

**PROCEDURAL JUSTICE AND EMPLOYEE CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOUR OF MARINE COMPANIES IN PORT HARCOURT, RIVERS STATE**

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**Abstract**

This study "examined the relationship between procedural justice and employee citizenship behaviour of marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The study was motivated by the increasing need for employees to exhibit positive discretionary behaviours that enhance organizational effectiveness beyond formal job requirements. Procedural justice was examined as the predictor variable, while employee citizenship behaviour was measured using sportsmanship and courtesy. The study was anchored on Equity Theory propounded by John Stacey Adams (1963), which emphasizes the importance of fairness perceptions in shaping employee attitudes and behaviours. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. Data were collected from 82 employees drawn from seven marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, using a structured questionnaire titled Procedural Justice and Employee Citizenship Behaviour Index (PJECBI). The instrument achieved a reliability coefficient of 0.77 using Cronbach's Alpha. The hypotheses were tested using Spearman Rank Order Correlation with the aid of SPSS version 25.0. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between procedural justice and employee sportsmanship ( $r = 0.705$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The study also found a significant positive relationship between procedural justice and employee courtesy ( $r = 0.681$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). These results indicate that employees who perceive organizational procedures as fair, transparent, and unbiased are more likely to exhibit positive citizenship behaviours such as sportsmanship and courtesy. The study concluded that procedural justice significantly enhances employee citizenship behaviour in marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The study recommended that management of marine companies should ensure transparency in decision-making processes so that employees understand how and why organizational decisions are made, thereby encouraging sportsmanship and reducing complaints; Management should apply organizational policies consistently and fairly to all employees to promote mutual respect, trust, and courteous behaviour" in the workplace.

***Keywords: Procedural justice, sportsmanship and courtesy.***

**Introduction**

Organizations "increasingly seek employees who are willing to make extra efforts to contribute to organizational success. Workers who consistently exceed their formal job requirements by supporting colleagues and promoting organizational objectives play a vital role in organizational growth and effectiveness. Employee citizenship behaviour has become a significant concept in modern organizations because it encompasses the voluntary actions employees perform beyond their prescribed duties to enhance organizational performance and effectiveness (Eain et al., 2025; Daniel, 2016). This is

particularly important in marine companies that operate within highly competitive and service-driven environments, where organizations rely on employees who are prepared to support teamwork, assist co-workers, and contribute positively to organizational goals. Employee citizenship behaviour consists of discretionary actions that are not formally recognized through rewards but significantly improve organizational functioning (Mitali et al., 2019; Verlinden, 2024). These behaviours contribute to stronger workplace relationships, improved operational efficiency, and enhanced organizational performance. In this study, employee citizenship behaviour is assessed through the dimensions of sportsmanship and courtesy.

Sportsmanship refers to an employee's capacity to endure workplace inconveniences, accept unfavorable circumstances without excessive complaints, and maintain a constructive attitude even when situations do not unfold as expected (Neelie, 2021). Employees who demonstrate sportsmanship exhibit qualities such as patience, tolerance, fairness, self-discipline, and resilience when facing workplace challenges, thereby promoting a peaceful and productive work environment. Courtesy, in contrast, relates to showing respect, politeness, and consideration toward others during workplace interactions. Employees who display courtesy communicate thoughtfully, prevent actions that may inconvenience others, and foster positive interpersonal relationships. Such behaviour minimizes workplace conflicts and disruptions while encouraging cooperation among employees, ultimately improving organizational effectiveness (Aaron, 2021).

One important organizational factor that can influence employee citizenship behaviour is procedural justice. Procedural justice refers to employees' perceptions regarding the fairness of the policies, procedures, and processes used by management when making decisions and distributing organizational resources (Cropanzano & Folger, 2015). It focuses on the consistency, transparency, neutrality, and fairness of organizational decision-making processes. When employees believe that procedures are implemented fairly and that decisions are made objectively without favoritism or bias, they are more likely to trust management and display positive attitudes and behaviours at work.

