innovative ideas. Accordingly, organisational justice has emerged as a key organisational factor that may explain variations in innovative work behaviour among employees.

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Organisational justice encompasses employees' views about the extent to which fairness is reflected in organisational decisions, processes, resource allocation, and interpersonal treatment (Colquitt et al., 2001). Research indicates that views on justice improve employee trust, commitment, collaboration, and engagement (Colquitt et al., 2013). Individuals who perceive justice are more predisposed to engage in constructive and voluntary activities, such as innovation (Akram et al., 2020; Nazir et al., 2019). Studies in Nigeria indicate that equitable incentive distribution, promotion procedures, and managerial conduct significantly enhance employee motivation, commitment, and engagement (Ugwu et al., 2014; Akinwale & George, 2020).

However, investigations into the Bayelsa civil service indicate that bureaucratic inflexibility, ineffective human resource management, protracted promotion processes, insufficient performance feedback, limited career advancement opportunities, inadequate communication systems, and adverse working conditions consistently undermine employee morale and job performance. Employees have articulated issues regarding the prolonged execution of promotions, inadequate welfare benefits, irregular administrative protocols, and limited possibilities for involvement in choices impacting their employment (Samuel 2015).

These characteristics correlate with diminished motivation, decreased commitment, administrative inefficiencies, and inferior staff performance. Instead of dedicating discretionary effort to organisational enhancement, individuals may become disenchanted, resistant to change, or restrict their involvement to routine tasks (Akram et al., 2020; Nazir et al., 2019). These persistent challenges suggest that organisational factors influencing employees' willingness to innovate require closer examination.

Consequently, there is insufficient empirical evidence explaining how organizational justice through; distributive, procedural, and interactional justice influence innovative work behaviour among employees of the Bayelsa State Civil Service, despite the unique administrative, bureaucratic, and socio-economic characteristics of the state's public service. Consequently, this study seeks to investigate the association between organisational justice and employee innovative work behaviour of the Bayelsa State Civil Service in Bayelsa State.

1. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

1.1 Conceptual Framework

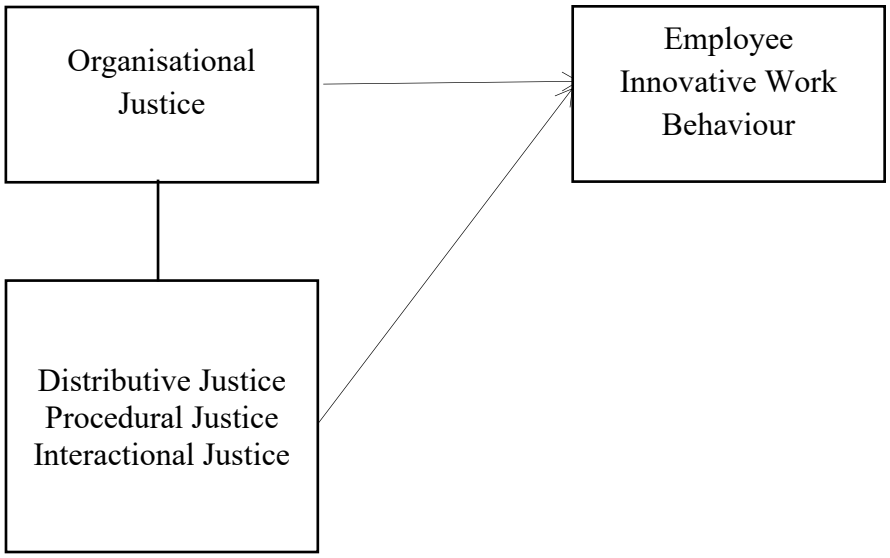

Fig 2.1. Conceptual framework showing the relationship between organisational justice and employee innovative work behaviour
Sources: Colquitt, et al. (2001).

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Thus, the research proposes the following hypotheses:

H0$_1$: There is no relationship between procedural justice and innovative work behaviour in Bayelsa State civil service

H0$_2$: There is no relationship between distributive justice and innovative work behaviour in Bayelsa State civil service

H0$_3$: There is no relationship between interactional justice and innovative work behaviour in Bayelsa State civil service.

1.1.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1.1 Organisational Justice

Organisational justice refers to workers' discernments of impartiality at work, encompassing how decisions, procedures, and interpersonal interactions are carried out. It connotes the determinant of discretionary behaviours, attitudes and motivation (Greenberg, 1990). Once workers notice fairness, they are more probable to exhibit commitment, trust in leadership, and engagement, whereas perceived injustice can lead to dissatisfaction, withdrawal, and reduced performance (Colquitt et al., 2001; Cropanzano et al., 2007).

