



## Organizational Justice as predictor of Knowledge Sharing Behavior among Employees of Beloxxi Industries, Lagos, Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between organizational justice (distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice) and knowledge sharing behavior among employees of Beloxxi Industries, located in Lagos, Nigeria. Anchoring the study on the social exchange theory, the study adopted a cross sectional survey research design in which data was collected from one hundred and fifty-six (156) employees using a structured questionnaire. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency count, mean, and standard deviation), while hypotheses were tested using simple linear regression. Findings revealed that distributive justice was positive and significantly related to knowledge sharing ( $\beta = +0.1688, p < 0.05$ ), procedural justice was positive and significantly related to knowledge sharing ( $\beta = +0.1924, p < 0.05$ ), and interactional justice were positive and significantly related to knowledge sharing ( $\beta = +0.2067, p < 0.05$ ) among employees. The study recommended that the management of Beloxxi Industries should ensure that a high level of perceived fairness prevails in the organization, as this will encourage employees to share their knowledge, which will ultimately improve organizational performance.

**Keywords:** Knowledge sharing, Distributive justice, Procedural justice, Interactional justice, Organizational justice

### INTRODUCTION

Due to rise in the realization of employee's rights and government regulations, organizations are now more concerned about treating employees fairly than ever. Fairness is also highly demanded in current business environment because today's economy is knowledge and innovation based economy. In today's fiercely competitive and technologically driven marketplaces, businesses are only surviving because of the competitive knowledge of their employees. Therefore, it is very important for the firms to determine those factors that hinders or promotes the knowledge sharing within the organization (Llopis & Foss, 2016). Perceived fairness in organizations is one of the factors that affects the behavior of the employees. Particularly, it is true for those manufacturing oriented jobs that require employees to donate and receive high quality knowledge to perform their day-to-day job activities (Safa & Solms, 2016).

Enhancing organizational justice can positively impact an organization's performance and long-term viability. Numerous studies conducted in the past have demonstrated a positive correlation between increased organizational justice and positive work attitudes and behaviors, job commitment, and job satisfaction (Chen et al., 2015). Conversely, lower levels of organizational justice are linked to detrimental outcomes such stress, low psychological well-being, employee attrition, and retaliatory intentions (Silva & Caetano, 2014).

Most of the organizational behavior studies stressed on how to motivate employees to share their knowledge with others, however, very few has focused on the aspect of organizational justice that actually effects the knowledge sharing among employees (Imamoglu, Ince, Turkcan, & Atakay, 2019). Furthermore, an extensive body of research has examined the impact of organizational justice on various organizational and individual outcomes (Fadel & Durcikova, 2014); comparatively little focus has been placed on the interplay between organizational justice and knowledge sharing. Since knowledge sharing is thought to be essential to an organization's growth and competitiveness, withholding knowledge could potentially threaten the organization's ability to survive (Aruoren, 2020). Hence, it is crucial for the organizations to find out the factors that enhance or impede the knowledge sharing on the part of employees. It is important to note that knowledge management is considered the most important organizational issue in terms of its operations. According to Imamoglu et al. (2019), the most essential factor to guarantee knowledge management is knowledge sharing, which is known as the delivery of knowledge.

In Nigeria, manufacturing organizations such as Beloxxi Industries demands high levels of knowledge sharing by its employees, therefore, employees need great motivation to become successful in performing their work activities. It is true that if employees perceive a fair treatment from their organizations, they are motivated and are more willing to share their knowledge with others in organization. Fairness, however, is a multifaceted concept that can include several organizational dimensions of justice in the eyes of employees. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to ascertain how all the three components of organizational justice affect the knowledge sharing of employees at Beloxxi Industries, Lagos. The reasoning for this decision was that,

while Sub-Saharan African nations are known to have few, if any, research conducted on knowledge management and organizational justice, the majority of these studies were conducted in western countries.

