

# Organizational Justice and Employee Retention in the Manufacturing Industry: The Mediating Effect of Career Development

<sup>1</sup>Ametepe Paul Kojo, <sup>2</sup>George Olusoji James, & <sup>3</sup>Adeku Salihu Ohiani

<sup>123</sup>Department of Business Administration, University of Lagos

<sup>1</sup>aganatop@gmail.com; <sup>2</sup>golusoji@unilag.edu.ng; <sup>3</sup>sadeku@unilag.edu.ng

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## Abstract

*This study explores the mediating effect of career development on the relationship between organizational justice and employee retention among the employee in the manufacturing industry. Anchored on job embeddedness theory, Herzberg's theory of motivation, and social exchange theory, the study employed convenience and simple random sampling to select a sample of 345 respondents through the use of a survey questionnaire designed for that purpose. Pearson correlation and simple regression were employed to test the five hypotheses raised. The findings showed that distributive justice (DJ), procedural justice (PJ), and interactional justice (IJ) had positive and significant relationships with employee retention, and career development mediates the relationship between organizational justice and employee retention. These results offer more proof that career development is a successful strategy for promoting employee retention. The study suggested that organizations need DJ, PJ, and IJ to increase employee retention among manufacturing companies and employees in other sectors. Additionally, despite a just workplace culture, management is expected to consider the employees' professional career pathways. It was recommended that management should consider the employees' professional career pathways and ensure a fair climate to foster employee retention.*

**Keywords:** Organizational justice, distributive justice, procedural justice, interactional justice, career development and employee retention.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Competition and globalization are two important variables that are influencing the corporate environment today. (Akwei & Nwachukwu, 2022; Soomro, Hussain & Abdullah 2021). Employees, who are the major source of accomplishing organizational goals, have to be well-catered for firms to meet up with the global competition. The consequence is that organizations run the risk of losing their best employees to their competitors if their employees are not effectively managed. This suggests that employee retention is a critical component in every commercial business. Hence, employee retention is defined as the strategies employed by organizations to keep productive employees from resigning or looking for better job prospects elsewhere (Modau, Dhanpat, Lugisani, MaboJane & Phiri, 2018). Soomro et al. (2021) opined that it is a responsibility to maintain doing business with a certain entity continuously.

Organizations lose valuable skills, corporate knowledge, and knowledgeable staff when employees quit their jobs. Kryscynski (2021) noted that employee turnover frequently results in losses for the company because additional expenses are incurred during the hiring, training, and orientation of new employees, and for this reason, a firm should make every effort to keep its productive employees. In comparison with a few selected nations around the world, employee retention in Nigerian manufacturing firms has declined due to poor performance and insufficient contributions from employees (Akwei & Nwachukwu, 2022). It has been suggested that low levels of employee retention are to blame for Nigeria's persistent poor output in the manufacturing industry (Ajibola, 2019). This is evident because employees' exit interviews showed that the majority of workers in manufacturing companies quit because of various inconclusive factors, and were either ultimately recruited by competitor organizations within or outside the countries (Ushakov & Shatila, 2021).

However, observation by the researcher suggests that most of the capable and talented workers at manufacturing companies in Nigeria are experiencing the brain drain syndrome (known in local parlance as JAPA) due to several factors unknown to their organization (Onah & Anikwe, 2016). For instance, ninety-seven percent of the nation's manufacturing companies forbid their employees from pursuing necessary external career growth (Abdullahi et al., 2015). In fact, the management of these companies would prefer that an employee who develops a personal aspiration for self-development, tenders a resignation before beginning such developmental studies. As a result, workers rarely remain in the manufacturing industry for an extended period of time; instead, they leave as soon as they learn of a better opportunity (Naved, Mamun, Parvin, Willan, Gibbs & Jewkes, (2021). On the contrary, studies have also shown that the ability of organizations to develop their employees through their career parts fosters commitment and trust in their employers and organizations (Chen, 2014; Wang,

Jiang, Zhang & Liu, 2021). Hence, career development is proven to foster organizational effectiveness and employee retention because it raises employee personal and organizational competence (Chen, 2014; Wang et al., 2021).

In addition, studies had shown that 65% of workers in Nigeria's manufacturing sectors are not fully committed to their work (Anaesoronye, 2019) because as Ota and Ologbenla (2020) argued, low employee commitment was caused by injustice in Nigerian manufacturing companies and this has been a key reason for employee turnover. However, overwhelming research evidence also showed that a fair organizational climate fosters employee retention (Aryani, Widodo & Chandrawaty 2021). Such factor is the employee's impression of fairness in the organization such as their feelings about how resources such as salaries, bonuses, shift assignments, work evaluations, processes, procedures, and policies, as well as how well their superior and colleagues treat them on a personal level, either encourage or dissuade them from working longer for their organization (Al Halbusi, Ruiz-Palomino, Jimenez-Estevez & Gutiérrez-Broncano, 2021). Therefore, the study's specific objectives are to determine the influence of distributive justice on employee retention; investigate the relationship between procedural justice and employee retention; analyze the significance of interactional justice on employee retention; compute the impact of career development on employee retention, and accentuate the mediating effect of career development on the relationship between organizational justice and employee retention.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Theoretical Framework**