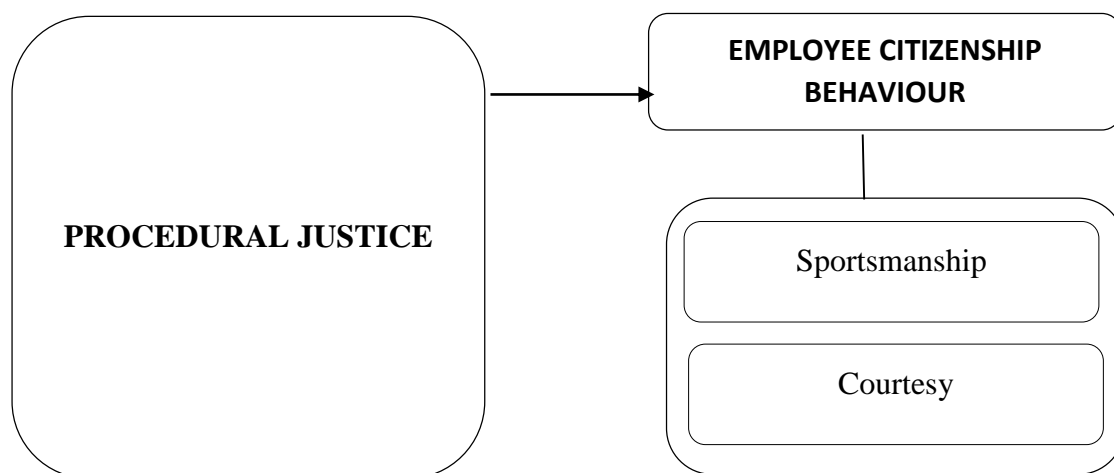
In marine companies operating in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, where employees work under challenging and dynamic conditions, procedural justice plays a critical role. Fair treatment in matters such as promotions, rewards, disciplinary measures, conflict management, and task allocation can motivate employees to demonstrate greater levels of sportsmanship and courtesy. Employees who perceive organizational procedures as fair are more inclined to collaborate with colleagues, support organizational goals, and sustain positive workplace relationships. On the other hand, perceptions of unfairness may lead to dissatisfaction, lower commitment levels, increased complaints, and a reduction in voluntary positive workplace behaviours (Eain et al., 2025; Cropanzano & Folger, 2015; Nguyen & Tran, 2022). Considering the significant contribution of marine companies to the economy of Rivers State and the importance of maintaining efficient operations and healthy employee relations, it is necessary to understand how procedural justice influences employee citizenship behaviour. Consequently, this study investigates the relationship between procedural justice and employee citizenship behaviour, specifically through the dimensions of sportsmanship and courtesy, among marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Employee citizenship behaviour has become a vital aspect of organizational success in marine companies because it encourages cooperation, enhances operational efficiency, and contributes to overall organizational effectiveness. Despite its importance, there are concerns that some employees in marine companies located in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, demonstrate low levels of citizenship behaviour. This is evident in behaviours such as poor sportsmanship, persistent complaints, low tolerance for minor workplace challenges, and a lack of courtesy in interactions with colleagues and supervisors. These negative behaviours often create strained working relationships, weaken teamwork, increase workplace conflicts, and disrupt routine organizational activities. As a result, service quality, employee morale, and the overall performance of marine companies may be negatively affected.

One possible explanation for this situation is employees' perception of inadequate procedural justice within the organization. When workers view organizational procedures relating to promotions, rewards, job assignments, and disciplinary measures as unfair, they may become dissatisfied and less motivated to engage in voluntary behaviours that benefit the organization. Such perceptions can lead employees to withdraw from extra-role activities, display unfavourable attitudes, and reduce their willingness to collaborate with others. In view of the critical role of fairness in promoting positive workplace conduct, it is important to investigate the relationship between procedural justice and employee citizenship behaviour, specifically sportsmanship and courtesy, among employees of marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

### Conceptual Framework



**Fig. 1:** Conceptual framework showing the relationship between Procedural Justice and Employee Citizenship Behaviour

**Source:** Adopted from Eain et al. (2025); Daniel, (2016)

### Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to examine the relationship between procedural justice and employee citizenship behaviour of marine companies in Port Harcourt. The specific objectives are to:

1. ascertain the relationship between procedural justice and employee sportsmanship of marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State
2. determine the relationship between procedural justice and employee courtesy of marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between procedural justice and employee sportsmanship of marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State?
2. Is there any relationship between procedural justice and employee courtesy of marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State?

