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Original Article

Moderating Effect of Organizational Justice Perceptions on the Relationship between Conflict Management Strategies and Effectiveness of Multinational Oil and Gas Companies in Nigeria

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Abstract: *This study examined the moderating effect of organizational justice perceptions on the connection between international oil and gas firms' performance in Nigeria and their approaches to conflict management. The research design utilized in the study was a cross-sectional poll. With the use of a standardized questionnaire, primary data were produced. The survey encompassed five (5) international oil and gas businesses that were registered with the Department of Petroleum Resources as its population. As a result of the relatively small sample size of the five (5) global oil and gas-producing organizations in Nigeria, the population as a whole was examined as a census. Ten (10) managers of the five (5) multinational oil and gas-producing companies in Nigeria received the questionnaire, carrying the overall number of respondents to fifty (50). This was done in accordance with the macro-level section of the evaluation. The study encompassed the following categories of managers: directors, divisional managers, deputy divisional managers, overall managers, and deputy general managers. By using the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient, which yields scores above 0.70 for every item, the validity of the tool was established. Findings revealed that organizational justice perceptions significantly moderate the relationship between conflict management strategies and the effectiveness of multinational oil and gas companies in Nigeria. Therefore, the study concluded that organizational justice perception is a significant moderator in the relationship between conflict management strategies and the effectiveness of multinational oil and gas companies in Nigeria.*

Keywords: *Conflict Management Strategy, Effectiveness, Organizational Justice Perceptions, Growth Rate, Innovation Market Share.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Increasing competition in the market and general uncertainty, as well as complexity in the operating environment, has made effectiveness an important issue for profit and non-profit organizations today. Three specific areas of a firm's outcome include financial effectiveness, product market effectiveness and shareholders' return (Richard, Simon & Brut, 2009). It is very vital for managers to know what factors (the speed of innovation, dynamic technological advancement, shorter product life cycles, higher rate of new product development, etc.) influence an organization's effectiveness in order to make them take appropriate steps and initiate the same. Awino (2011) asserts that, for an organization to be successful, it must have above-average returns and identify effectiveness drivers from the top to the bottom of the organization. Effectiveness guarantees the continuity of the organization and makes it to be competitive in a global marketplace. Effectiveness can be seen as a multi-dimensional construct consisting of more than simply financial effectiveness (Baker & Sinkula, 2005). It explains the degree to which the company can satisfy both its own survival demands and the needs of its stakeholders. (Griffin, 2003). In this sense, effectiveness depicts that an organization is achieving its mission and goals.

Zeb-Obipi (2015) posits that effectiveness refers to the record of achievements made by an organization (a corporation) at or over a given time, measurable through several indices. It is measured by the extent to which an organization achieves set objectives or executes its strategies; hence, effectiveness measurement is sourced from both corporate objectives and strategies. According to Tangen (2005), effectiveness can be described as an umbrella term for all concepts that consider the success of a firm and its activities. Effectiveness can relate to the actual outputs or consequences of an activity, the manner in which it gets carried out, or the capacity to produce desired outcomes. Effectiveness, according to Atkinson (2012), is the attainment of results that guarantee the provision of desired outcomes for a firm's stakeholders.

Njihia, Obara and Mauti (2013) emphasize that successful measurement is one of the instruments that businesses use to track their efficacy, pinpoint problem areas, boost employee motivation, enhance communication, and fortify responsibility.

Daft (2010) defined effectiveness as the organization's ability to attain its goals by using resources efficiently and effectively. Similarly, Sok, O'Cass and Sok (2013) argue that effectiveness is the ability of the organization to achieve its goals and objectives.

Effectiveness is vital for organizations to stay in operation in a dynamic environment. Several organizational factors drive the attainment of effectiveness, such as knowledge sharing, organizational climate, organizational structure, organizational culture, organizational leadership and environmental factors. Also, conflict management is a crucial factor in driving effectiveness. Conflict is an inevitable part of life because it relates to situations where resources are scarce and where there is a need for functions' division, role differentiation and power relations (Azamosa, 2004). Mostly, conflict results in stress, which leads to less-than-optimal satisfaction for the employees (Bashir, 2010). Thus, reduced satisfaction may result in higher absenteeism rates and high turnover rates. Conflict may also erode trust in fellow employees and even supervisors and seniors, and this tendency can dent or completely halt the project execution progress. The collection of internal consequences that are negative, such as slowed progress and loss of trust, could generate a negative impact on the satisfaction of customers as a result of failure to meet deadlines for service delivery and service quality that is below the expected standards (Dontigney, 2012). Conflicts in organizations are disastrous and create unnecessary economic loss both to the organizations and the society. It sometimes results in strikes, stress, low productivity, loss of man-hours and wastage of resources (Oparanma, Hamilton & Ohaka, 2009).