A theoretical framework introduces and discusses the theory that provides an explanation for why the research problem under consideration arises. A theoretical framework demonstrates an understanding of ideas and concepts that are relevant to the subject matter of research and connect to the broader disciplines of knowledge being considered. The theoretical framework underpinning this study is job embeddedness Theory, the Social Exchange Theory, and Herzberg's Motivation Theory

### ***Job Embeddedness Theory***

To improve employee turnover models, Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski & Erez, (2001) created the Job Embeddedness Theory (JET). Job embeddedness is defined as the extent to which an employee is incorporated into a larger social system due to a number of external (or contextual) pressures operating on the key employee in the business and community. According to Holtom and Inderrieden, (2006), employees can be thought of as unique people with a web of links between various facets of their lives. Job embeddedness is the combination of elements that affect employee retention (Shibiti, 2019). According to Mitchell et al. (2001), "job embeddedness" is made up of

three factors: link, fit, and sacrifice, each of which is important both on and off the job. They stated that employees would stay with the organization as long as the incentives remained the same or exceeded their expectations. This implies that an employee's decision to remain or leave their job may be influenced by how embedded they feel in their current position.

Part of the drawbacks of this theory according to Crossley, Bennett, Jex&Burnfield, (2007) is that employee turnover may be preferable to keep on the employees who feel injustice and do not think there is a fit between their personal objectives and those of the company.

Resonating JET theory to this study implies that employers are expected to ensure that workers are integrated into their positions through these three qualities of links, fit, and sacrifice (Holtom&Darabi, 2018) because doing so enhances employee retention. For instance, employees' relationships with other team members are reflected in the links dimension. Examples include mentors, relatives, co-workers, friends, work teams, and so on. The fit of an employee in terms of how justice is upheld within the company and the workplace is the subject of the second dimension. Individuals tend to encounter and bear sacrifice (the third dimension) when they choose to leave a company. When employees quit from their companies, they give up exciting initiatives, alluring benefits and pay, the chance to work with coworkers they have gotten to know well, and prospects for advancement. Moreover, job embeddedness is favorable to firms when it comes to retaining staff because it enables them to comprehend why people opt to stay (Lyu& Zhu, 2019).

### ***Social Exchange Theory (SET)***

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) was developed by George Homans in 1958. According to the social exchange theory, social behavior is the outcome of an exchange process. The exchange is meant to maximize gains and cut down on expenses. This idea contends that individuals balance the advantages and dangers of their social interactions. Typically, when scholars discuss partnerships, they mean connections between two interacting partners (whether individuals or institutions). It is generally believed that employees can establish distinguishable social exchange relationships with their immediate supervisor (Kirkland, 2019; Liden, Sparrowe & Wayne, 1997), coworkers (Deckop, Cirka & Andersson, 2003; Eriksson, 2022), employing organizations (Moorman et al., 1998), customers (Sheth, 1996), and suppliers, among others (McEvily, Zaheer & Soda 2021). Particularly, people are more likely to repay the favors extended to them by the other party because they return the benefits they obtain. However, the SET theory received criticism for ignoring the subject of altruism and selflessness.

Resonating with this theory suggests that employees may implement SET by rewarding fairness with a commitment to their organization. If their personal professional goals align with those of their company, employees are also more likely to stay involved (continue to commit) to the organization and work there for a longer period of time.

### ***Herzberg's Motivational-Hygiene Theory***

Herzberg (1974) proposed the Motivation-Hygiene Theory. According to the theory, motivators make up the majority of factors that affect job satisfaction while hygiene factors make up the majority of factors that affect job dissatisfaction (Holston-Okae&Mushi, 2018). The hygiene factors include elements like money, a pleasant workplace, a good relationship with one's boss and coworkers, company policy, working conditions, relationship with managers, and general management, and so on that do not encourage or cause satisfaction but whose absence increases job discontent. The motivators are such factors as responsibility and the chance to contribute to job tasks, the opportunity for growth, the opportunity to advance one's career, the work itself, recognition, responsibility, the satisfaction of the work itself, etc. Herzberg developed the theory to comprehend a worker's attitude and drive for the job. When applied to this study, it suggests that the manufacturing company needs to evaluate its policies and think about how to align its objectives with that of the employees. For instance, career paths will serve as a motivator for the employees and hence encourage them to work longer for the same. However, workers rarely remain in the manufacturing industry for an extended period of time because their career aspirations do not align with that of their organization. More so, their perception of fairness in the organizational resources serves as a hygiene factor where rewards and compensations are distributed fairly among them.

### **Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework shows how your variables should be related to one another. It outlines how your research method' pertinent objectives fit together to provide logical findings to the study. The conceptual framework for this study is outlined below:

### ***Employee Retention***

Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, which contends that organizations should work to identify individual needs and promote employee job satisfaction, served as the foundation for the idea of employee retention. An employer's efforts to keep employees as staff are referred to as employee retention (Shrotryia&Dhanda, 2020). Hee and Rhung (2019) opined that employee retention is a process of creating a work environment where employees can stay as long as possible. The company needs well-considered policies and procedures to complete this task effectively (Amushila and Bussin, 2021; Ushakov and Shatila, 2021). Some scholars contend that to prevent

losing the company's best-trained personnel to a rival company, employee retention tactics should prioritize talented individuals (Gandy, Harrison & Gold 2018; Marinakou, 2019). According to Choy and Kamoche (2021), managers will encounter several issues that may hinder their capacity to accomplish organizational goals if retention tactics are overlooked or disregarded. Companies should be aware of how crucial it is to adopt effective retention strategies and how challenging it may be to do so, especially given the fierce global competition for qualified and experienced workers that exists today (Marinakou, 2019).