Organisational justice reflects employees' assessment of whether organisational rewards, such as salaries, promotions, incentives, and recognition, are allocated equitably (Adams, 1965). Procedural justice captures employees' evaluation of the methods and principles governing organisational decisions, particularly the level at which such measures are impartial, consistent, unbiased, and allow employees to express their views (Leventhal, 1980). Interactional justice embodies the eminence of communal relations amongst managers and employees during the implementation of organisational decisions, emphasising civility, consideration, sincerity, and the provision of meaningful explanations (Bies & Moag, 1986).

In modern organizations, particularly in public sector contexts, perceptions of organisational justice significantly influence employee behaviour, including innovative work behaviour, cooperation, and compliance with policies (Akram et al., 2020). By fostering fair outcomes, transparent processes, and respectful interactions, firms can build a helpful work climate that enhances workers motivation and drives organizational effectiveness.

2.1.1.2 Procedural Justice

Procedural justice refers to to employees' perceptions of equity in the procedures and approaches used for corporate policymaking. Procedural justice emphasises transparency, consistency, and impartiality in policymaking developments (Leventhal, 1980). Employees remain further disposed to acknowledge management choices when they perceive that procedures are applied consistently and impartially (Colquitt et al., 2001).

Equitable practices promote employees' trust in organisational leadership and augment the credibility of managerial decisions. When employees are given the chance to articulate their perspectives in decision-making processes, they cultivate a heightened sense of inclusion and respect inside the firm (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Engaging in decision-making diminishes opposition to organisational policies and fosters collaboration among employees.

Procedural justice is crucial to fostering good workplace behaviours. Studies suggest that employees who recognise equitable practices are more inclined to exhibit trust, dedication, and a tendency for discretionary actions, including knowledge sharing and creativity (Colquitt et al., 2013).

Moreover, equitable practices foster a safe work climate, enabling employees to confidently share innovative ideas without the apprehension of biased evaluation (Akram et al., 2020).

Procedural justice enhances organisational relationships by promoting equitable decision-making and cultivating trust, collaboration, and innovative workplace behaviour.

2.1.1.3 Distributive Justice

Distributive justice refers to employees' conceptions of equity in the distribution of organisational outcomes, including remuneration, promotions, recognition, and workload distribution. The concept is rooted in Equity Theory, which suggests that employees form judgements about fairness by weighing the rewards they receive against the effort they invest and comparing this balance with that of other employees (Adams, 1965). Employees are more inclined to cultivate positive work attitudes and exhibit supportive behaviours towards organisational goals when they believe that rewards are allocated equitably based on effort, skills, and performance (Colquitt et al., 2001). Distributive justice significantly influences employees'

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satisfaction and motivation in organisations. An equitable allocation of prizes augments employees' perceptions of worth and acknowledgement, fostering heightened job satisfaction and organisational allegiance (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Conversely, alleged injustice in outcome distribution may lead to discontent, animosity, and a diminished inclination to exceed obligatory responsibilities (Colquitt et al., 2013).

A recent study has emphasised the significance of distributive fairness in fostering discretionary choices, including innovative workplace conduct. Employees who perceive their contributions as justly compensated exhibit a heightened propensity to dedicate time and ingenuity to generating innovative concepts and enhancing organisational procedures (Akram et al., 2020). Consequently, distributive justice is a crucial component of organisational effectiveness, as equitable incentive frameworks enhance employee engagement and foster behaviours that elevate innovation and performance.

2.1.1.4 Interactional Justice

Interactional justice pertains to the level of impartial treatment that employees receive throughout the execution of administrative processes and choices. This feature underscores the necessity of respect, civility, and effective communication between supervisors and employees (Bies & Moag, 1986). Interactional justice is typically categorised as interpersonal justice, emphasising respectful treatment, and informational justice, which concerns the clarity and honesty of communication (Colquitt et al., 2001).

Respectful and constructive communication from supervisors is essential in influencing employees' perceptions of equity. Employees who receive respectful treatment and adequate clarification regarding organisational decisions are more inclined to trust their leaders and perceive themselves as valuable in the workplace (Cropanzano et al., 2007). Effective communication eliminates ambiguity and improves employees' understanding of organisational expectations.