The modern functional view sees organizational/firm conflict in a positive light and as a productive force (Kumar & Hossain, 2012). The approach has a belief that conflicts stimulate both employee and management to improve their levels of skills and knowledge. Functional conflict, which is also known as creative conflict, refers to a constructive form of conflict that supports the goals of the society or organization and improves performance. This type benefits or supports the main purpose of the society or organization. Angaye (2003) expressed that, functional conflict reflects the differences and variety of human opinions and activity which exist in any free society. The approach has a belief that conflicts simulate both employees and management to improve their levels of skills and knowledge. Mark (2019) states that industrial relations came as a result of the nature of human society and the businesses around it.

According to Boulden (2003), Conflict Management Strategy (CMS) is the process that involves blocking out the negative aspects of conflicts while at the same time pronouncing more of the positive aspects of the same conflict by using styles and techniques in managing conflict between individuals or between groups. Management of conflict includes executing tactics to suppress the deleterious elements of the conflict while at the same time pronouncing more the aspects of conflict that are positive at the same or greater level compared to where conflict occurs; the main management intention with regard to conflict concerns improving performance and efficacy of organizations (Rahim, 2002). Its main concern is not avoiding or eliminating all conflicts. According to Gordon (2004), the concept of conflict management is, more often than not, linked to containment and settlement of conflict. The containment and settlement of conflict concerns the activity of identification and handling of conflict in a manner that is sensible, efficient and fair. The practice presupposes such skills as problem-solving, negotiating and adequate communication with a clear concentration on welfare issues.

Organizational justice perceptions play a crucial role in conflict management strategies within an organization. According to Ozgan (2011), organizational justice refers to the fairness and equity experienced by individuals in the workplace. It encompasses three dimensions: distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice. Distributive justice focuses on the fairness of outcomes and resource allocation. Procedural justice concerns the fairness of the processes used to make decisions and resolve conflicts. Interactional justice examines the fairness of interpersonal treatment and communication during conflict resolution. These dimensions of organizational justice perceptions significantly influence employees' perceptions of fairness and their subsequent behavior in conflict situations. Research has shown that when individuals perceive higher levels of justice, they are more likely to engage in cooperative conflict management strategies, such as problem-solving and negotiation (Ozgan, 2011). Conversely, when individuals perceive lower levels of justice, they are more inclined to engage in destructive conflict management strategies, such as avoidance or aggression. Therefore, it is important for organizations to foster a culture of fairness and equity to promote positive conflict resolution outcomes.

This research aimed to investigate the moderating impact of views on organizational justice on the association between conflict management practices and the efficacy of multinational oil and gas firms operating in Nigeria. This study highlights the significance of considering employees' perceptions of justice in the context of conflict resolution and management. By understanding how organizational justice perceptions can influence the effectiveness of conflict management strategies, organizations can implement fair and equitable practices that promote positive outcomes. This research underscores the need for organizations to prioritize justice in their conflict resolution processes, as it can have a significant impact on employee satisfaction, engagement, and overall organizational effectiveness.

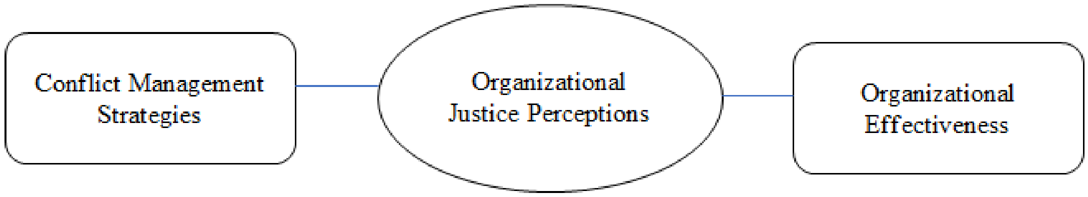

Figure 1: Conceptual Model for the Moderating Role of Organization Justice Perceptions on the Relationship between Conflict Management Strategies and Organizational Effectiveness

Source: *Desk Research (2023)*

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

A) Traditional Versus Contemporary Theories of Conflict

The two major theories of conflict management include the Traditional Theory and Contemporary Theory. These two are basic and opposing theories. Traditional theory sees conflict as being primarily negative. In the traditional theory of conflict management by Kirchoff and Adams (1982), conflict is assumed to be bad, and that trouble maker causes it, and in that case, it must be subdued. According to the Traditional Theory perspective, conflict is the result of troubling indicators, and it has bad effects, and it is better to avoid conflicting situations. This perspective claims that a person who is facing a conflict tries to avoid the conflict by keeping it under the cover and denying its existence.