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were raised to guide the study:

- Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between procedural justice and employee sportsmanship of marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between procedural justice and employee courtesy of marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

### **Conceptual Review**

#### **Concept of Procedural Justice**

Procedural "justice refers to employees' perceptions regarding the fairness, consistency, and openness of the procedures used by organizations in making decisions and distributing resources (Cropanzano & Folger, 2015; Loi, 2016). It focuses on ensuring that organizational decisions are based on impartial procedures, reliable information, ethical principles, and opportunities for employees to voice their opinions (Leventhal et al., 2014; Tyler, 2016). Procedural justice is evident when employees perceive those organizational rules, policies, and decision-making processes are implemented fairly and equally without bias or discrimination (Tepper & Taylor, 2017; Ding & Lin, 2006).

When employees believe that procedures are fair, they are more likely to trust and accept organizational decisions, even if the outcomes are not in their personal favor (Tyler, 2016). Such perceptions encourage higher levels of commitment, loyalty, and constructive workplace behaviour, whereas feelings of procedural unfairness can result in dissatisfaction and increased intentions to leave the organization (Jahangir et al., 2016). In addition, procedural justice contributes to greater job satisfaction, minimizes workplace disputes, and promotes cooperation among employees (Williams et al., 2012; Yasmin, 2017). Through transparent practices, effective communication, and employee involvement in decision-making, procedural justice plays a vital role in improving organizational effectiveness, productivity, and positive workplace relationships (Akanbi & Ofoegbu, 2013).

#### **Concept of Employee Citizenship Behaviour**

Citizenship behaviour, commonly referred to as organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB), describes the voluntary actions employees perform beyond their official job responsibilities that help improve organizational effectiveness (Organ, 2015; Neelie, 2021). Such behaviours may involve assisting co-workers, participating in optional

organizational activities, and supporting organizational goals without anticipating formal rewards or recognition (Jack, 2018; Koslowsky & Pindek, 2019). Citizenship behaviour strengthens cooperation among employees, minimizes workplace conflicts, and creates a positive work atmosphere that enhances productivity and efficiency (Organ, 2015; Smith et al., 2014). It also encourages teamwork and enables organizations to adapt more effectively to changing environments (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Research has indicated that citizenship behaviour improves employee well-being, operational effectiveness, and overall organizational performance by fostering collaboration and maintaining high levels of performance (Hamza, 2023; Lam et al., 2016; Walz & Niehoff, 2015). In this study, citizenship behaviour is assessed through sportsmanship and courtesy.

**Sportsmanship:** Sportsmanship refers to an employee's capacity to demonstrate a positive attitude, fairness, self-discipline, and professionalism when confronted with workplace difficulties, disappointments, or unfavorable circumstances (Neelie, 2021; Abad, 2010). Within marine companies, sportsmanship encourages employees to work cooperatively with colleagues, accept organizational decisions, and refrain from unnecessary complaints that could hinder operational activities. It promotes resilience, healthy competition, and dedication to shared organizational objectives. Employees who exhibit sportsmanship respect their co-workers, support collaborative efforts, and remain committed to organizational success despite challenges and setbacks (Hamza, 2023; Nathan, 2023).

**Courtesy:** Courtesy refers to the display of politeness, respect, and consideration toward others within the workplace (Neelie, 2021). In marine companies, courteous behaviour helps maintain positive working relationships, reduces workplace interruptions, and improves operational efficiency. It includes treating colleagues with respect, meeting deadlines, participating in work-related activities on time, and being mindful of how personal actions may affect others (Davis, 2021; Aaron, 2021). Employees who demonstrate courtesy help create a supportive and cooperative work environment where mutual respect and teamwork flourish. As a result, courtesy contributes significantly to productivity, collaboration, and overall organizational effectiveness in marine" companies.