### ***Organizational Justice and Employee Retention***

Organizational justice (OJ) is a notion that has its roots in Adams' (1965) Theory of Equity, which proposes that the distribution of resources should be equitable to relational partners. The fundamental tenet of justice is that people ought to evaluate the results of their organizations about the inputs they provide in terms of their experiences, activities, demography, and personal choices, both financially and non-financially. The phrase "organizational justice" was first used by Greenberg (1987a), who defined it as the level of fairness that employees experience within an organization. The impact that OJ has on organizations is what makes it relevant today. In addition, several studies (Erturk, 2007; Greenberg, 1987; Oren, Tziner, Nahshon & Sharoni 2013), have found that when workers are treated fairly by their coworkers, they are more likely to adhere to workplace policies and procedures and put forth extra effort in their work and organizations. In other words, as demonstrated by Laith, Alaa & Abd (2019) and Yean (2016), employees will work harder and longer in return for fairness in the organization. There are different categorizations of the term organizational justice. While others conceptualized the construct into three dimensions (Greenberg, 1987; Robins and George, 2009), other authors divided the same into four dimensions (Cole et al., 2010, Colquitt, 2001). Moreover, this study adopts the three-dimensional conceptualization of OJ which are distributive, procedural justice, and interactional justice (Greenberg, 1987; Robins and George, 2009).

**Distributive Justice (DJ):** "Distributive justice" (DJ) is the term used to describe the fair distribution of resources among employees (Jameel, Hamdi, Abdul-Karem & Ahmad, 2020). This shows that rewarding employees and providing them with both monetary and non-monetary incentives have an impact on their conduct in the future. The worker evaluates their performance and efforts about the rewards received (Laith et al., 2019). The notion of a DJ takes into account how social and physical interactions at work affect how much someone is paid for their performance (Jameel et al., 2020). The psychological implications of unequal DJ on workers, such as demotivation and low inventiveness, have been highlighted further by Noruzy, Shateri, Rezazadeh & Hatami-Shirkouhi, (2011). An employee must believe that their contributions and amount of

effort are recognized and that all other nominees are treated equally (Alsalem&Alhaiani, 2007).

**Procedural Justice (PJ):** PJ is concerned with how employees perceive the fairness, correctness, and authority of administrative rulings (Deepak, 2021; Greenberg, 1990). Since Thibaut and Walker (1975) developed the concept of PJ, a variety of perspectives have been accommodated in a study on the PJ notion. The legitimacy of the organization's decision-making and PJ, in Moorman et al(1998) opinions are related. According to Byrne (2005) and Gambhir and Kkan (2022), it applies to all key decisions that the employee will be affected by and how they will be perceived as just. Azubuike and Madubochi (2021) opined that PJ refers to the fairness of an organization's processes for determining employee outputs. When this kind of justice is used, people feel satisfied with the outcome and tend to stay longer with organizations (Fatima, Izhar&Kazmi, 2020; Nabatchi, Bingham& Good, 2007). However, Wittmer, Martin and Tekleab (2010) found a negative relationship between procedural justice and employee retention.

**Interactional Justice (IJ):** Colquitt (2001) defined IJ as the fair treatment an employee receives as a consequence of a managerial choice. IJ specifically refers to the interactions between subordinates and superiors. There are two main components of interactional justice (IJ), according to Greenberg and Cropanzano (1993) and Deepak (2021). These are interpersonal justice, which is how well people are treated by decision-makers and other parties when carrying out actions or arriving at conclusions, and informational justice, which Colquitt (2001) refers to as providing honest information with just reasons. According to Azubuike and Madubochi (2021) and Walumbwa, Cropanzano, and Hartnell (2009), it also calls for adequately informing employees of the systems in place for awarding rewards and upgrading staff members. According to the body of research in the field of industrial psychology, organizational justice has been shown to significantly affect employees' intentions to leave their jobs.

Numerous studies had looked into the significance of the relationship between organizational justice and employee intentions (Mehmood, Nadarajah&Akhtar, 2018; Jung &Choi, 2020; Shahid, Harun, Othman, Jani, Rahman& Mohamed, 2020; Hickman, 2021); and revealed that employees' perceptions of fairness may be influenced by their awareness of organizational justice, which in turn may affect their intention to stay. When an employer treats a worker decently, the worker is more likely to remain with that company than a worker who perceives unjust treatment (Parker, Nouri& Hayes, 2011). Similar findings made by Oluwafemi (2013) revealed that nondiscriminatory reward systems, punctual frequent wage reviews, transparent and equitable appraisal systems, promotion, and proper training will enhance employee quality of life at work, employee retention, and performance. According to Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel and

Rupp,(2001), unfair procedures have detrimental effects on the organization, including low organizational citizenship behavior, job dissatisfaction, intention to leave, and low commitment. Additionally, Prathamesh (2012) asserted that if distributive justice is not felt when employees assess the fairness of human resource processes in the organization, commitment to the organization will decline and employee retention will become low.

