



Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Predictive Roles of Equity Sensitivity and Interpersonal Justice among State Civil Servants in Anambra

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Abstract

Organisational citizenship behaviour is voluntary behaviour on the part of employee which does not bring any reward to them. An employee who feels like citizen of organisation may do something extra for organisation and coworkers which is not described in job description. This study examined interpersonal justice and equity sensitivity as predictors of organisational citizenship behaviour among state civil servants in Anambra State. Participants in the study were 279 employees of Anambra State Civil Service and they were selected through Purposive Sampling Technique. They responded to, Organisational Justice Scale, Equity Sensitivity Instrument and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Scale. Two hypotheses were posited and tested using Regression Analysis Statistics. The results showed that interpersonal justice ($\beta = .51$; $t = 17.38$; $p < .001$) and equity sensitivity ($\beta = .59$; $t = 20.32$; $p < .001$) predicted organisational citizenship behaviour. Findings were discussed in line with theoretical framework. Implications of the results were given and suggestions made on how organisations will enhance their employees' citizenship behaviour. It was recommended that managers of Nigerian public sector should develop and implements policies that will promote justice and equity perception among its employees so as to promote good citizenship behaviour among its' employees.

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Introduction

The modern business environment has become complex and aggressive due to cut throat competition engaged by competing organisations. Most organisations employ every available strategies open to them to see they keep ahead of their competitors. One of these strategies employed by these organisations is assembling employees with right attitude to work and organisation. This is important bearing in mind that the success of any organisation is largely dependent on its workforce. In Nigeria today, many public organisations are going into extinction. Most time, people feel more comfortable patronizing private owned organisation than public organisations. Reason for this is based on employees work attitude. Organisation as we know is its people. This means that for organisation to achieve its aims and objectives there is need for its worker to show a sense of commitment and patriotism. Having a group of workers who are ready to give their all to the organisation will go a long way to ensure productivity and sustainability of the organisation. In this regard, this study tends to look at how citizenship behaviour will improve productivity and efficiency in public organisations in Nigeria.

Organisational citizenship behaviour is a job attitude that contributes positively to realization of organizational goals. Organ (1988) described it as individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organisation. Graham (1991) viewed it as employees' obedience, loyalty, and participation that strengthens individual's relational ties to the organisation. Nwibere (2014) defined organisational citizenship behaviour as anything positive and constructive that employees do, of their own volition, which supports co-workers and benefits organisation. Other scholars like Yaakobi and Weisberg (2020) and Igbinomwanhia & Akinmayowa (2014) described it as free will behaviours that exceeds routine expectations and benefits either or both co-worker and organisation. The center point of all these definitions is that organisational citizenship behaviour is a discretionary behaviours, are performed by the employees on personal choice and contributes positively to overall organisational effectiveness. By discretionary, it means that the behaviour is not an enforceable requirement of the role or the job description, that is, the clearly specifiable terms of the person's employment contract with the organisation. Being a personal choice means that it voluntary and that its omission is not generally understood as punishable.

The basic elements of organisational citizenship behaviour are that it enhances productivity, free up resources, attract and retain good employees and create a favourable social framework. Enhancing productivity means that it promotes efficiency and effectiveness. Freeing up resources implies that it opportunity for creativity and innovation. In creating a favourable social framework, organisational citizenship behaviour fosters employees' loyalty towards the organization (Dash & Pradhan, 2014). Managers can tap into this social framework to boost employees' confidence and commitment to the organization. This is very important because having a workforce that can shoe extra ordinary commitment as citizens of the organisation will enhance development and sustainability.

Because of beneficial effects of organisational citizenship behaviour in the workplace, researchers have focused on the antecedents of this construct. Many of the first studies focused on workplace attitudes as predictors of organisational citizenship behaviour. Among attitudinal constructs found to be related to organisational citizenship behaviour are job satisfaction (Unal, 2013), perception of fairness (Davoudi et. al., 2012) and perceived organisational support (Nasar et. al., 2014). These studies have typically taken a social exchange approach in which employees' commitment to the organisation is based on their beliefs about the organisation's commitment to them (Mansoor et. al., 2012). Both the employer and employee fulfill their exchange obligations and act in a manner that maximizes reciprocity on the part of the other.