Interactional justice which embodies employees' evaluation of the respect, sensitivity, and sincerity displayed by organisational representatives in their day-to-day dealings and exchanges, correlates with auspicious work results, as well as enhanced job satisfaction, trust in leadership, and organisational commitment (Aryee et al., 2012).

In contemporary organisational settings, it has been associated with innovative work behaviour. Employees who encounter courteous interactions and honest communication are more inclined to contribute ideas and engage in problem-solving activities (Akram et al., 2020). Interactional justice enhances interpersonal relationships within organisations and fosters a friendly workplace that promotes employee engagement and inventive input.

2.1.2 Employee Innovative Work Behaviour (EIWB)

Employee Innovative Work Behaviour (IWB) refers to people generating, advocating for, and implementing novel ideas aimed at enhancing processes, services, or products at work (Janssen, 2000). EIWB differs from conventional work performance as it necessitates innovation, proactive problem-solving, and the audacity to take chances to enhance the firm (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Every level requires cognitive, social, and behavioural competencies, including creativity, communication, and collaboration. Employees are more inclined to engage in creative activities when they are supported by managers treated equitably, provided with resources, and situated in a secure environment (Anderson et al., 2014; Akram et al., 2020). Conversely, rigid hierarchies, lack of recognition may inhibit employees' innovative potential. In governmental organisations, EIWB enhances service delivery, increases efficiency, and facilitates procedural modifications. Organisations may leverage employees' innovative ideas to enhance performance and attain sustainable outcomes by cultivating an atmosphere that encourages innovation and experimentation.

2.2 Theoretical Underpinning

2.2.1 Equity Theory

Equity theory was introduced by Stacey Adams in 1965 to clarify fairness and incentives in social and organisational dynamics. The theory asserts that individuals assess impartiality by equating their inputs (including effort, talents, and experience) against outputs (such as compensation, advancement, and recognition) in relation to others. Employees recognise equity when their input-output ratio is comparable to that of their colleagues. According to Adams (1965) and Colquitt et al. (2001), individuals feel compelled to restore balance by adjusting inputs, pursuing changes in outcomes, or readjusting perceptions due to psychological distress caused by perceived injustice, whether from under-reward or over-reward.

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Equity theory asserts that assessments of fairness have a significant impact on the workforce of an organisation. It clarifies why employees may exhibit reduced effort or disengagement in response to perceived unfairness, and conversely, why they amplify their efforts when they believe their contributions are appropriately acknowledged. This notion has been extensively utilised in organisational research to investigate discretionary behaviours, commitment, and employee happiness.

Equity theory is particularly pertinent for understanding the impact of distributive elements of organisational justice on creative work practices. Employees at Bayelsa State government agencies are more likely to participate in innovative problem-solving and idea execution when they believe that opportunities, rewards, and recognition are fairly distributed. On the contrary, perceived injustice may stifle creativity. Equity theory offers a motivational framework that encourages proactive and inventive employee behaviour (Colquitt et al., 2013).

2.2.2 Social Exchange Theory (SET)

Social Exchange Theory (SET), was introduced by Blau (1964) which utilises reciprocal exchanges to explain social behaviour. SET asserts that human interactions predominantly rely on reciprocity, where individuals provide resources or services to others with the anticipation of obtaining benefits in return. These connections involve more than simple financial exchanges; they also include intangibles such as loyalty, respect, trust, and support. SET is frequently employed in organisational contexts to clarify employee-employer relationships, highlighting that favourable treatment by the company cultivates a sense of responsibility and commitment among employees (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

SET is based on the premise that employees oversee the quality of workplace interactions. Employees are seen as important assets when provided with equitable treatment, helpful supervision, and acknowledgement. In return, they exhibit constructive actions, including organisational citizenship, discretionary effort, and innovative endeavours. Conversely, adverse reactions, such as reduced involvement, withdrawal, or counterproductive activities, may stem from perceived inequality.

SET clarifies that fair treatment of employees enhances their involvement in innovative activities within the context of organisational justice and innovative work behaviour. Government agency employees in Bayelsa State feel obligated to reciprocate by inventing, promoting, and executing new ideas when they sense fairness in interactions, processes, and outcomes. Thus, the theory offers a psychosocial framework that connects voluntary creative behaviour to concepts of justice, especially in situations where formal incentives are scarce.