The conventional perspective, which was prevalent from the late 1800s until the mid-1940s, holds that conflict is inherently negative, always has an adverse effect and causes performance to decrease with increasing conflict. Therefore, disputes must be avoided at all costs. In this view, conflict is closely associated with such terms as violence, destruction, and irrationality. The response to conflict in the traditional view is to reduce, suppress, or eliminate it. The manager was responsible for freeing the project of any conflict, often using an authoritarian approach. Although that approach worked sometimes, it was not generally effective; when they are suppressed, the root causes cannot be identified, and the potentially positive aspects of conflict cannot emerge. This traditional view of conflict is still widely held because industrial and business institutions that have a strong influence on our society concur with it. This negative view of conflict played a role in the development of labour unions. Violent or disruptive confrontations between workers and management led people to conclude that conflict was always detrimental and should, therefore, be avoided.

On the contrary, contemporary theory recognizes that conflict between human beings is inevitable and that it emerges as a natural result of choice. The foregoing shows that conflict, whether bad or inevitable, must occur at some point for one reason or the other. This theory suggests that conflict cannot be avoided. It is something inevitable as conflict is the result of things that occur under the natural circle, and if a person handles it properly, it can be beneficial (Adam & Kirchhoff, 1982).

According to Vijay (1998), the interpersonal view, sometimes referred to as the behavioral or current view, first appeared in the late 1940s and persisted into the 1970s. It contends that disagreements will inevitably arise in all organizations and that, depending on how they are resolved, they can have either a beneficial or bad outcome. Conflict may boost performance, but only to a limited extent. If conflict is allowed to escalate or is not addressed, performance will eventually drop. This approach advocates acceptance of conflict and rationalizes its existence. Because of the potential benefits from conflict, project managers should focus on managing it effectively rather than suppressing or eliminating it.

The Contemporary Conflict Theory has been criticized for its focus on change and neglect of social stability. Some critics acknowledge that societies are in a constant state of change but point out that much of the change is minor or incremental, not revolutionary. The traditional view sees conflict as being primarily negative. In this view, conflict is caused by troublemakers; it is bad, and it should be avoided. The researcher who views conflict in this way avoids admitting that it exists, keeps it under cover, and tries to suppress it.

B) Conflict Management Strategies

In addition to being advised as a means of resolving challenging disagreements within an established social structure, conflict management is also recommended as a strategy for promoting positive social change in the direction of a just and responsive society. (Fisher 2000). Organizational conflict may occur between two individuals, within small groups and work teams, or between groups (De Dreu& Van de Vliert, 1997). It is obvious that conflict is an unavoidable reality of living. However, while one may recognize this, it still does not negate the fact that conflict is difficult to define, is often viewed much differently today than it was a few decades ago, and is linked to, but is more than, communication. Perhaps because conflict is such an elusive entity, one tends to discuss it in terms of sources, types, and stages. Considering this, conflict management seems to be a concept that can be dealt with pragmatically. Much has been written about the management of conflict. A great deal of the literature is derived from the business world. In simpler terms, Huseman (1977) views conflict management as distinguishing between useful conflicts and conflicts that should be eliminated. Also, conflict management should involve the ability to develop individuals who can work under stress but continue to be productive.

The strategies employed by one or both sides to resolve a dispute are referred to as conflict management. When confronted with a disagreement, Adler and Towne (1990) recognized three alternative courses of action: (1) accepting the status quo (i.e., living with the problem), (2) utilizing force and mandating change, and (3) negotiating a settlement. These conflict management strategies lead to three different kinds of outcomes: win-lose, lose-lose, and win-win. Conflict management research focus is centered primarily on the conflict situation and the person–situation interaction (Knapp *et al.* 1988). However, there is a reason to believe that conflict behaviour is determined by both situational and dispositional influences (Sandy *et al.* 2000). The findings suggest that the instrument is able to differentiate between conflict management strategies. Successful conflict resolution not only removes frustration but also leads to higher effectiveness, trust and openness (Van de Vliert 1998). Deetz and Stevenson (1986) discuss a number of items which must be kept in mind when preparing for conflict management. First, the manager must try to understand the type of conflict that he or she will be dealing with. It may be a conflict of differing opinions, incompatible roles, incompatible goals, or differing resources. Identification of the type of conflict will help in managing the conflict. Second, the manager must also be aware of the importance of the conflict so as to select appropriate strategies for management. Third, the manager must recognize the complexity of the conflict, as this can vary widely. Finally, the manager must also be able to assess the energy and resources available for managing the conflict.
Conflicts normally occur when two or more parties, like teams, departments, and individuals, do not agree on anything due to certain factors like personalities, beliefs, values and needs (Mwangi & Ragui, 2013). This may affect the parties negatively or positively. In a workplace, conflict normally occurs between employees and management or between colleagues. Conflict is also seen as inevitable, and therefore, managers may have to find various ways to manage conflicts because it may affect the performance of the organization like low results which need to be suppressed (Anis-ul-Haq & Niazi, 2014); thus, managers have to come up with various ways to manage conflicts.

