

PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE AND QUALITY OF WORK-LIFE OF ACADEMICS: THE MODERATING ROLE OF SELF-EFFICACY

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ABSTRACT: This study explored the perceived organizational justice and quality of work-life of academics, examining the moderating role of self-efficacy. A cross-sectional survey design was adopted for the study, and a sample of 132 academics of the University of Delta, Agbor, participated in the study. Three standardized questionnaires were used for data collection, namely, Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scale, Walton's Quality of Work-life Scale, and the General Self-Efficacy Scale. Three hypotheses were formulated and tested using multiple regression, simple linear regression, and moderated regression analysis. Results showed a significant joint influence of perceived organizational justice on quality of work-life [$R^2 = .383$, $F(4, 127) = 19.717$; $p < .001$], and significant independent contributions of distributive justice [$\beta = .529$, $p < .001$] and interpersonal justice [$\beta = .230$, $p < .001$] whereas the results for procedural justice [$\beta = -.085$, $p > .05$] and informational justice [$\beta = .025$, $p > .05$] were not significant. Furthermore, self-efficacy showed a significant influence on quality of work-life [$\beta = .366$, $p < .001$]. However, the interaction term between organisational justice and quality of work-life was not significant ($\beta = -.011$, $p > .05$). The overall model explained 37.8% of the variance in quality of work-life [$F(3, 128) = 25.89$, $p > .05$]. Study findings imply that self-efficacy does not buffer or sufficiently compensate for institutional justice deficiencies. It was recommended that the universities prioritise equitable distribution of work and benefits.

Keywords: Perceived Organizational Justice, Self-efficacy, Quality of Work-Life, Universities, Academics.

INTRODUCTION

Quality of Work-Life of academics is crucial because it covers all aspects of an employee's work: psychological, social, physical, and environmental (Nayak & Sahoo, 2015). A balance in these aspects of work is vital for employees to maintain continuous bonding with their organisations, and strong relationships thrive when employees perceive their organisation as treating them fairly (Selatan et al., 2023). It encompasses the extent to which employees are satisfied with core job-related factors, including job security, work-life balance, compensation, the meaningfulness of tasks, organizational support, and opportunities for personal growth. Wages and conditions are critical drivers of the mutual exchanges that occur between employees and their organisations, and sustaining that symbiosis is key to survival and gaining a competitive advantage.

Quality of work-life, based on the social exchange theory by Blau (1964), offers a relational framework for understanding interpersonal and institutional dynamics in the workplace. Built on the principle of reciprocity, mutual trust, and long-term commitment, it posits that the nature of the relationship between employees and their organisations, though based on economic and social exchanges, is not purely transactional. The theory suggests that when individuals perceive that they are treated fairly and humanely by their organization through consistent support, recognition, and opportunity for self and career development, they feel morally obligated to reciprocate with positive outcomes, such as organizational citizenship, trust, and commitment.

However, disparities in the treatment of academics, through prolonged neglect, have weakened the perception of justice held by academics within institutions of higher learning. For academics, constant neglect by successive administrations, poor pay and working conditions, inadequate policy implementation, such as the delay of agreements following negotiations, and perceived injustices in salaries and working conditions have affected the quality of work-life. Organisational justice, comprising distributive, procedural, interpersonal/interactional, and informational justice, plays a significant role in shaping how employees evaluate their work experiences and their sense of inclusion and value within the organization (Bies, 2015). Justice perceptions have been empirically linked to positive outcomes, such as greater identification and commitment, better organizational trust, increased job satisfaction, reinforced job performance, improved health and well-being, and negative consequences and counterproductive workplace behaviour (Abdullah & Al-Abrrow, 2023).

Furthermore, individual differences in the use of psychological abilities affect how employees perceive and react to organizational injustice. One of such psychological abilities is self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is “an individual’s confidence in their ability to mobilize innate resources to achieve high levels of performance” (Egwuenu & Ehigie, 2023). Individuals with high self-efficacy tend to be more resilient, proactive, and adaptable in the face of challenges, and are likely more confident in their ability to navigate institutional pressures and maintain a positive work-life balance, even in the face of perceived unfairness (Swami, Sharma, & Sharma, 2024). Conversely, individuals with low self-efficacy tend to be more resilient, proactive, and adaptable in the face of challenges, and are likely more confident in their ability to navigate institutional pressures and maintain a positive work-life balance, even in the face of perceived unfairness (Swami, Sharma, & Sharma, 2024). Thus, since universities are conversant with the multifaceted responsibilities academics engage in, such as high workloads, limited funding, pressure to publish, and unstable policies (Osibanjo et al., 2019), they should prioritise the pursuit of factors that promote work-life quality. Perceived disparities in output and attitudes towards universities and their administrative policies have led scholars to want to decipher how academics’ perception of their organisations influences their work-life, how perceptions of core organizational justice components affect QWL, and influence some academics to continuously strive to attain success, where others give up.

Statement of Problem

The quality of work-life (QWL) of academic staff has become a growing concern, especially as universities face increasing demands for performance, accountability, and productivity. Academics are often subjected to long working hours, limited resources, high workloads, and administrative

pressures, all of which can negatively impact their professional and personal well-being (Mohammadi & Karupiah, 2020). Also, academic institutions have undergone substantial structural and policy changes, driven often by globalization, increased student enrolment, administrative reforms, and pressure for research output, which have placed a greater demand on academic staff, often leading to an imbalance between their professional responsibilities and personal lives. Despite their essential roles in education, research, and societal development, many academics report high levels of stress, job dissatisfaction, burnout, and a lack of work-life balance (Akinwale et al., 2023), thus making the quality of work-life (QWL) of academics a critical concern for university management and policymakers.