2.3 Empirical Review

Akram et al. (2020) investigated the relationship between organisational justice and employee innovative work behaviour in the Chinese telecommunications industry, with particular attention to the mediating influence of knowledge sharing. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design, collecting data from 345 employees through a structured questionnaire. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used to examine the hypothesised relationships. The results indicated that distributive, procedural, interactional, temporal, and spatial justice each exerted a positive and significant influence on employees' innovative work behaviour. In addition, knowledge sharing was found to partially mediate the relationship between organisational justice and innovative work behaviour. Based on these findings, the authors recommended that organisations cultivate a fair work environment and encourage knowledge-sharing practices as a means of strengthening employee innovation.

Ye et al. (2022) examined the influence of organisational justice and ethical leadership on employees' innovative behaviour in Chinese industrial firms. Using a cross-sectional survey design, data were collected from 323 employees through structured questionnaires and analysed with Smart Partial Least Squares (SmartPLS). The findings showed that distributive and interactional justice significantly enhanced employees' innovative behaviour. Furthermore, ethical leadership strengthened the positive effect of organisational justice on innovation. The authors concluded that organisations seeking to improve employee innovation should combine fair organisational practices with ethical leadership behaviours.

Sabuhari et al. (2025) explored whether organisational justice moderates the relationship between transformational leadership, work engagement, and innovative work behaviour among civil servants in the Indonesian public sector. The study employed a survey research design involving 500 respondents, while Structural Equation Modelling using Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) was utilised for data analysis. The results indicated that transformational leadership and work engagement significantly promoted innovative work

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behaviour. However, organisational justice neither exerted a direct influence nor moderated the relationship between the study variables. Consequently, the authors recommended strengthening leadership capabilities and employee engagement initiatives as key strategies for fostering innovation in public organisations.

Okafor and Nwankwo (2021) investigated the effect of organisational justice on employee performance in Nigerian public sector organisations. The study specifically examined how organisational justice influences employee engagement and innovative work behaviour. A survey design was adopted, and data were gathered from 276 employees using structured questionnaires. Multiple regression analysis revealed that distributive and procedural justice significantly improved employee engagement and innovative work behaviour. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended the adoption of transparent reward systems and equitable decision-making procedures to enhance employee performance and innovation within government institutions.

Omoregie and Akintola (2020) assessed the relationship between interactional justice and innovative work behaviour among employees in Nigerian ministries. The researchers adopted a correlational survey design and obtained data from 310 respondents through structured questionnaires. Correlation and regression analyses demonstrated that interactional justice, particularly respectful interpersonal treatment and effective communication, significantly encouraged employees to generate and implement innovative ideas. The study therefore recommended leadership development programmes that emphasise respectful communication and interpersonal fairness to stimulate innovation in public organisations.

Musa and Abdullahi (2022) examined the effect of organisational justice on employee creativity in the Nigerian banking sector. The study focused on procedural and distributive justice as predictors of employees' creative performance, which represents an important dimension of innovative work behaviour. A survey research design was employed, with data collected from 248 bank employees and analysed using multiple regression analysis. The findings established that both procedural and distributive justice significantly improved employees' creative performance. The authors therefore recommended that banking institutions strengthen procedural transparency and ensure equitable reward distribution to encourage creativity and innovation among employees.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional research design. The target population for the study was employees of Bayelsa state's civil service. The total population of employees of the 26 ministries in Bayelsa State was 28,000, drawn from the civil service commission. The sample size of 377 staffs was determined with the aid of the Krejcie and morgan (1970) table. The stratified proportionate sampling technique was employed in administering the research instrument to the respondents. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire. Organisational justice was measured with Niehoff and Moorman's (1993) 20-item scale, covering distributive, procedural, and interactional justice, while innovative work behaviour was assessed using Scott and Bruce's (1994) 6-item scale. The instrument's validity was confirmed through expert review, and reliability was tested via a pilot study with 30 employees, yielding Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.70 and above for organisational justice dimensions and innovative work behaviour, respectively. Data analysis was conducted using the Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient (SPSS) with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.

IV. RESULTS

Questionnaire Distribution and Collection

The questionnaire was distributed to 377 staff members in the Bayelsa State civil service. A total of 269 questionnaires were successfully retrieved and deemed valid for analysis. This represents a response rate of 72%, indicating an adequate level of participation for the study.

Bivariate Analysis

Ho_1: There is no relationship between procedural justice and innovative work behaviour

Correlational outcome on relationship between procedural justice and innovative work behaviour

			Procedural Justice	Innovative Work Behaviour
Spearman's rho	Procedural Justice	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.587**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000

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		N	269	269
	Innovative Work Behaviour	Correlation Coefficient	.587**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	269	269

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*
Source: SPSS windows version 25.0

Decision: The results indicate a strong positive relationship between procedural justice and innovative work behaviour (ρ = 0.587). It is further concluded that procedural justice has a significant positive relationship with innovative work behavior.