Conflict management also refers to various strategies, styles, skills and processes required to manage conflicts in the organization (Corn, 2013). Conflict management does not necessarily mean that the conflicts will be settled or managed but is seen as a way how to reduce and suppress the conflicts. Human resources in organizations are striving to show their value in the workplace, and this can lead to conflicts among themselves. Therefore, management should be able to have the right skills, know the right styles of managing conflict and which suit the organization, what procedures should be followed and who is in charge of handling the various types of conflicts in the organization.

The theory of managing conflicts holds that while a conflict may not always be resolved, knowing how to use it to your advantage can boost productivity in the workplace. The goal of conflict management is to provide people with the means and chances to address injustice methodically without resorting to strikes, legal action, or other types of labor organizing (Akinwale, 2011).

However, conflict management provides for different strategies. Consequently, one or more people's or groups' approach to resolving conflict can be referred to as a method for handling conflicts (Mughal & Khan, 2013). Additionally, Mughal and Khan (2013) mentioned the following techniques for managing conflicts: complying, avoiding, combining, compromising, and dominating. These strategies are related to the work of Organ (1983) and that of Salami (2009). Springfellow (2012) and Owoseni (2011) employed a compromise strategy, in which both parties give the other party an opportunity to present their full case; a logical strategy, in which both parties attempt to identify the source of the disadvantage; an accommodating strategy, in which either party attempt to recognize the value of their differences; and partnering strategy, in which both parties find a middle ground to resolve their differences, as conflict management techniques.

C) Organizational Effectiveness

Effectiveness is the capability of the organization to meet its set vision and mission, given the resources it has in its possession (Yukl, 2008). Organizational effectiveness is often used in measuring results towards a firm's attainment of its vision, mission and goals (Bartuseviciene & Sakalyte, 2013). Effectiveness determines the degree to which an organization meets its strategic goals (Zheng, Yang & McLean, 2010). Business efficiency informs the performance of the input and output ratio, whereas organizational efficiency examines the enhancement of internal processes of the organization, such as structure and culture (Bartuseviciene & Sakalyte, 2013). Efficiency is about resource allocation across alternative uses to achieve an organization's goal (Kumar & Gulati, 2010).

The effectiveness and efficacy of organizations differ primarily in that the former measures the achievement of the input-to-output ratio. At the same time, the latter indicates the extent to which internal organizational processes—such as organizational culture, structure, culture, and community—have improved (Pinprayong & Siengtai, 2012). Organizations that are efficiency-oriented focus on sales, quality and the creation of benefits, output, innovation and cost reduction (Zheng, 2010). Effectiveness-oriented organizations, on their part, focus on the goal and mission of the organization and the right strategy and measure if its implementation is thriving (Daft, 2010). The evaluation of an organization's effectiveness helps determine how well it is doing in terms of achieving its objectives and mission (Heilman & Kennedy-Philips, 2011).

In order to gain a competitive edge, organizational effectiveness emphasizes the efficient, responsible, and strategic use of all of the company's assets, including human, monetary, and technological resources. (Daft, 2010). Organizational effectiveness has a link to strategy implementation. Yukl (2008) asserts that effectiveness refers to the capability of the organization to meet its set vision and mission given the resources in its possession. Another way to define corporate efficiency is the ability of a business to achieve its goals by achieving the intended result with little or no waste of resources such as labor, money, energy, or time (Lunenburg, 2012).

The degree to which the organization's primary duties are completed is considered its effectiveness, and the concept of effectiveness is closely linked to the company's capacity for successful operation. (Kafashpoor, Shakoori & Sadeghian, 2013). To measure effectiveness, Lee and Choi (2003) proposed a set of criteria that include overall success, market share, profitability, growth rate and innovation. Commonly proposed measures of organizational effectiveness are net profitability compared to budgeted profitability, growth achieved over a planning period, and customer satisfaction (Yukl, 2008).

D) Concept of Organizational Justice Perception

The perception of organizational justice is thought to be an important element in ensuring the development of organizational commitment (Içerli, 2010). Organizational justice covers the perceptions of the employees about the accuracy of organizational decisions and implementations and the impact of these perceptions on the employees (Içerli, 2010). Observing justice also affects an organization's durability and protects its health in the long run. Observing justice is considered one of the political necessities of organizational behaviour because it enhances the interest, loyalty and trust of people in the organization and adds to the human and social investment of the organization (Williams, 2004). Organizational justice describes the individual's perception of fairness in organizations and his behavioural reaction to such perceptions. It shows how these perceptions affect organizational outcomes such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Noruzy, Shatery, Rezazadeh, & Hatami-Shirkouhi, 2011). Injustice decreases job performance as well as decreases the quality of work and the degree of cooperation among workers (Fatimah, Amiraa & Halim, 2011).