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## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Knowledge Sharing

Within the organization, knowledge sharing is seen as a social exchange where employees share their knowledge, skills, and experiences (Lee, Tao, Li, & Sun, 2021). Employees can help one another develop their potential, overcome difficulties, and improve work performance by exchanging knowledge with one another (Nguyen, Siri, & Malik, 2021). Thus, the process of making pertinent knowledge easily accessible to colleagues inside the organization is known as knowledge sharing and it is an essential technique by which individuals innovate, acquire new knowledge, and ultimately boost competitiveness (Marouf & Khalil, 2015; Grant, 2016). According to De Ridder and van den Hooff (2004), knowledge sharing is the process by which people typically exchange their explicit and implicit information in order to produce new knowledge. The exchange of task-related knowledge, advice, and expertise to assist others and work together to complete everyday tasks, resolve issues, and generate new ideas is known as knowledge sharing (Ahmad, 2017). Furthermore, according to Ortiz, Chang, Chih, and Wang (2017), knowledge sharing happens when people deliberately impart their knowledge or experience to others in order to aid in the acquisition of new concepts or ideas. According to Oyemomi, Liu, Neaga, Chen, and Nakpodia (2019), knowledge sharing is the ongoing activity of transferring experiences and organizational knowledge to business processes through communication channels among individuals, groups, and organizations.

Thus, there are three primary attributes of knowledge sharing: first, sharing knowledge entails following a method or process, implying that knowledge sharing depends on communication channels and is not a singular event. Second, individuals share their knowledge and experiences with others. Accordingly, knowledge sharing involves both the readiness to receive and the willingness to donate knowledge and experience. Moreover, the goal of sharing knowledge is to produce fresh ideas or find solutions to organizational issues. Sharing knowledge hence promotes innovation and long-term success (Islam, Ahmad, Kaleem, & Mahmood, 2021).

### Organizational Justice

The term "organizational justice" (OJ) describes how employees view fairness in the workplace. It is the extent to which a particular rule or norm is thought to be fair with regard to a particular component of the organizational environment (Moliner, Martinez-Tur, & Cropanzano, 2017; Colquitt, Greenberg, & Zapata-Phelan, 2005). Individuals evaluate the fairness of various aspects of decision events, are worried about fairness for a variety of reasons, and utilize their views of fairness to inform a wide range of important attitudes and behaviors (Colquitt et al., 2005). Traditionally, OJ is divided into three dimensions: distributive justice (DJ), procedural justice (PJ), and interactional justice (IJ) (Colquitt, et al. 2005).

The fair, equitable, and needs-based distribution of outcomes, incentives, and resources is known as DJ (Cropanzano, Bowen, and Gilliland, 2007). Equitable, which has its roots in Adam's equity theory, describes how results and incentives are distributed according on each person's contribution (Adams, 1965; Leventhal, 1980). It has been acknowledged that needs and equality affect judgments of fairness (Colquitt et al. 2005). In addition to compensation and benefit packages, DJ affects how possibilities for advancement and professional growth are distributed. In these situations, individuals evaluate DJ based on factors including experience and effort as well as workload and responsibility (Lim & Loosemore, 2017; Yang, Xiaodong, Ziyang, Yulong, & Zhu, 2018). In terms of resource allocation, DJ is also important because it guarantees that resources are sufficient for people to work efficiently (Lim & Loosemore, 2017). Other areas in which DJ is relevant include work schedules (Sahoo & Sahoo, 2019), workload and job responsibilities (Chih, Kiazad, Li, Capezio, Zhou, & Restubog, 2017), and appropriate equipment and support (Yang et al. 2018).

Procedural justice pertains to several aspects such as practices (Sahoo & Sahoo, 2019), rules and guidelines (Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002), regulations and processes (Loosemore & Lim, 2015), and procedures that are employed in decision-making and outcome determination. Fair procedures should be: (i) based on reliable and accurate facts, laws, and opinions; (ii) impartial, neutral, bias-free, and non-discriminatory; (iii) designed and applied equally to all; and (iv) provide opportunities for procedures to be altered, contested, and appealed; (v) not be dishonest and morally and ethically deficient. In addition, equitable processes ought to be (vi) inclusive of all viewpoints; and (vii) facilitate the prompt settlement of conflicts (Leventhal, 1980; Colquitt & Jackson, 2006; Dayan & Di Benedetto, 2008); Lim & Loosemore, 2017). Furthermore, fair procedures provide people the chance to communicate their thoughts, opinions, feelings, and contribute to, negotiate, and influence the results of decisions (Dayan & Di Benedetto, 2008).