Ho2: There is no relationship between distributive justice and innovative work behaviour

Correlational outcome on relationship between distributive justice and innovative work behaviour

			Distributive Justice	Innovative Work Behaviour
Spearman's rho	Distributive Justice	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.641**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	269	269
	Innovative Work Behaviour	Correlation Coefficient	.641**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	269	269

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*
Source: SPSS windows version 25.0

Decision:
The results reveal a strong positive relationship between distributive justice and innovative work behaviour (ρ = 0.641, p = 0.000 < 0.05). This indicates that distributive justice has a statistically significant positive relationship with innovative work behaviour among employees in the Bayelsa State Civil Service.

Ho3: There is no relationship between interactional justice and innovative work behaviour

Correlational outcome on relationship between Interactional justice and innovative work behaviour

			Interactional Justice	Innovative Work Behaviour
Spearman's rho	Interactional Justice	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.703**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	269	269
	Innovative Work Behaviour	Correlation Coefficient	.703**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	269	269

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*
Source: SPSS windows version 25.0

Decision:
The results reveal a strong positive relationship between interactional justice and nnovative work behaviour (ρ = 0.703, p = 0.000 < 0.05). This indicates that interactional justice has a statistically significant positive relationship with innovative work behaviour among employees in the Bayelsa State Civil Service.

V. Discussion

The study's results indicated a significant and positive association between distributive justice

and innovative work practices among employees of the Bayelsa State government. The findings correspond with the research by Akram et al. (2020), which shows that distributive justice positively affects the innovative work habits of Chinese telecom employees. Furthermore, their research indicated that when individuals are treated appropriately, they are more likely to disseminate knowledge and engage creatively in the organisational process. The results align with Ye et al. (2022), who found that distributive justice significantly positively influenced employees' innovative behaviour at work. This indicates that employees are more likely to engage in innovative activities like idea generation, when they perceive that rewards, promotions, responsibilities, and recognition are allocated equitably. When employees see that organisational outcomes are equitably allocated, they are more inclined to propose innovative ideas.

The research identified a robust positive relationship between procedural justice and employees' innovative work behaviour. The research supports the works of Akram et al. (2020) that procedural fairness positively influences employees' creative work habits in the Chinese telecommunications sector. The results also align with the research by Okafor and Nwankwo (2021), which revealed that procedural justice substantially enhanced creativity within Nigerian government organisations. This indicates that employees exhibit greater creativity when organisational decisions and processes are transparent, consistent, fair, and inclusive. Equity motivates people to exceed their standard duties and cultivates trust and confidence in leadership. Musa and Abdullahi (2022) assert that procedural justice strongly predicts employee innovativeness in the banking sector.

Collectively, these results propose that individuals who regard organisational procedures as equitable are more likely to engage in innovative projects and creative problem-solving activities that contribute to economic success.

Interactional justice significantly influences the innovative work practices of employees in Bayelsa State government agencies. This research aligns with the findings of Omoregie and Akintola (2020), which revealed that interactional justice significantly influences the execution and implementation of ideas. Their findings pointed out the importance of interpersonal justice and courteous communication in fostering an environment conducive to creativity. The positive interpersonal ties between managers and employees significantly affect the creative work practices in public companies, according to this study. In sharp contrast to the findings of Sabuhari et al. (2025), our study reveals that organisational justice exerted no direct influence on the innovative work practices of Indonesian civil servants. Employees at Bayelsa State government entities may be concerned about perceptions of equity due to the bureaucratic and resource-related challenges inherent in public sector administration.

VI. Conclusion

The research discloses that organisational justice is positively and significantly related to employees' innovative work behaviour in Bayelsa State civil service. Distributive, procedural, and interactional justice all favourably foster innovativeness when employees sense equity in rewards, processes, and interpersonal interactions. A just work environment fosters trust, motivation, and employees' propensity to participate in innovative endeavours.

Recommendations

1. Administrators of the civil service should adopt more transparent, consistent, and inclusive decision-making processes. Efforts should be made to simplify administrative procedures and reduce excessive bureaucracy that may discourage creativity.
2. Administrators of the civil service in Bayelsa State should ensure that rewards, promotions, and recognition are distributed fairly and transparently.
3. Administrators of the civil service should be trained to communicate respectfully, provide constructive feedback, and treat employees with dignity.

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