Organizational justice is an important factor associated with the success of every organization. In an attempt to keep employees committed to the organization, the organization needs to be fair in its system regarding organizational justice (Akanbi & Ofoegbu 2013). Organizational justice perception is one of the important determinants of employees‟ perception of organizational commitment. This is due to the fact that employees with a high perception of organizational justice tend to show positive behaviours. In contrast, those with a negative perception tend to show behaviours like decreased effort and reduced commitment to their organization (Cemal, 2014). Selvitopu and Sahin (2013) argue that what is more important in an organization is an accurate perception of organizational justice by the employees. This perception is an important feature of social interaction. Where this perception is negative, the management may have issues in motivating and directing their employees.

According to (Muharram-Zadeh, 2012), organizational justice refers to the fair and equitable behaviour of the organizations with their employees. If an organization wants to fully achieve its objective using a clear mission, optimal strategies, organizational structures and efficient job design, competent and committed manpower is needed (Muharram-Zadeh, 2012). Organizational justice has the potential to create enormous benefits for organizations and employees, and the benefits include more trust and commitment (Cropanzano & Rupp, 2008). Greenberg and Baron (2009) defined organizational justice as the study of people's perceptions of fairness in an organization. Researchers of Organizational behaviour identified four types of organizational justice: distributive, procedural, interactional, and procedural justice (Colquitt *et al*., 2001; Colquitt, Greenberg & Zapata-Phelan, 2005).

E) Distributive Justice

According to Greenberg and Baron (2008), distributive justice refers to the form of organizational justice that focuses on people's beliefs that they have received fair amounts of valued work-related outcomes, for instance, pay, recognition, etc. Yavus (2010) sees distributive justice as a perception of justice that encompasses the perceptions of the employees regarding the fair distribution of resources among the members of the organization. Colquitt, Greenberg and Zapata-Phelan (2005) posit that employees are likely to compare the fairness of their outcomes with those of similar employees based on their level of input within the organization to determine their perceptions of fairness. An employee will feel that distributive justice exists if resources are distributed equitably across employees within his or her organization relative to their inputs (Mishra, Mishra, &

Lee Grubb, 2015). The fundamental principle in distributive justice is that individuals should think that they get a share from the distributed sources fairly (Ozdeveciogl, 2003).

F) Procedural Justice

As mentioned in the historical review of workplace justice, Thibaut and Walker (as cited in Tam 1998) pioneered the concept of procedural justice and segregated procedural justice from the distributive justice context (as cited in Oh 2013; Tam 1998; Zhang 2006). Prior to Thibaut & Walker (as cited in Tam 1998), there were other researchers such as Deutsh (cited in Tam 1998) who argued about the four important principles in determining the fairness of distribution of resources (distributive justice) which are (1) the significance and values of the rules used to control the distribution, (2) the rules itself, (3) the approach of enforcing those rules and lastly (4) the decision-making procedures. However, Deutsh (as cited in Tam 1998) treated procedural justice as a subset within the distributive justice scope. The same applies to Leventhal (cited in Ozdevecioglu, 2003), who also discussed procedural justice bound by the context of distributive justice. He further claimed that if the procedures are seen as fair, then the final distributed outcome would probably be perceived as fair, although it might be disadvantageous (as cited in Tam 1998) to the person.

G) Interactional Justice

Gauri (2013) and Belanger (2007) reported that Greenberg (2010) argued that interactional justice can further be segregated into two separate parts, which are interpersonal and procedural justice, in 1993. He defined interactional justice as showing concern for individuals regarding the distributive outcome they receive (Hamlett 2014). Interactional justice emphasizes the interaction between those who will be affected by the distribution decisions and the outcomes of the distribution. Bies and Moag (1986) described interactional justice as the quality of the attitudes and behaviours people are faced with during the application of organizational operations (Bies & Moag, 1986). In other words, it is the perception regarding how a decision is made or will be communicated to the individuals. People working in organizations expect their managers to communicate with them in the same way they communicate with other workers. And they seek justice in this communication. Those managers or resource allocators who treat some workers respectfully and others disrespectfully are not perceived as just. The perceived interpersonal interaction injustice causes the workers to react to their managers (Ozdevecioglu, 2003).