The communication of outcomes and procedures is the focus of IJ (Bies & Moag, 1986; Colquitt et al. 2005). It consist of interpersonal and informational justice (Colquitt, 2001). Perceptions of how people are treated by sources of justice, such as whether they are treated with dignity, kindness, and consideration, are all part of interpersonal justice (Rupp, Shao, Jones, & Liao, 2014; Lim & Loosemore, 2017; Colquitt & Jackson, 2006; Dayan & Di Benedetto, 2008). It also has to do with people's perceptions of their freedom of expression and association (Lim & Loosemore, 2017) and their belief that the sources of justice value and respect them (Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002). Informational justice is concerned with how people view the ways in which sources of justice interact with them. One such approach is the manner in which information is provided in a timely, accurate, sincere, open, and transparent manner (Lim & Loosemore, 2017; Dayan & Di Benedetto, 2008; Colquitt & Jackson, 2006). It entails individuals consulting with justice sources, being informed about decisions, and receiving reasonable amounts of information, explanations, and justifications for actions (Dayan & Di Benedetto, 2008).

The detrimental impacts of injustices from other justice dimensions will be lessened if organizations are able to maintain high levels of the interactional justice dimension (Cropanzano, Bowen, & Gilliland, 2007). IJ is characterized by the belief that sources of justice respect people's rights (Chih et al.

2017; Yang et al. 2018), are able to repress personal prejudices, and refrain from saying inappropriate things (Yang et al. 2018). Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework for this study.

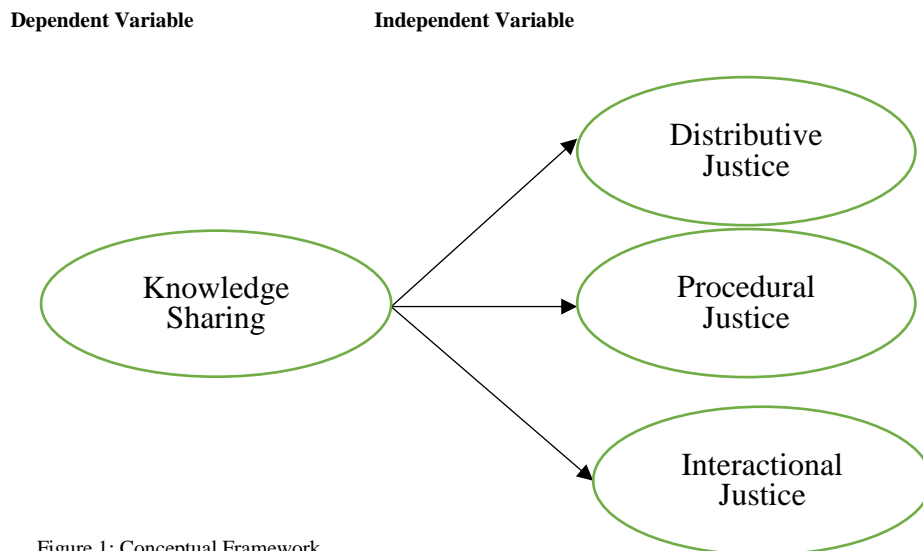


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

### Theoretical Review

The social exchange theory (SET) served as the theoretical framework for this study. According to Blau (1964), individuals want to give something back to those who assist them. When this happens, they feel obligated to respond favorably and give something more worthwhile in return. When employees feel that their organization treats them fairly—that is, organizational justice—they are more likely to exhibit better work behavior—like sharing knowledge. This reciprocal behavior takes place in such environments. According to SET, employees who experience or recognize organizational justice are more likely to act cooperatively in return. Since knowledge donation and collection, is viewed as a cooperative and exchange activity, employees who believe in organizational justice—that is, distributive, procedural, and interactional justice—are known to share their knowledge more successfully (Tea Moon, 2015). They may not only be encourage to collect knowledge from their co-workers but also donate them their valuable knowledge without hesitating.