According to research by Ahmad and Riaz (2011), one of the reasons for employee attrition in Pakistan was a lack of distributive justice. In Oman, Imran and Allil (2016) look into how organizational justice affects employee retention using 148 respondents in Omani Airport and discovered that distributive, interactional justice and procedural justice had a positive and significant impact on employee retention. In a related study, Hassan (2002) found out that among managers from the banking, finance, manufacturing, production, and service sectors, both distributive and procedural justice factors had a substantial impact on employees' intention to leave. In Malaysia, Ponnun and Chuah (2010) found that distributive and procedural justice discouraged turnover intention, meaning that it encourages employee retention. It is abundantly obvious from the discussion above that there is enough evidence to suggest that Organizational justice (DJ, PJ, and IJ) directly influence ER. Thus, the following hypotheses are taken into consideration.

*H<sub>1</sub>: Employees' perception of PJ does not favorably affect ER among employees in manufacturing companies in Nigeria.*

*H<sub>2</sub>: Employees' perception of DJ does not impact ER among employees in manufacturing companies in Nigeria.*

*H<sub>3</sub>: Employees' perception of IJ does not have a significant effect on ER among employees in manufacturing companies in Nigeria.*

### **The Mediating effect of Career Development**

Career development is an idea brought up by Frank Parson (1900). It states that the assistance an organization offers to an individual's professional development, particularly when the employee moves to a new role or project within the company, is known as career development. For instance, skill development, career planning, coaching, networking, and mentoring are commonly included in this support. Career development practices help employees' comprehension of their mental processes, character traits, and potential contributions to an organization, according to empirical research (Gope et al., 2018). Studies have demonstrated a clear and favorable relationship between career development and job retention (Herman, 2005; Smith, 2021). In the studies carried out by Ghazali (2010) and Raid and Alzoubi (2021) found a strong correlation between the intention to stay and human resource strategies including

employee training and development. Cardy, and Lengnick-Hall (2011), Kroon, and Freese (2013), and Oyetunde, Prouska and McKearney, (2022), opined that career development increase employees' intentions to stay with their current organization.

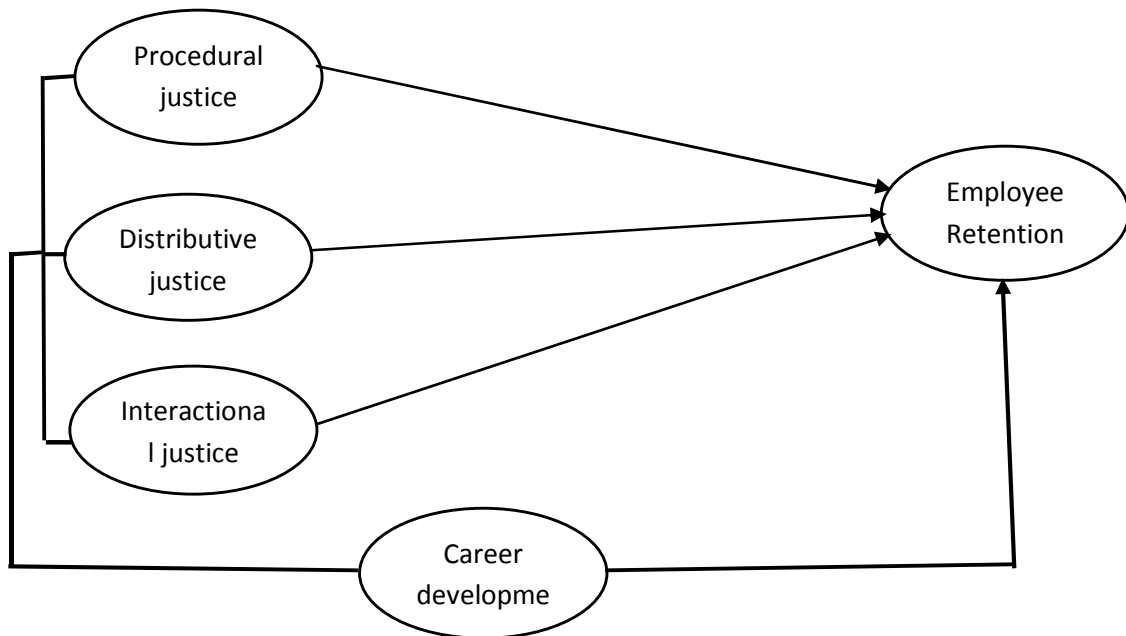
The survey conducted by Aruna and Anitha (2015) indicated that one of the factors influencing employee retention was career progression. Furthermore, career development was found to be a positive predictor of job satisfaction and a negative correlate of employees' intentions to quit their jobs in a study by Chen, Hou, Li, Lovelace, Liu & Wang (2016). In addition, Gogoi and Gogoi (2022) revealed that employees who believe that their company offers career opportunities are more committed to their organization and are less likely to leave. Kefelegn (2016), however, looked into how career development impacts employee motivation and retention while using descriptive and explanatory analysis and discovered that abilities and accomplishments go unnoticed and that employees at all levels do not gain from career advancement. It is, therefore, hypothesized that:

*H<sub>4</sub>: Career development practice has a positive relationship with ER among employees in manufacturing companies in Nigeria.*

*H<sub>5</sub>: Career development programfully/ partially moderates the relationship between organizational justice and employee retention among employees in manufacturing companies in Nigeria.*

### **Conceptual Model of the Study**

The conceptual framework in Fig. 1 demonstrated the relationship between the outcome variable (employee retention), the predictor factors (distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice), and the mediating variable (career development). However, a considerable number of studies have investigated the effect of organizational justice on employee retention. However, there is a paucity of research on career development's capacity to mediate the link between organizational justice and employee retention, particularly in emerging nations like Nigeria. Hence the need for this research as captured in the framework in Fig. 1.



*Fig. 1. Researchers' Conceptualization (2022)*

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study used cross-sectional survey research because it enables researchers to quickly and efficiently collect data once at numerous study locations (Sekaran&Bougie, 2016). A questionnaire served as the main tool for obtaining data from the study organizations. The questionnaire was developed using the literature on related issues. The questionnaire was divided into two main components. The respondents' gender, education, age, and marital status with their present employer are all gathered in the first section. The components of the predictor variables (organizational justice), the outcome variable (employee retention), and the mediator (career development) were in the second part.

The target population of the study was made up of all the employees of 30 manufacturing companies operating in Lagos State that are listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange. The reason Lagos State was chosen was that it is the commercial center of Nigeria and it has a diversified population that includes both locals and foreigners. Manufacturing firms were chosen because they create a range of goods that considerably boost Nigeria's gross domestic product. There are 17,836 employees in the targeted population in total (MAN, 2018).

The study further employed multistage sampling to collect the data. The study first used convenience sampling to select 15 out of the 30 manufacturing companies. Convenience sampling was preferred because of proximity and access to respondents, and it is cheap and very simple to use. Simple random sampling was adopted to select a sample of 390 respondents. This was done by randomly picking the respondents in the manufacturing firms. To remove bias and offer every respondent an equal chance of participating, 26 respondents were randomly selected from each manufacturing company to arrive at 390 respondents. The justification for picking an equal sample size from each firm (Taherdoost, 2016) was to add up to 390. Using Taro Yamane's (1967) formula, the sample size was determined as follows:  $n = 17836 / (1 + 17836(.05)^2)$ . Where: Sample size is n, and the allowed error is  $e = .05$ ,  $n = 391$ . The sample size was estimated to be 390 to correspond with the total number of respondents for the 15 manufacturing companies sampled while randomly selecting 26 respondents from each of the companies. However, 345 copies of the questionnaire in total were filled out, and 45 of those were rejected owing to incorrect completion, giving the survey an 88.46% response rate.

#### **Instrumentation (See Appendix A)**

**Organizational Justice:** A 20-item scale created by Niehoff and Moorman (1993) was used to assess the dimensions of organizational justice. Accordingly, there were 5, 6, and 9 items in the distributive, procedural, and interactional dimensions of justice, respectively. Every item was scored using a five-point Likert scale with a range of 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The scale reported a 0.9 Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient.

**Career Development:** This was measured using a 6-item scale created by Price (2001) on a five-point Likert scale, which ranges from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. This measurement's internal consistency reliability in the most recent study work was 0.87.

**Employee Retention:** Employee retention was measured using an 11-item scale developed by Kyndt et al. (2009). Responses were collected using a 5-point Likert scale with a score range of 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. This measurement's internal consistency reliability in the most recent study work was 0.78.

Meanwhile, research has demonstrated that once an instrument is validated, there is no need to repeat the instrument's validation and reliability (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Therefore, the validity and reliability of the study were based on Sekeran and Bougie's (2016) submission.

## **Analysis**

The statistical tools used to analyze the data were descriptive, bivariate, simple regression and Process Macro by Baron and Kenny. The predictability between the independent variables and the dependent variable, which is explained in the model, was measured using a single regression model. The simple regression model was preferred because it looks at whether an independent variable can predict a specific dependent variable (James and Frank, 1985). Moreover, the mediating effect was measured using Baron and Kenny Process Macro 3.5v. In addition, assumptions of linearity, independence of residuals (positive autocorrelation, that is, Durban Watson  $< 2$  for all variables), homoscedasticity, and normality were all met.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The result section provides the demographic characteristics of the respondents of the study coupled with the correlation, regression results, and Process Macro used to test the hypotheses generated for the study and the discussion of findings as shown below:

**Table I. Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents**

<b>Profile</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Ages</b>		
21-30	191	55.4
31-40	117	33.9
41-50	27	7.8
51 years and above	10	2.9
Total	345	100.0
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	251	72.8
Female	94	27.2
Total	345	100.0
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	50	14.5
Married	242	70.1
Widow(er)	27	7.8
Divorced	18	5.2
Separated	8	2.4
Total	345	100.0
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
DIPLOMA	17	4.9
HND/B.Sc.	243	70.4
MSc./MBA/M.Ed./ Equivalent	80	23.3
Ph.D.	5	1.4
Total	345	100.0