H) Empirical Review

Akanbi and Ofoegbu (2013) examined the role of organizational justice on organizational commitment in a food and beverage firm in Nigeria. The findings from the study showed that there was a significant relationship between distributive justice and organizational commitment. Based on the findings from this study, it was recommended that organizations should embrace justice in all their practices with the employees to bring about committed employees (Akanbi & Ofoegbu, 2013). Niazi and Ali (2014) found that procedural justice had a positive impact on the organizational commitment of employees and a negative influence on the employee’s intention to leave the job. They also found the use of that procedural justice contribution to predict the commitment of the employees was greater than that of distributive justice. Likewise, Lambert *et al*. (2005) found that perceptions of procedural justice had a greater impact on the organizational commitment of employees than perceptions of distributive justice.

A study by Gulluce, Ozer and Erkilic (2015) to examine the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational justice perceptions of employees working in private healthcare institutions in Van province found that distributive justice has a statistically significant correlation with the commitment of healthcare employees. This study concluded that the most important way to increase the commitment of employees is for executives to be fair to them. For this reason, it is possible to increase their commitment through the development of their justice perceptions towards the management (Gulluce *et al.* 2015).

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Cemal (2014), in a study of the effect of organizational justice on organizational commitment in primary education institutions in Turkey, found that teacher’s perception of distributive justice had a positive and significant effect on their organizational commitment. Fields (2000) also found that distributive justice had a major impact on employee’s intention to remain in an organization. If people felt that their work assignments and rewards were fair, they would show more commitment to their work. Greenberg and Baron (2008) note that organization officials should be very careful to adhere to distributive justice practices and ensure that the good performance of employees is fairly rewarded.

Ang, Van Dyne, and Begley (2003) carried out an investigation in Singapore on the attitudes of two worker groups toward distributive justice. The study found that foreign workers experienced higher levels of distributive injustice due to their unequal pay relative to their work and that this negatively impacted their productivity as they provided less output overall. People's sensitivity to the equitable and right allocation of assets and benefits was demonstrated by this study. Employees who perceived that they were treated fairly by the organization would try to maintain a long-term relationship with the organization (Kim, 2009). This would eventually modify the behavior of the employees including creating more commitment towards that particular organization.

In a study to evaluate whether there was a relationship between organizational justice perceptions and organizational commitment levels of teachers working in a private educational institute in the city of Konya, Yadigarjon and Aykut (2014) observed that organizational justice dimensions had a positive and significant relationship between organizational commitment types. The results indicated that normative commitment perceptions of the teachers increased directly in proportion to the increase in their distributive justice perceptions. The study concluded that treating people in the same position equally and applying rules and procedures of the institution to the employees fairly resulted in enhanced organizational commitment (Yadigarjon & Aykut, 2014).

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Wan *et al.* (2012), who researched workplace justice in Malaysia, confirmed the positive impact of procedural justice on organizational commitment, retention, career satisfaction and work performance. Zhang (2006) also observed similar issues in his study. Additionally, Choong *et al.* (2010) had slightly different findings in which they observed that there was a fair correlation between procedural justice and job satisfaction. However, Choi (2011), on the other hand, highlighted the inapplicable outcome of the model presented by Choong. Wong and Tioh (2010), this is as Gauri (2013) stated in his study that procedural justice didn't positively relate to job satisfaction as long as the perceived unfairness of procedure is balanced off with the perceived fairness in distributive. Procedural justice perceptions are universally recognized today, but Thibaut and Walker (1975) were the pioneers of these procedural influences. According to them, if employees were given a chance to participate in the process used to reach outcomes, they might perceive the outcomes as fair. These findings gave way to a new dimension of organizational justice perceptions. Organizational justice found its way from a distributive view to a comprehensive, procedural view (Bernerth, Field, Giles, Cole, 2006).

Based on the foregoing, the study thus hypothesized that:

H_{O1}: Distributive justice does not significantly moderate the relationship between conflict management strategies and the effectiveness of multinational oil and gas companies in Nigeria.

H_{O2}: Procedural justice does not significantly moderate the relationship between conflict management strategies and the effectiveness of multinational oil and gas companies in Nigeria.

H_{O3}: Interactional justice does not significantly moderate the relationship between conflict management strategies and the effectiveness of multinational oil and gas companies in Nigeria.

III. METHODOLOGY

The survey encompassed five (5) international oil and gas businesses that had filed with the Department of Petroleum Resources as its population. Because there were only five (5) multinational oil and gas producing companies in Nigeria, the population as a whole was investigated as a census. In accordance with the macro level section of the evaluation, the survey was sent out to individuals who were selected from the population. Ten (10) managers of the five (5) multinational oil and gas producing companies in Nigeria received the questionnaire as well, for a total of fifty (50) participants. Directors, General Managers, Deputy General Managers, Divisional Managers, and Deputy Divisional Managers were the managers that made up the study's category. The Cronbach Alpha Coefficient was utilized to determine the accuracy of the tool, and all of the items had a score greater than 0.70. Using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient, the hypotheses were examined. The tests were run using a significance threshold of 0.05.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The multivariate analysis in this section examines the assumed role of organizational justice perception as a moderator in the relationship between conflict management strategies and the effectiveness of multinational oil and gas companies in Nigeria. The Decision rule is that if the difference between the zero-order correlation and the controlled correlation < 0.01, then there is no significant difference, and the null hypothesis is accepted. However, we commenced by first presenting proof of existing relationships using a scatter graph.