### **Theoretical Review**

This "study is anchored on equity theory propounded by John Stacey Adams in 1963. Equity Theory posits that individuals evaluate fairness by comparing their inputs, such as effort and time, with the outcomes they receive, including rewards and recognition, relative to others (Cropanzano & Rupp, 2005). When employees perceive equity, they experience satisfaction, commitment, and positive work attitudes. Conversely, perceived inequity creates feelings of dissatisfaction and motivates individuals to restore fairness. The theory emphasizes that perceptions of fairness significantly influence workplace behaviour and interpersonal relationships. Therefore, equitable treatment is essential for promoting positive employee outcomes and organizational effectiveness (Cropanzano & Rupp, 2005).

### **Justification of Equity Theory to the Study**

The implications of this theory on the relationship between procedural justice and employee citizenship behaviour suggest that employees in marine companies are more likely to exhibit positive discretionary behaviours when they perceive organizational procedures as fair, consistent, and unbiased. According to the theory, employees evaluate the fairness of decision-making processes and compare their treatment with that of others within the organization. When procedures relating to promotions, rewards, grievances, and work assignments are perceived as equitable, employees develop feelings of trust, satisfaction, and organizational commitment. These positive perceptions encourage them to go beyond their formal job requirements by assisting colleagues, supporting organizational initiatives, and demonstrating loyalty. Conversely, perceived procedural unfairness may lead to dissatisfaction and a reduction in citizenship behaviours.

### **Empirical Review .**

Eain et al. (2025) investigated the relationship between procedural justice and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), focusing on the mediating effects of job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Data were gathered through questionnaires administered to 210 employees from various business organizations. Pearson correlation and regression analyses were employed to test five hypotheses. The findings revealed that procedural justice was positively associated with job satisfaction, turnover intentions, and OCB. The study provided valuable insights for organizations aiming to minimize employee turnover. Moreover, job satisfaction and turnover intentions were found to fully mediate the relationship between procedural justice and organizational citizenship behavior. The results underscore the significance of fair decision-making processes in fostering a positive work environment and enhancing employee contributions within organizations.

Nguyen and Tran (2022) examined the relationship between procedural justice and organizational citizenship behavior, while also assessing the mediating and moderating mechanisms involved. Survey data were collected at two different periods to reduce common method bias, with respondents drawn from various business units. The authors evaluated path significance using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) algorithm and bootstrapping procedures at a 95% bias-corrected confidence interval. Drawing on data from an import-export company, the study confirmed the positive mediating effects of job engagement and job satisfaction in the relationship between procedural justice and OCB. Additionally, the findings demonstrated that perceived supervisor support (PSS) and reward recognition (RR) significantly moderated the relationship between procedural justice and job satisfaction, as well as the relationship between job engagement and OCB, respectively.

Daniel (2016) investigated the extent to which procedural justice influences altruism, conscientiousness, and sportsmanship among employees of First Bank, Union Bank, Access Bank, Sterling Bank, United Bank for Africa (UBA), and Guaranty Trust Bank (GTB) in Rivers State. The study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data were obtained through observation and structured questionnaires, while secondary data were sourced from journals and scholarly publications relating to organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). The hypotheses were tested using

Spearman's Rank Correlation (Rho), while multiple regression analysis was employed to examine the causal relationships among the variables. The results indicated a positive relationship between procedural justice and the dimensions of altruism, conscientiousness, and sportsmanship. The study further revealed that organizational climate exerted only a weak influence on OCB. This suggests that employees assess the presence of procedural justice based on both the fairness of outcomes and the processes through which those outcomes are distributed.

O'Callaghan (2024) examined the effect of procedural justice on employee turnover intentions and explored the mediating roles of job characteristics and meaningful work. Data were collected from 448 employees in the United States through Prolific, comprising both full-time and part-time workers. After excluding nine responses completed in less than half of the median completion time, the final sample consisted of 439 participants. The study employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to develop and test the proposed research model, with model fit assessed using established goodness-of-fit indicators. The findings showed a significant negative relationship between procedural justice and employees' intentions to leave their organizations. This relationship became even stronger when job characteristics and meaningful work were introduced as mediating variables. While job characteristics influenced turnover intentions only indirectly, meaningful work demonstrated both direct and indirect negative effects on employees' intentions to leave, highlighting its important role in employee retention" (O'Callaghan, 2024).