*Source: Field Survey, 2022*

Table I showed that 191(55.4%) of the respondents were in the age bracket of 21-30 years; 117(33.9%) were in the bracket of 31-40 years, 27(1.7%) were in the age bracket of 41-50 years and 10(2.9%) were in the age bracket 51 years and above. The gender profiles showed that 251 (72.8%) were male while 94(27.2) were female. The marital status of the respondents showed that 242(70.1%) respondents were married, 50(14.5%) were single, 27(7.8%) were widowed and 18(2.4%) were divorced. On the part of educational qualification, 243 (70.4%) of the respondents had HND/B.Sc., and 80(23.3%) had M.Sc./ MBA. /M.Ed./Equivalent, 17(4.9%) had diplomas and 5(1.4%) had PhD.

**Table II: Mean, Standard Deviation, and correlation between the variables of the study**

Factor	Mean	SD	CR	Correlation				
				1	2	3	4	5
EMRETE	2.979	.428	.896	-				
DIJUS	3.197	.522	.830	.706	-			
PRJUS	3.243	.539	.859	.851	.780	-		
INJUS	4.004	.302	.846	.402	.340	.431	-	
CADEV	2.943	.606	.804	.861	.735	.692	.413	-

Notes: \*\*p<0.01. SD: Standard Deviation; 1 = EMRETE: Employee Retention; 2 = DIJUS: Distributive Justice; 3 = PRJUS: Procedural Justice; 4 = INJUS: Interactional Justice; 5 = CADEV: Career Development

Table II showed the correlation analysis for the study. The result showed that there is a strong positive correlation between distributive justice, procedural justice, and career development,  $r = .706, .851, .861$ ;  $p < 0.01$ . Likewise, the relationship between interactional justice was moderately related to employee retention,  $r = .402$ ;  $p < .01$ . This means that a unit increase in distributive justice, procedural justice, interactional justice, and career development brought about 70.6%, 85.1%, 40.4% and 86.1% increase in employee retention respectively. However, a strong correlation between two or more variables may be misleading because correlation cannot assume a cause-and-effect relationship. Consequently, to achieve the objective of the study, regression analysis was employed.

**Table III: Data analysis for Hypothesis one**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>R<sup>2Adj</sup></b>	<b>T-Value</b>	<b>F-value</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Distributive Justice	.630	.769	.769	.591	.590	22.25	495.480	.000

**D.Watson = .1.376**

*Note: Outcome Variable: Employee Retention*

*Source: Field Survey, 2022*

In Table III, a simple regression was used to show the predictive ability of distributive justice on employee retention. Distributive justice predicted employee retention  $F = 495.480$ ;  $p = .000$ ;  $R^2 = .591$ ;  $R^2$  Adjusted = .590, meaning that distributive justice showed a 59.1% variance in employee retention. The standardized regression coefficient ( $\beta$ ) = .769, indicating that a unit increase in distributive justice led to a 76.9% increase in employee retention. Therefore, H1 which stated that Employees' perception of PJ does not favorably affect ER among employees in manufacturing companies in Nigeria was not supported and the study concluded that employees' perception of PJ favorably affects ER among employees in manufacturing companies in Nigeria. Durban Watson's value of 1.376 showed that there is positive autocorrelation between residual errors.

**Table IV Data analysis for Hypothesis two**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>R<sup>2Adj</sup></b>	<b>T-Value</b>	<b>F-value</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
Procedural Justice	.676	.851	.851	.723	.723	29.955	897.300	.000

**D.Watson 1.297**

*Note: Outcome Variable: Employee Retention*

*Source: Field Survey, 2022*

A simple linear regression was calculated to predict the impact of procedural justice on employee retention in Table IV. A significant regression equation was found  $F(1, 344) = 897.300$ ,  $p < .000$ , with an  $R^2$  of .723, indicating that employee retention can be explained by 72.3% of procedural justice. The Model Summary showed that  $R^2$  and Adjusted,  $R^2$  respectively; and the Standardized Coefficients ( $\beta$ ) = .851, meaning that a unit increase in procedural justice led to an 85.1% increase in employee retention. Hence, H2 was not supported. The study then concluded that employees' perception of DJ impacted ER among employees in manufacturing companies in Nigeria. This effect

is strong (Cohen, 1988). Durban Watson’s value of 1.297 showed that there is positive autocorrelation between residual errors.

**Table V: Data analysis for Hypothesis three**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>R<sup>2Adj</sup></b>	<b>T-Value</b>	<b>F-value</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
<b>D.Watson = 1.395</b>								
Interactional Justice	.569	.402	.402	.161	.159	8.125	66.009	.000

*Note: Outcome Variable: Employee Retention*

*Source: Field Survey, 2022*

Table V showed simple regression conducted to investigate how well interactional justice predicts employee retention. The results were statistically significant  $F(1,344) = 66.009, p = .000$ . The identified standardized coefficient ( $\beta$ ) = .402 indicating that 40.2% of the variance in employee retention was explained by interactional justice. This is a moderate effect according to Cohen (1988). Therefore, H3 which stated that employees’ perception of IJ does not have a significant effect on ER among employees in manufacturing companies in Nigeria was also not supported. Durban Watson’s value of 1.395 showed that there is positive autocorrelation between residual errors.