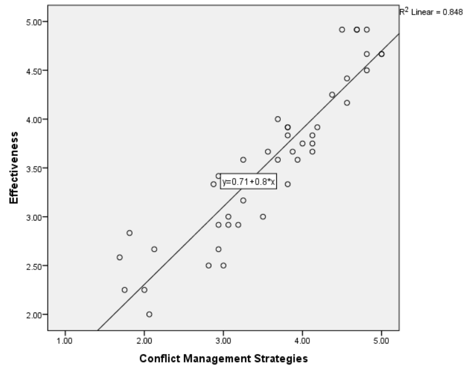

Figure 1: Scatter Graph for the Relationship between Conflict Management Strategies and Effectiveness

Figure 1 shows a very strong relationship between conflict management strategies (independent variable) and effectiveness (dependent variable). The scatter plot graph shows that it is a linear graph with a value of (0.848) depicting a very strong and positive relationship between the two constructs. The implication is that an increase in conflict management strategies simultaneously brings about an increase in the level of effectiveness. The scatter diagram has provided a vivid evaluation of the closeness of the relationship among the pair of variables through the nature of their concentration. The positive relationship is evidenced by the pattern of the points moving upwards from left to right. This positive relationship indicates that a higher value of the dependent variable is associated with higher values of the independent variables. The steepness of the regression line roughly indicates the strength of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. As shown in Figure 1 the scatter plots show a positive gradient, which means that conflict management strategies have a positive relationship with the effectiveness of multinational oil and gas companies in Nigeria?

Table 1: Correlations Matrix for the Moderating Effect of Distributive Justice

Control Variables			**Conflict Management Strategies**	**Effectiveness**	**Distributive Justice**
-none-[a]	Conflict Management Strategies	Correlation	1.000	.921	.850
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		Df	0	41	41
	Effectiveness	Correlation	.921	1.000	.808
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		Df	41	0	41
	Distributive Justice	Correlation	.850	.808	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		Df	41	41	0
Distributive Justice	Conflict Management Strategies	Correlation	1.000	.755	
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	
		Df	0	40	
	Effectiveness	Correlation	.755	1.000	
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	
		Df	40	0	
a. Cells contain zero-order (Pearson) correlations.					

***Source**: SPSS Output version 23.0*

Ho_{13}: Distributive justice does not significantly moderate the relationship between conflict management strategies and the effectiveness of multinational oil and gas companies in Nigeria.

A critical look at the zero partial correlation, we found that the relationship between conflict management strategies and effectiveness is positively correlated with distributive justice, the control variable. Removing the effect of this control variable reduced the correlation between the other two variables to 0.755 and significant at α = 0.05. Since the difference between the zero-order correlation and the controlled correlation (0.921 - 0.755) = 0.166> 0.01 hence, from the decision rule, there is a significant difference, and thus the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it is concluded that distributive justice has a significant moderating effect on the relationship between conflict management strategies and the effectiveness of multinational oil and gas companies in Nigeria.

Table 2: Correlations Matrix for the Moderating Effect of Procedural Justice

Control Variables			Conflict Management Strategies	Effectiveness	Procedural Justice
-none-a	Conflict Management Strategies	Correlation	1.000	.921	.864
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		Df	0	41	41
	Effectiveness	Correlation	.921	1.000	.845
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		Df	41	0	41
	Procedural Justice	Correlation	.864	.845	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		Df	41	41	0
Procedural Justice	Conflict Management Strategies	Correlation	1.000	.708	
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	
		Df	0	40	
	Effectiveness	Correlation	.708	1.000	
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	
		Df	40	0	
a. Cells contain zero-order (Pearson) correlations.					

***Source**: SPSS Output version 23.0*

Ho$_2$: Procedural justice does not significantly moderate the relationship between conflict management strategies and the effectiveness of multinational oil and gas companies in Nigeria.

Taking a critical look at the zero partial correlation, we found that the relationship between both conflict management strategies and effectiveness is positively correlated with procedural justice, the control variable. Removing the effect of this control variable reduced the correlation between the other two variables to 0.708 and significant at α = 0.05. Since the difference between the zero-order correlation and the controlled correlation (0.921 - 0.708) = 0.213> 0.01 hence, from the decision rule, there is a significant difference and thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it is concluded that procedural justice has a significant moderating effect on the relationship between conflict management strategies and the effectiveness of multinational oil and gas companies in Nigeria.