Equity sensitivity refers to people's disposition to perceive stimuli as unfair (Adams, 1965). In terms of perception of inequity, recent research has suggested that individuals may differ in their reactions to unfair outcomes and situations. Huseman, Hatfield & Miles (1987, 1985) identified three categories to capture

individuals' equity preference as: (a) benevolents, (b) equity sensitives, and (c) entitleds. Miles, Hatfield & Huseman (1994) have asserted that the concern for the relationship between the employer and employee and the desire for outcomes differentiates one type of individual from another. At one end of the spectrum are the benevolents that place their emphasis on the relationship with their employer. Benevolents find satisfaction when they can give their talents and expertise to the organisation. At the opposite end of the spectrum are the entitleds who believe that their personal outcomes are of primary importance when dealing with their organisations. Entitleds are constantly looking for ways to improve their situation and maximize the rewards given by the organisation. In the middle of both benevolent and entitled are the equity sensitive who place the same emphasis on having a good employment relationship and achieving desired outcomes. Researchers have shown that individuals have a unique perception to equity or inequity (King & Miles, 1994; Miles et. al., 1994). The equity sensitivity construct was developed to offer predictions about how individuals may react when they are denied or given reward or outcomes. Researchers have found this dispositional variable (equity sensitivity) to have moderated employees' engagement in organisational citizenship behaviour (Blakely et. al., 2005).

Perception of justice is a core determinant of employees' decision to engage in organisational citizenship behaviour (Colquitt, 2001). Organisational justice is consisting of distributive justice, procedural justice, interpersonal justice and informational justice (Colquitt et. al., 2001). The four justice dimensions are related to how employees behave in the workplace. However, it has been suggested that of the four justice dimensions, interpersonal justice is particularly important in shaping employee behaviour (Judge et. al., 2006). Interpersonal justice captures the degree to which people are treated properly, with dignity, and politeness (Colquitt, 2001), and respect by authorities or third parties involved in executing procedures or determining outcomes (Aryee et. al., 2007). Day-to-day, interpersonal encounters are so frequent in organisations that interpersonal justice often becomes more relevant and psychologically meaningful to employees compared to other types of justice dimension (Bies, 2005). Multiple theoretical frameworks help explain why perceptions of interpersonal justice often lead to discretionary behaviour in the workplace. For instance, social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Thibaut & Kelly, 1959) and the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) suggests employees reciprocate the treatment (good or bad) they receive from others. Hence employees who perceive fair interpersonal treatment are generally more likely to engage in behaviours that benefit and promote the goals of their organisation or individuals within the organisation (Bakchsha et. al., 2009).

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Equity Sensitivity and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Equity sensitivity construct proposed the individuals vary in terms of their equity preferences (Fronte & Harmon, 2006). Studies have also shown that individuals' equity preference has in turn influence individual engagement in organisational citizenship behaviour. Hayes (2005) in his study revealed that benevolent individuals easily give their skills and abilities to the organisation without any expectation about fair outcomes than equity sensitive and entitled individuals. Bynum et al. (2012) found support for an interaction effect between equity sensitivity and organisations citizenship behaviours. Golparvar and Javadian (2012) in their study established that differences in equity perceptions are linked to attitude formations including organisational citizenship behaviours. Other studies like Blanky et al. (2005), Kickul and Lester (2001); Bing and Burroughs (2001) found that employees' engagement in organisational citizenship behaviour is tied to their perceptual disposition to balance their perceived inequity.

Interpersonal Justice and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour

Interpersonal justice deals with individuals' perception of fairness in interaction within the organisation. Previous studies revealed that employees' perception of justice affects their job outcomes. Nwibere (2014) found a positive relationship between dimension of organisational justice and organisational citizenship behaviour. The study further revealed that fairness in interaction between employees and their supervisors promotes organisational citizenship behaviour and other positive job outcomes. Igbinomwanhia and

Akinmayowa (2014) revealed that justice perception elicits better performance from employees which includes extra-role performance. Asamani and Mensah (2013) observed that interactional justice perception increases citizenship behaviour. Also the works of Bamerjee and Banerjee (2013), Damirachi et al. (2013) and Rauf (2014) observed that interpersonal justice promotes fairness in socialization among organisation staff which has a positive effect on their disposition to engage in extra-role behaviours.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested.