**Table VI: Data analysis for Hypothesis four**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Beta</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>R<sup>2Adj</sup></b>	<b>T-Value</b>	<b>F-value</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
<b>D.Watson = 1.349</b>								
Career Development	.608	.861	.861	.741	.740	31.301	979.736	.000

*Note: Outcome Variable: Employee Retention*

*Source: Field Survey, 2022*

Table VI also showed that career development significantly predicted employee retention,  $\beta = .861$  that is, a unit increase in career development led to 86.1% in employee retention. Career development also explained a significant proportion of variance in employee retention scores,  $R^2 = .741, F(1, 344) = 979.736, p = .000$ . As a result, H4 was supported and the study concluded that *career development practice has a positive relationship with ER among employees in manufacturing companies in Nigeria*. This is a strong effect as reported by Cohen (1988), and a Durban Watson value of 1.349 indicated that there was positive autocorrelation.

**Table VII: The Mediating effects of self-efficacy using Haye’s Process Macro**

Variable/ effect Interval	b	SE	t	p	95% Confidence	
ORGJUS → EMRETE	.507	.038	13.241	.000	.432	.582
ORGJUS → CADEV	1.196	.055	21.737	.000	1.088	1.304
ORGJUS → CADEV → EMRETE	.362	.024	14.852	.000	.314	.410
<b>Effects</b>						
Direct	.507	.038	13.241	.000	.432	.582
Indirect	.433	.034			.368	.500
Total	.740	.318	29.553	.000	.877	1.002

*Note: ORGJUS: Organizational justice; CADEV: Career development; EMRETE: Employee Retention*

Mediation analysis was performed to assess the mediating role of career development on the relationship between organizational justice and employee retention in Table VII. The result revealed that the total effect of organizational justice on employee retention was significant ( $\beta = .740$ ,  $t = 29.533$ ,  $p < .001$ ). With the inclusion of the mediating variable (career development), the impact of organizational justice on employee retention was also significant ( $\beta = .507$ ,  $t = 13.241$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The indirect effect of organizational justice on employee retention through career development was found significant ( $\beta = .362$ ,  $t = 14.852$ ,  $p < .001$ ). This statistically implied that the relationship between organizational justice and employee retention is partially mediated by career development, thereby supporting hypothesis 5 which stated that career development fully/ partially mediates the relationship between organizational justice and employee retention.

### **Discussions**

The goal of this study was to examine OJ, career advancement, and ER among workers in the manufacturing sector. For hypothesis one (H1), the study found a strong link between DJ and ER among employees working in Nigeria's manufacturing sector, thereby suggesting that employees have a stronger willingness to stay when they recognize that resources are distributed fairly within their organization. That is employees in the manufacturing industry perceive fair treatment in terms of the incentives they receive for the duties allocated to them and as a result, chose to stay in their companies. The result is consistent with the submissions of Laith et al.(2019) and Jameel et al. (2020).

The results of this study, which did not support hypothesis two (H2) showed that procedural justice is a key predictor of employee retention. The employees' satisfaction with perceived justice in these manufacturing companies may indicate that the workers in Nigeria's manufacturing industry were doing a good job of upholding procedures. Additionally, it shows the balance between perceived distributive justice and procedural justice in the companies of study, which may encourage employee retention. This result is in line with the assertions of Park et al. (2022) and Roch and Shanock (2006) who revealed a direct correlation between procedural justice and employee retention. However, this finding did not align with the opinion of Wittmer et al. (2010).

Furthermore, the good impressions that employees in the manufacturing organization have of their superior behavior were shown by the considerable association between interactional justice and employee retention and hence the support for alternative hypothesis three (H3). This implies that employees were treated with respect, politeness, and dignity. It also means that management listens to employees' concerns and takes adequate steps to such concerns, and takes care of employees' well-being, thereby falling in line with the assertion of Lu et al. (2021).

Progress toward career goals was also discovered to have a substantial influence on employee retention as indicated by the study's acceptance of hypothesis four (H4). The findings imply that workers in the manufacturing sector view their jobs as a means of achieving their career objectives. Additionally, individuals have job opportunities that align with their envisioned professional objectives and as a result, they choose to stay with their organization. This finding supports the opinions of Herman, (2005), Chen et al, (2016), Smith, (2021), and Oyetunde et al. (2022). It, however, did not support the aversion of Kefelegn (2016).

Lastly, the study also found that among employees in the manufacturing sector, career development partially mediates the link between organizational fairness and employee retention. Inferring that workers in the manufacturing sector engage in professional growth by incorporating their knowledge, skills, and talents; hypothesis five H5 was thus supported. That is, career development fosters employee retention. This discovery supports research by Mehmood et al. (2018), Jung and Choi (2020), Shahid et al. (2020), and Hickman, (2021), all of which discovered a connection between organizational fairness, career advancement, and employee desire to leave.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study concludes that all three dimensions of organizational justice are important when considering employee retention strategies. Moreover, more importance should be attached to both DJ and IJ as indications from the study findings showed stronger links between these two and employee retention compared to the link between procedural

justice and employee retention. As a result, organizations need to do a better job of allocating resources fairly, treating staff members with respect and decency, and including them fairly in decision-making. Assignment distribution needs more consideration, as well as clear, standardized procedures to reduce the impact of implicit bias. Additionally, career development mediates the link between organizational fairness and employee retention. Therefore, the study affirmed that organizations need organizational justice to increase employee retention among manufacturing companies and employees in other sectors.