### Empirical Review

Some studies have been conducted that demonstrate the relationship between knowledge sharing (KS) behavior and organizational justice (OJ). The impact of employees' perceptions of OJ on KS was investigated by Cetin, Davarci, and Karakas (2022) using a survey approach with 421 participants (68 managers and 353 employees) working in the public and private sectors in the province of Bartin, Turkey. Structural equation modeling (SEM) results showed that there was a significant relationship between KS and IJ, but not between DJ and PJ. The study conducted by Yesil and Dereli (2013) examined the associations between KS and the three aspects of OJ. Three organizations in the Turkish city of Adana provided the data for this study. Path analysis results demonstrated that KS has a positive relationship with both PJ and IJ. Nevertheless, their analysis does not provide evidence in favor of the hypothesis linking DJ with KS.

The study conducted by Akrama, Lei, Haider, Hussaina, and Puig (2017) concentrated on two types of KS (donating and collecting) and five types of organizational justice (distributive, procedural, interactional, temporal, and spatial). 245 employees from China's telecom industry in Shanghai took part. Path analysis results showed that employees are inherently motivated to share their knowledge with colleagues if they have positive perceptions of distributive, procedural, interactional, and temporal justice. However, it was discovered that spatial justice negatively and significantly influenced KS. The impact of PJ on employees' intra-team KS was examined in Wan, Qin, Zhou, Zhou, and Li (2023) study. 416 valid questionnaire responses were subjected to a path analysis; the findings showed that PJ promotes intra-team KS. Cugueró-Escofet, Ficapal-Cusí, and Torrent-Sellens (2019) study investigated the association between OJ, perceived organizational support (POS), job satisfaction (JS), affective commitment (AC), and KS. Using a sample of 1350 employees working for multinational firms operating in Spain, the results from path analysis revealed that OJ, POS and AC are positively related with KS. The mediating role of organizational trust on the relationship between OJ and KS was examined in Aruoren, Odiri, and Igemohia (2021) study. Participants included 167 employees from the Nigerian based Warri Refining and Petrochemical Company. KS was significantly and positively associated with OJ, according to findings from SEM. From these research findings, this study proposes that:

H1: There is no relationship between distributive justice and knowledge sharing.

H2: There is no relationship between procedural justice and knowledge sharing.

H3: There is no relationship between interactional justice and knowledge sharing.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The cross sectional survey design was used to assess the causal effect of independent variables on a dependent variable.

### Population and Sample

The population of the study consist of permanent employees of a private company, Boloxxi Industries. The company was established in 1994, with headquarters in Ikeja, Nigeria and produces food products. The convenience non-random sampling technique was adopted in the study in which one hundred and fifty-six (156) permanent employees participated.

### Data Collection and Instrument

Primary data was collected with the aid of a structured questionnaire. Knowledge sharing was measured by nine items adopted from Yesil and Hirlak (2013), while organizational justice was measured by twenty items adopted from Niehoff and Moorman (1993). Five items represented distributive justice, six items represented procedural justice, and the remaining nine items represented the interactional justice. Socio-demographic variables (age, gender, marital status, work experience) were also measured.

### Model Specification

The following models guided the study:

$$KS = f(DJ) \quad 1$$

$$KS = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 DJ + e_1 \quad 2$$

$$KS = f(PJ) \quad 3$$

$$KS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PJ + e_2 \quad 4$$

$$KS = f(IJ) \quad 5$$

$$KS = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 IJ + e_3 \quad 6$$

Where, KS = Knowledge Sharing; DJ = Distributive Justice; PJ = Procedural Justice; IJ = Interactional Justice;  $\alpha_0$ ,  $\beta_0$ ,  $\alpha_0$  = Constant terms;  $\alpha_1$ ,  $\beta_1$ ,  $\alpha_1$  = Regression Coefficients;  $e_1$ ,  $e_2$ ,  $e_3$  = Error terms

### Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using STATA 13 statistical software. Socio-demographic variables were analyzed by frequency count, while hypotheses were tested by simple linear regression.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The respondents' demographic profile is shown in Table 1, 104 (66.67%) are male and 52 (33.33%) are females. Based on age, 25 (16.03%) respondents are between 20 and 29 years, 68 (43.59%) respondents are between 30 and 39 years, 44 (28.21%) respondents are between 40 and 49 years, while 19 (12.17%) respondents are above 50 years. Based on marital status, 37 (23.72%) respondents are single and 119 (76.28%) respondents are married. Based on highest educational qualification, 15 (9.62%) respondents have a diploma degree, 92 (58.97%) respondents have a Bachelor's degree, while 49 (31.41%) respondents have a postgraduate degree. Finally, based on work experience, 21 (13.46%) respondents have below 10 years' experience, 83 (53.21%) respondents have between 10 and 19 years' experience, while 52 (33.33%) have above 20 years work experience.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