- i. Equity sensitivity will significantly predict organisational citizenship behaviour of state civil servants.
- ii. Interpersonal justice will significantly predict organisational citizenship behaviour of state civil servants.

Method

Participants

A total number of 279 full-time employees of grade levels 7 to 10 in state civil service participated in the study. They comprised of 120 (43.01%) males and 159 (56.99%) females with the age range of 20 to 48 years with the mean age of 32.08 years (SD=8.17). The four senior cadres were chosen because they share similar condition of service. Based on their level in service, 70 (25.09%) of the participants were in level 7, 102 (36.56%) were in level 8, 38 (13.62%) were in level 9, and 69 (24.73%) were in level 10. The participants have spent between 1 to 12 years with the organisation with the mean tenure of 5.63 years (SD=3.56). Of 279 of them, 35 (12.54%) hold NCE, 40 (14.34%) hold HND, 188 (67.38%) hold Bachelors Degree, and 16 (5.74%) hold Postgraduate Degree. Their marital statues showed that 129 (46.24%) of the participants were single while 150 (53.76%) were married. Participants were drawn from the population through purposive sampling technique. This means that the researcher made use of those employees that served his purpose.

Instruments

The following instruments were used for data collection.

Equity Sensitivity Instrument (ESI)

Equity Sensitivity Instrument was developed by Huseman, Hatfield & Miles (1985). It is a 5-item scale that measures individuals' equity sensitivity level. The scale has a cronbach alpha of .84 and reliability of .92. For each item, respondents allocate 10 points between 2 statements, one representing a benevolent response and the other representing an entitled response. Examples of the items are "It would be more important for me to: A) help others; B) watch out for my own good.", and "The hard work I would do should: A) Benefit the organization; B) Benefit me." It was used to measure employees' equity sensitivity. The researcher followed Huseman, Hatfield & Miles (1985) procedure by summing the scores. The five items in the equity sensitivity scale were subjected to validity and reliability test to make it usable in Nigeria. For the content and face validity, the five items were shown to five experts in psychology. The experts were lecturers in Department of Psychology, Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka and Anambra State University Igbariam. The experts were asked to go through the items and then indicate which of them measures equity sensitivity. They all agreed that all the items actually measure the construct. Further validity study was carried out using 74 participants that were randomly selected from employees of three local governments in Anambra State namely: Idemili South, Onitsha South and Aguata L.G.As. Out of 74 copies, 62 copies were returned representing 83.78%. The responses from the 62 participants were subjected to reliability test and item analysis. The scale has a reliability coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) of .85, and a test retest reliability of .76. The items correlations ranged from .33 to .63. The items were also subjected to factor analysis using Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation Rotation Method and all the items scaled through. Following Huseman, Hatfield & Miles (1985) procedure by summing the scores, participants with scores 0 to 25 were classified as entitled, those with scores of 26 to 34 were seen as equity sensitive while those with scores of 35 to 50 were classified as benevolent.

Interpersonal Justice Scale (IJS)

Interpersonal justice scale was adopted from organisational justice scale developed by Colquitt (2001). The scale is in a 5-point likert response ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). The four items in the interpersonal justice scale were subjected to validity and reliability test to make it usable in Nigeria. For the content and face validity, the four items were shown to five experts in psychology. The experts were lecturers in Department of Psychology, Ekiti State University Ado-Ekiti, NnamdiAzikiwe University Awka and Anambra State University Igbariam. The experts were asked to go through the items and then indicate which of them measures interpersonal justice. They all agreed that all the items actually measure the construct. Further validity study was carried out using 74 participants that were randomly selected from employees of three local governments in Anambra State namely: Idemili South, Onitsha South and Aguata L.G.As. Out of 74 copies, 62 copies were returned representing 83.78%. The responses from the 62 participants were subjected to reliability test and item analysis. The subscale has a reliability coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) of .86, and a test retest reliability of .92. The items correlations ranged from .45 to .65. The items were also subjected to factor analysis using Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation Rotation Method and all the items scaled through. The mean score of the participants was 13.38 and those who scored above the mean score were categorized to have high interpersonal justice while those below the mean scored were seen as low interpersonal justice.

Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Scale (OCBS)

The 21-item Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Scale developed by Onyishi (2007) with Nigerian sample was used to measure citizenship behaviour. The instrument measures two types of organisational citizenship behaviour, organisational citizenship behaviour directed at the individual (OCBI) and organisational citizenship behaviour directed at the organisation (OCBO). The response is on a likert points from never (1) to very often (5). It was used to measure organisational citizenship behaviour. Some items (12, 13, 15, and 16) are scored in reverse direction. The scale has a reliability coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) of .83, and a test retest reliability of .78.

Procedure

The copies of the three scales namely, Equity Sensitivity Instrument; Interpersonal Justice Scale; Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Scale was distributed to the participants who were employees of Anambra State Civil Service. This was made possible with the aid of Head of service who introduced the researcher to Heads of department with a written note so that he can assess the workers in their respective departments. The researcher went round the 20 ministries in Anambra State in five working days. The researcher was able to give out copies of the questionnaires to the employees who were in levels 7 to 10. The participants were made to understand that their response is confidential and will be used for only research purpose. The researcher guided them on how to fill the questionnaires and they were allowed to fill it immediately and return back to the researcher. A total of 318 each of the three questionnaires were given to them to respond to. Out of the 318 copies, 302 representing 94.97% was returned. Based on improper and incomplete response, 23 out of 302 returned questionnaires were discarded. This leaves the researcher with properly filled 279 copies representing 92.38% that were used for data analysis.

Design/ Statistics

The design for this study was a cross-sectional survey design. The statistics use was linear regression analysis to test the predictive role of equity sensitivity an interpersonal justice on organisational citizenship behaviour.

Results

This study made use of regression statistics. Based on the analysis, the following findings were made.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation among Study Variables

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
OCB	279	21	90	67.35	20.08
Equity sensitivity		5	46	30.84	8.57
Interpersonal justice		4	20	13.38	4.28
Age		20	48	32.08	8.17

The above table shows the mean, and standard deviation among study variables. Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) has a mean score of 67.35 and standard deviation of 20.08, interpersonal justice has a mean score of 13.38 and standard deviation of 4.28, and equity sensitivity has a mean score of 30.85 and standard deviation of 8.55.

Table 2: Regression Analysis of the Predictive Roles of Equity Sensitivity and Interpersonal Justice on Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

Model	R ²	F	Sig	β	t	Sig
Equity sensitivity	.59	2.57	.01	.03	20.32	.01
Interpersonal justice				.81	17.38	.01

Dependent variable: Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

The two independent factors equity sensitivity ($\beta = .59$; $t = 20.32$; $P < .001$) and interpersonal justice ($\beta = .51$; $t = 17.38$; $P < .001$) predicted organisational citizenship behaviour. Further analysis showed that the R square coefficient indicates that equity sensitivity explains 55% of the variance in the organisational citizenship behaviour of the employees while interpersonal justice explains 29% of the variance.

Discussion

This study was made to determine the interrelatedness and the predictive power of interpersonal justice and equity sensitivity on organisational citizenship behaviour among civil servants in Anambra State, Nigeria. The research theme was hinged on the need to provide an empirical basis for psychological intervention in the promotion of citizenship behaviour among Nigeria civil servant.

Equity sensitivity was also found to be good predictor of organisational citizenship behaviour. This implies that benevolents exhibit more citizenship behaviour than equity sensitives and entitleds while equity sensitives also are more organisational citizens than the entitleds. This finding could be explained using Adams (1965) equity theory. The theory suggests that individual perceptions of equity treatment in the workplace directly influence their behaviour and performance. It goes further to describe how individuals differ in their reaction to perceived equity or in their tolerance of inequity. Based on this finding, one would suggest that benevolents are more tolerant of inequity situations and can continue to exhibit more organisational citizenship behaviour not minding whether a fair working environment exists or not. The finding also indicates that equity sensitives would exhibit organisational citizenship behaviour when they perceive the work environment to be fair. And for the entitleds, because they only engage on what benefits them, they showed poor attitudes towards engaging in organisational citizenship behaviours which are non-rewarding behaviours and are done out of free will.