Table 3: Correlations Matrix for the Moderating Effect of Interactional Justice

Control Variables			Conflict Management Strategies	Effectiveness	Interactional Justice
-none-[a]	Conflict Management Strategies	Correlation	1.000	.921	.883
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		df	0	41	41
	Effectiveness	Correlation	.921	1.000	.814
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		df	41	0	41
	Interactional Justice	Correlation	.883	.814	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		df	41	41	0
Interactional	Conflict Management	Correlation	1.000	.742	

Justice	Strategies	Significance (2-tailed)	.	.000	
		df	0	40	
	Effectiveness	Correlation	.742	1.000	
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.	
		df	40	0	
a. Cells contain zero-order (Pearson) correlations.					

***Source**: SPSS Output version 23.0*

Ho_3: Interactional justice does not significantly moderate the relationship between conflict management strategies and the effectiveness of multinational oil and gas companies in Nigeria.

A critical look at the zero partial correlation, we found that the relationship both between conflict management strategies and effectiveness is positively correlated with Interactional Justice, the control variable. Removing the effect of this control variable reduced the correlation between the other two variables to 0.742 and was significant at $\alpha = 0.05$. Since the difference between the zero-order correlation and the controlled correlation (0.921 - 0.742) = 0.179> 0.01; hence from the decision rule, there is a significant difference, and thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it is concluded that interactional justice has a significant moderating effect on the connection between international oil and gas firms' performance in Nigeria and their approaches to conflict management.

V. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings revealed that Organizational Justice has a moderating effect on the relationship between conflict management strategies and effectiveness in multinational oil and gas companies in Nigeria. This finding agrees with Akanbi and Ofoegbu (2013) who examined the role of organizational justice on organizational commitment in a food and beverage firm in Nigeria. The findings from the study showed that there was a significant relationship between distributive justice and organizational commitment. Based on the findings from this study, it was recommended that organizations should embrace justice in all their practices with the employees to bring about committed employees (Akanbi& Ofoegbu, 2013). Niazi and Ali (2014) found that procedural justice had a positive impact on the organizational commitment of employees and a negative influence on the employee's intention to leave the job. They also found that procedural justice's contribution to predicting the commitment of the employees was greater than that of distributive justice. Likewise, Lambert *et al*. (2005) found that perceptions of procedural justice had a greater impact on the organizational commitment of employees than perceptions of distributive justice.

The study agrees with the work of Cemal (2014) in a study of the effect of organizational justice on organizational commitment in primary education institutions in Turkey found that teachers' perception of distributive justice had a positive and significant effect on their organizational commitment. Fields (2000) also found that distributive justice had a major impact on employee's intention to remain in an organization. If people felt that their work assignments and rewards were fair, they would show more commitment to their work. Greenberg and Baron (2008) note that organization officials should be very careful to adhere to distributive justice practices and ensure that the good performance of employees is fairly rewarded.

The study is in line with the study conducted by Kernan and Hanges (2002) on the antecedents and consequences of procedural justice survivor reactions to reorganization, and it was established that surviving employees who were aware of the objectives of the reorganization evaluated the process and results as fairer than those who were not consulted. Whereas initial explanations of employment outcomes are important, employees should receive information that extends beyond initial justifications or explanations (Mansour-Cole & Scott, 1998). Bies and Shapiro (1987), cited in Tyler and Bies (2015), found that people who received negative outcomes such as being turned down for a job were more likely to accept those results as fair when a reasonable explanation was offered than when no such explanations were provided. Further, Bies, Shapiro, and Cummings (1988), cited in Tyler and Bies (2015), found that perceptions of procedural justice were enhanced only when explanations were believed to be adequately reasoned and sincerely communicated. It was established that the rejected requests were likely to be perceived as procedurally fair when the decisions were based on logically relevant information.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Therefore, the study concluded that organizational justice perception is a significant moderator in the relationship between conflict management strategies and the effectiveness of multinational oil and gas companies in Nigeria. By focusing on organizational justice and its interaction with conflict management strategies, multinational oil and gas companies can create a work environment where conflicts are addressed fairly and effectively, contributing to improved organizational effectiveness and employee satisfaction.

Therefore, the study recommends that:

1 Multinational oil and gas companies should ensure that compensation, benefits, and rewards are distributed fairly, with clear and consistent criteria. Regularly review and adjust these systems to maintain equity.
2 Multinational oil and gas companies should develop and communicate clear and consistent conflict resolution procedures that all employees can access. Ensure that these procedures are seen as unbiased and transparent. They can also involve employees in decisions that affect them, such as changes in policies, procedures, or resource allocation. Encourage participation and gather their input.
3 Multinational oil and gas companies should foster open and respectful communication between employees and management. Be transparent about decisions and changes, and provide explanations when necessary.

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