Characteristics	Options	Respondents	
		N	%
Gender	Male	104	66.67
	Female	52	33.33
Age	20 – 29 years	25	16.03
	30 – 39 years	68	43.59
	40 – 49 years	44	28.21
	Above 50 years	19	12.17

Marital Status	Single	37	23.72
	Married	119	76.28
Educational Qualification	Diploma	15	9.62
	Bachelor's Degree	92	58.97
	Postgraduate Degree	49	31.41
Work Experience	Below 10 years	21	13.46
	10 – 19 years	83	53.21
	Above 20 years	52	33.33

Source: Researcher's Compilation.

Table 2 shows the mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values of KS, DJ, PJ, and IJ. As revealed in Table 2, the mean for KS was 4.019 with a standard deviation of 0.828. This mean value exceeded the mid-point of 2.50 given a minimum value of 1 and maximum value of 5. Similarly, the mean for DJ was 5.257 with a standard deviation of 1.191, which also exceeded the mid-point of 3.50 given a minimum value of 1 and a maximum value of 7. Furthermore, the mean for PJ was 4.742 with a standard deviation of 1.239. This mean value exceeded the mid-point of 3.50 given a minimum value of 1 and a maximum value of 7. Finally, the mean for IJ was 4.851 with a standard deviation of 1.433, which also exceeded the mid-point of 3.50 given a minimum value of 1 and a maximum value of 7. These results indicate adequate agreement and spread among the respondents concerning the variables measured.

Table 2 also indicates the correlation among KS, DJ, PJ, and IJ that were studied. The results suggested that KS was significantly and positively correlated with DJ ( $r = +0.316, p < 0.05$ ), PJ ( $r = +0.374, p < 0.05$ ), and IJ ( $r = +0.464, p < 0.05$ ), while DJ was significantly and positively correlated with PJ ( $r = +0.708, p < 0.05$ ), and IJ ( $r = +0.554, p < 0.05$ ). Furthermore, PJ was significantly and positively correlated with IJ ( $r = +0.771, p < 0.05$ ). These correlation coefficients show the direction of the relationships among the variables. Furthermore, the Cronbach alpha coefficient ( $\alpha$ ) of the study variables is shown in Table 2. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for KS, DJ, PJ and IJ were 0.775, 0.902, 0.824, and 0.911 (diagonal values). These values exceeded the recommended cutoff point of 0.70 (Lance, Butts, and Michels, 2006).

**Table 2: Means, Standard Deviation, Min, Max, and Correlation Matrix**

Variables	Means	SD	Min	Max	KS	DJ	PJ	IJ
KS	4.019	0.828	1	5	<b>(0.775)</b>			
DJ	5.257	1.191	1	7	0.316*	<b>(0.902)</b>		
PJ	4.742	1.238	1	7	0.374*	0.708*	<b>(0.824)</b>	
IJ	4.851	1.433	1	7	0.464*	0.554*	0.771*	<b>(0.911)</b>

Source: Researcher's Compilation. N = 156; SD = Standard Deviation; Min = Minimum Value; Max = Maximum Value; KS = Knowledge Sharing; DJ = Distributive Justice; PJ = Procedural Justice; IJ = Interactional Justice; \* $p < 0.05$

### Hypotheses Testing

H1 proposes that 'There is no relationship between distributive justice (DJ) and knowledge sharing (KS)', and the summary of the results obtained from regressing KS on DJ such that KS was the dependent variable while DJ was the independent variable is presented in Table 3. This regression result shows an R-squared of 0.0996, indicating that DJ explains 9.96% of the systematic variations in KS. The F-statistics ( $df = 1, 154$ , F-ratio = 17.04) with a  $p$ -value of 0.0001 showed that the relationship between DJ and KS is significant at 5% level. Thus, H1 was rejected. Therefore, it was affirmed that DJ has a positive and significant effect on KS of employees in Belloxi Industries. In addition, the regression coefficient showed that a unit increase in DJ would lead to 16.88% increase in KS of employees. This finding agrees with the results of previous researchers like Akrama et al. (2017). However, this finding contradict the results of Cetin et al. (2022), and Yesil & Dereli (2013).