As previously state, entitlements are less tolerant of inequity and will tend to monitor the employment relationship carefully. This finding has been found to be consistent with the findings of earlier researchers. Hayes (2005), Blankly et al. (2005), Bynum et al. (2012) and Golparvar and Javadin (2012) in their separate studies found that benevolents perform more organisational citizenship behaviour than the entitlements who are consistent with their job descriptions.

The findings revealed that interpersonal justice was a strong predictor of organisational citizenship behaviour. The concept of interpersonal justice as earlier stated is used to explain the general belief that employees hold concerning how their organisation treat and respect them at work (Colquitt, 2001). Organisations that have regard for their employees treat them fairly by respecting their pride and dignity. This can be explained using Blau (1964) social exchange theory which suggest that individual are likely to reciprocate favours or disfavours done to them. The exhibition of organisational citizenship behaviour by employees could be viewed as a reciprocation of good interpersonal relationship that exists between them and their organisation. This implies that organisations that respects and treat their employees fairly are likely to produce employees who are good organisational citizens. That is employees who can go beyond their job description and freely contribute in a way that will guarantee organisational effectiveness. This finding is in agreement with earlier empirical studies like the works of Jafari and Bidarian, (2012), Asamani and Mensah (2013), Nwibere (2014) and Igbinomwanhia & Akinmayowa (2014). The findings of their study also showed that interpersonal justice influences employees' choice to exhibit organisational citizenship behaviour.

The findings of this study have several implications for organisational practitioner in public organisations in Nigeria. The findings of this study are consistent with Blau (1964) social exchange theory and Adams (1965) equity theory of organisational behaviour. In line with the social exchange theory, the finding that interpersonal justice influence citizenship behaviour implies that employees engage in citizenship behaviour as a reciprocation of the manner in which they are fairly treated by their organisation. Secondly Adams (1965) equity theory supports the second finding that individual level of tolerance to inequity situations influences their choice to be good organisational citizens.

Managers of public organisations in Nigeria should understand that employees are concerned about the quality of interpersonal treatment they receive which also affects their work attitude. They should develop policies and procedures that improve the quality of interpersonal relationship with their employees. Such policies should provide required terms to respect, build trust, and accommodate employees' suggestions in the decision making. Giving that respect is said to be reciprocal, receiving such respect from the organisation will enhance employees' display of organisational citizenship behaviours (Nwibere, 2014). The established link between equity sensitivity and organisational citizenship behaviour has its own implications. For managers who are interested in getting best out of their employees, they should device strategies that ensure equitable working environment. This is very important because it has been revealed that sense of equity is important for promoting the performance of organisational citizenship behaviours (Blakely et al., 2005). This study also helps in understanding of organisational process. The study reveals that perceptual and dispositional processes helps in eliciting citizenship behaviour directed at the individuals in the organisation and those directed at the organisation. This has implications for organisational effectiveness and survival. When employees become good citizens, they will be willing to do more than their job description which is very important for organisational effectiveness and survival. This calls for need for managers of Nigerian public organisations to take measures to foster organisational citizenship behaviour in their workplace.

In conclusion organisational citizenship behaviour represents those specific instances where employees go beyond their formal duty. This is discretionary and do not attract any direct formal reward, but in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organisation. To this end, organisational practitioners should evolve schemes and strategies that will make their employees good organisational citizens. Managers of Nigerian public sector should develop and implements policies that will promote justice perception among its employees. They should understand that employees perform better when they feel that

their organisation respect and value them. Similarly, they should create equitable working environments that ensure the sense of equity in workplace. These measures will not only improve organisational citizenship behaviour in Nigerian public organisation but will ensure the organisational effectiveness and survival.

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