Therefore, the study recommends that to encourage optimism among employees and increase employee retention, managers should work to build organizational procedures that are fair to all employees. Similarly, organizations may think about fostering fair and equitable career advancement and making sure that these are strongly reflected in their policy in order to support career development.

### **Theoretical and Practical Implication of the Study**

The study is anchored on relevant theories. For instance, the study validated by SET on the basis that workers choose to stay with the company as a result of DJ, PJ, and IJ experience. The study also provided evidence in favor of Herzberg's theory of motivation, showing that employees decided to stay with their employers because such decisions drove them to pursue their career development goals. The link between management and employees was demonstrated by the employee's positive assessment of interactional justice, and the relationship between the employee's career development and the organization and their decision to remain with the company was also demonstrated. This showed that the employees were well-embedded in their organizations. Moreover, it serves as a wake-up call for the management to foster a climate of justice among workers and to create policies and practices that would institutionalize their employees' professional development goals to keep competent employees.

This study is significant in that it would assist manufacturing companies to improve organizational performance and lower staff turnover by supporting leaders and organizations in understanding the influence of organizational justice on employee retention. Likewise, it would be helpful to all manufacturing companies, particularly in developing policy recommendations for their career development programs in fostering employee retention amid a fair organizational environment. It would also help managers in coming up with ideas and answers to issues based on the best method for their workforce career development to keep their best workers and mitigate against brain drain.

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**APPENDIX A**

Dear Participant,

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Lagos. I am carrying out a study on “Organizational Justice and Employee Retentions in the Manufacturing Industry: The Mediating Effect of Career Development.” In order to ensure that all information will remain confidential, please do not include your name. Please answer all questions as honestly as possible and return the completed questionnaires promptly by hand. Participation is strictly voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely Yours,

**SECTION A: BIO – DATA**

**Kindly Indicate by ticking (☐)**

1. Age Range: 21-30yrs ( ) 31-40yrs ( ) 41-50yrs ( ) 51years & above ( )
2. Sex: Male ( ) Female ( )
3. Marital Status: Single ( ) Married ( ) Widow(er) ( ) Divorced ( ) Separated ( )
4. Educational: Diploma ( ) HND/ B.Sc. ( ) MSc./MBA/M.Ed./ Equivalent ( ) Ph.D. ( )

**INSTRUCTION: KINDLY TICK AS APPROPRIATE (√)**

**Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Undecided (U), Disagreed (D), Strongly Disagreed (SD)**

**SECTION B:**

SN	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
<b>Employee Retention</b>						
1	I am planning on working for another company within a period of three years*					
2	Within this company, my work gives me satisfaction.					
4	I see a future for myself within this company					
5	It does not matter if I am working for this company or another, as long as I have work*					
6	If it were up to me, I will definitely be working for this company for the next five years.					
7	If I could start over again, I would choose to work for					

<b>SN</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
	another company*					
8	If I received an attractive job offer from another company, I would take the job*					
9	The work I am doing is very important to me					
10	I love working for this company.					
11	I have checked out a job in another company previously*					
<b>Distributive Justice</b>						
12	My work schedule is fair.					
13	I think that my level of pay is fair.					
14	I consider my workload to be quite fair.					
15	Overall, the rewards I receive here are quite fair.					
16	I feel that my job responsibilities are fair.					
<b>Procedural Justice</b>						
17	Job decisions are made by the general manager in an unbiased manner.					
18	My general manager makes sure that all employee concerns are heard before job decisions are made.					
19	To make job decisions, my general manager collects accurate and complete information.					
20	My general manager clarifies decisions and provides additional information when requested by employees.					
21	All job decisions are applied consistently across all affected employees.					
22	Employees are allowed to challenge or appeal job decisions made by the general manager.					
<b>Interactional Justice</b>						
23	When decisions are made about my job. the general manager treats me with kindness and consideration.					
24	When decisions are made about my job. the general manager treats me with respect and dignity					
25	When decisions are made about my job, the general manager is sensitive to my personal needs					
26	When decisions are made about my job. the general manager deals with me in a truthful manner.					
27	When decisions are made about my job, the general manager shows concern for my rights as an employee.					

<b>SN</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
28	Concerning decisions made about my job. the general manager discusses the implications of the decisions with me.					
29	The general manager offers adequate justification for decisions made about my job					
30	When making decisions about my job. the general manager offers explanations that make sense to me					
31	My general manager explains very clearly any decision made about my job.					
<b>Career Development</b>						
31	There is the existence of clear career paths in my company					
32	My career goals are known by my immediate superior					
33	There are available positions for promotions					
34	Organizational and employee needs align in my organization					
35	There is proper planning of employee development in my organization					
36	My career development programs are valued in my organization					

\*Are reverse coded items