### Gap in Related Literature

Studies related to procedural justice and employee citizenship behaviour have been carried out (Eain et al., 2025; Nguyen & Tran, 2022; Daniel, 2016; O'Callaghan, 2024). However, from extant literature, the relationship between procedural justice and employee citizenship behaviour of marine companies in Port Harcourt is yet to be established. Therefore, this study was carried out in order to establish its evidence of relationship.

### METHODOLOGY

The "study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design. A sample drawn from 100 employees were collected from 7 marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, and a total of 82 responses were used for data analysis after the data screening process. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire titled: Procedural Justice and Employee Citizenship Behaviour Index (PJECBI). The reliability coefficient of 0.77 of the questionnaire was achieved using the Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman Rank order Correlation with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between procedural justice and employee sportsmanship of marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

#### **Table 1 Relationship between Procedural Justice and Employee Sportsmanship**

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		Procedural Justice	Employee Sportsmanship
Procedural Justice	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.705**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	82	82
Employee Sportsmanship	Correlation Coefficient	.705**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	82	82

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

**Source:** Survey Data, 2026

Table 1 above shows r value of 0.705 at a significance level of 0.00 which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.01. Since the significance value 0.000 is less than the alpha level of 0.01, the null hypothesis ( $H_{01}$ ) which states that there is no significant relationship between procedural justice and employee sportsmanship of marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State was rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. This implies that there is a significant relationship between procedural justice and employee sportsmanship of marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

$H_{02}$ : There is no significant relationship between procedural justice and employee courtesy of marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

**Table 2 Relationship between Procedural Justice and Employee Courtesy**

		Procedural Justice	Employee Courtesy
Procedural Justice	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.681**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	82	82
Employee Courtesy	Correlation Coefficient	.681**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	82	82

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

**Source:** Survey Data, 2026

Table 2 above shows r value of 0.681 at a significance level of 0.00 which is less than the chosen alpha level of 0.01. Since the significance value 0.000 is less than the alpha level of 0.01, the null hypothesis ( $H_{02}$ ) which states that there is no significant relationship between procedural justice and employee courtesy of marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State was rejected and the alternate hypothesis accepted. This implies that there is a significant relationship between procedural justice and employee courtesy of marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

### Discussion of Findings

The test of hypotheses revealed that there is a significant relationship between procedural justice and employee citizenship behaviour of marine companies in Rivers State. The

findings are in line with the works of Eain et al. (2025) which found that procedural justice influences organizational citizenship behaviour. This implies when employees in marine companies perceive that procedures relating to promotions, rewards, work allocation, and disciplinary actions are fair and unbiased, they develop trust and confidence in management (Eain et al., 2025; Cropanzano & Folger, 2015; Nguyen & Tran, 2022). This trust encourages sportsmanship, as employees become more willing to tolerate inconveniences, accept unfavorable outcomes, and maintain a positive attitude without unnecessary complaints. Procedural justice also promotes courtesy by encouraging employees to treat colleagues with respect, consideration, and professionalism. Employees who feel fairly treated are more likely to communicate positively, cooperate with others, and avoid behaviours that may create workplace conflicts (Daniel, 2016; Eain et al., 2025). In marine companies in Port Harcourt, where teamwork and coordination are essential for operational success, fair procedures foster harmonious relationships and mutual respect among workers. Consequently, employees voluntarily engage in behaviours that support their colleagues and the organization. Therefore, procedural justice strengthens sportsmanship and courtesy, leading to improved employee citizenship behaviour, workplace harmony, and organizational effectiveness.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, procedural justice plays a significant role in enhancing employee citizenship behaviour in marine companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. When employees perceive organizational procedures and decision-making processes as fair, transparent, and unbiased, they are more likely to exhibit positive behaviours beyond their formal job duties. Such fairness encourages sportsmanship, courtesy, cooperation, and respect among employees. Consequently, procedural justice promotes harmonious workplace relationships, strengthens organizational commitment, and contributes to improved organizational effectiveness.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Management of marine companies should ensure transparency in decision-making processes so that employees understand how and why organizational decisions are made, thereby encouraging sportsmanship and reducing complaints.
2. Management should apply organizational policies consistently and fairly to all employees to promote mutual respect, trust, and courteous behaviour in the workplace.

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