**Table 3: Summary of Regression Results for H1**

D.V: KS	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F-Statistics	$p$ -value	t-value	$\beta$ -Coefficient
I.V: DJ	0.0996	0.0938	F(1, 154) = 17.04*	0.0001	4.14	+0.1688

Source: Researcher's Computation; KS = Knowledge Sharing; DJ = Distributive Justice; I.V = Independent variable; D.V = Dependent Variable; N = 156; \* $p < 0.05$

H2 proposes that 'There is no relationship between procedural justice (PJ) and knowledge sharing (KS)', and the summary of the results obtained from regressing KS on PJ such that KS was the dependent variable while PJ was the independent variable is presented in Table 4. This regression result shows

an R-squared of 0.1398, indicating that PJ explains 13.98% of the systematic variations in KS. The F-statistics ( $df = 1, 154$ , F-ratio = 25.05) with a  $p$ -value of 0.0000 showed that the relationship between PJ and KS is significant at 5% level. Thus, H2 was rejected. Therefore, it was confirmed that PJ has a positive and significant effect on KS of employees in Belloxi Industries. In addition, the regression coefficient showed that a unit increase in PJ would lead to 19.24% increase in KS of employees. This finding concurs with Yesi & Dereli (2013), and Akrama et al. (2017). Moreover, this result is in conflict with the findings of Cetin et al. (2022).

**Table 4: Summary of Regression Results for H2**

D.V: KS	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F-Statistics	$p$ - value	t- value	$\beta$ - Coefficient
I.V: PJ	0.1398	0.1342	F(1, 154) = 25.03*	0.0000	5.00	+0.1924

Source: Researcher's Computation; KS = Knowledge Sharing; PJ = Procedural Justice; I.V = Independent variable; D.V = Dependent Variable; N = 156; \* $p < 0.05$

H3 proposes that 'There is no relationship between interactional justice (IJ) and knowledge sharing (KS)', and the summary of the results obtained from regressing KS on IJ such that KS was the dependent variable while IJ was the independent variable is presented in Table 5. This regression result shows an R-squared of 0.2154, indicating that IJ explains 21.54% of the systematic variations in KS. The F-statistics ( $df = 1, 154$ , F-ratio = 42.28) with a  $p$ -value of 0.0000 showed that the relationship between IJ and KS is significant at 5% level. Thus, H3 was rejected. Therefore, it was confirmed that IJ has a positive and significant effect on KS of employees in Belloxi Industries. In addition, the regression coefficient showed that a unit increase in IJ would lead to 20.67% increase in KS of employees in the workplace. This finding concurs with Cetin et al. 2022, Yesil & Dereli (2013), and Akrama et al. (2017).

**Table 5: Summary of Regression Results for H3**

D.V: KS	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	F-Statistics	$p$ - value	t- value	$\beta$ - Coefficient
I.V: PJ	0.2154	0.2103	F(1, 154) = 42.28*	0.0000	6.50	+0.2067

Source: Researcher's Computation; KS = Knowledge Sharing; IJ = Procedural Justice; I.V = Independent variable; D.V = Dependent Variable; N = 156; \* $p < 0.05$

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The three dimensions of organizational justice (OJ)—distributive justice (DJ), procedural justice (PJ), and interactional justice (IJ)—and knowledge sharing (KS) among Belloxi Industries Lagos, Nigeria, employees were examined. The study's conclusions supported the idea that each dimension of OJ positively and significantly influences employees' propensity to share knowledge. The study consequently recommends that managers take steps to make sure that organizational justice—DJ, PJ, and IJ—predominates in Belloxi Industries, Lagos, since employees share and acquire knowledge as a result of feeling that job-related procedures and processes are fair.

One of the limitations of the study was that both the dependent and independent variables were collected at the same time and from the same source, which may lead to common method bias. Data for these variables should be gathered from different sources in future research. Secondly, since the study adopted a cross-sectional survey design, drawing a causal inference may be a challenge. Future research should consider longitudinal or experimental designs. Furthermore, respondents were drawn from one organization (Belloxi Industries), thus limiting generalizations.

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