Agreeably, an understanding of psychological and organizational factors that influence the quality of work-life will aid the design of effective interventions to improve staff welfare and institutional effectiveness (Ahmad et al., 2021). However, little is known about how self-efficacy may alter the influence of organizational justice on quality of work-life among Nigerian university academics in spite of the many advantages self-efficacy confers on individuals. Despite growing interest in organizational justice and employee well-being, few studies have specifically explored the relationship between perceived organizational justice and quality of work-life in higher education contexts, and even fewer have examined the moderating role of self-efficacy in this relationship. This gap is particularly significant, considering rising demands on university lecturers and the decline in morale and job satisfaction among teaching staff in Nigerian universities. This study, therefore, aims to investigate the influence of perceived organizational justice on the quality of work-life balance of academic staff and to examine the moderating role of self-efficacy in this relationship. Given the foregoing, the following research questions emerge.

i. Since fairness is perceived as evidenced by reciprocity in exchanges by employees and their organisations, will there be a significant influence of perceived organizational justice and its components—distributive justice (fairness in the allocation of tangible outcomes), procedural justice (fairness of the decision-making processes), interpersonal justice (perceptions of fairness in quality of interpersonal treatment received by employees during the implementation of procedures), and informational justice (fairness in the communication of decisions) on the quality of work-life among academics?

- i. Will the perception that self-efficacy as an internal resource empowers individuals with confidence to take on tasks successfully in the face of stress or uncertainties significantly influence the quality of life among academics?
- ii. Will the perception of self-efficacy as a buffer for stress and challenging situations significantly moderate the influence of perceived organizational justice on quality of life among academics?

Research Hypotheses

- i. There will be a significant influence of perceived organizational justice (distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice) on quality of work-life among academics.

- ii. There will be a significant influence of self-efficacy on quality of work-life among academics.
- iii. Self-efficacy will significantly moderate the influence of perceived organizational justice on quality of work-life among academics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Perceived Organizational Justice and Quality of Work-Life

Perceived organizational justice is a key organizational factor that influences employee outcomes, including motivation, satisfaction, engagement, retention, and overall well-being. Organizational justice emphasizes the subjective interpretation of workplace experiences, how individuals emotionally and cognitively process decisions, outcomes, and interactions based on their expectations and in comparison, with others (Tziner et al., 2020). It goes beyond monetary expectations to evaluations of internal processes that depict the value their organisations place on them. Alshuridel et al. (2021), in a study of faculty across universities in the United Arab Emirates, identified that perceived justice in academic performance evaluations impacted emotional engagement more than monetary rewards.

Distributive Justice

Distributive justice refers to perceptions of fairness in the allocation of tangible organisational outcomes such as remuneration, workload, promotions, recognition, and other organizational rewards. Specifically, it describes the distribution of “advantages and burdens be distributed to workers in an organization according to proportionate equality” (Ereh & Vincent, 2025). Khan et al., (2019) in the study of the impact of distributive and procedural justice on physical engagement, cognitive and emotional engagement, found that distributive justice had significant impact on physical, cognitive and emotional engagement. Furthermore, in a study of academics of four Federal universities in South-South, Nigeria, Ereh and Vincent (2025) found, promotion– an outcome of distributive justice, to significantly predict commitment of academic staff while compensation did not and concluded that promotions convey opportunities and recognition to academics and is proof that a person’s contribution is recognised and valued by their organisations. This reinforces the proposition of the social exchange theory that highlights employer-employee relationships to be that of symbiotic exchanges which foster loyalty, commitment, trust and wellbeing.

Similarly, Ekundayo and Ayodele (2019) in their study examining job performance levels of academics attributed level performance of 18.6% of lecturers to inequitable distribution of justice in the universities further highlighting that unfair distribution of burdens and advantages led to a loss of trust between employees and their organisations. Buttressing the above, Ogbemudia and Ezeani (2022) investigation of the quality of work-life of 608 academic staff in Nigeria found that distributive injustice, relating to pay disparity and promotion stagnation predicted burnout and attrition pointing to the fact that perceived absence of justice promoted cynicism and emotional detachment, and academics perceived their work as merely transactional.

Procedural Justice

Procedural justice is concerned with the fairness of the decision-making processes that lead to the allocation of organizational outcomes and covers a ‘perception of fairness of motives, methods, mechanisms, and processes used in determining outcome’ (Ghasi et al., 2020). Evaluations of the decision-making processes as transparent, consistent, unbiased, and ethical improve well-being at work, enabling employees to challenge decisions made by their organisations, thereby lending a voice that gives a sense of being heard and taken into consideration. The influence of procedural fairness often outweighs distributive fairness, and employees may accept unfavourable outcomes if they view the process that led to such outcomes as unbiased and transparent.

Ghasi et al. (2020) reported that in Tanzania, when older employees with longer working experience become subordinates to newer colleagues with longer formal training, they become dissatisfied. They added that management’s failure to provide clear promotion criteria after upgrading their qualifications promoted an atmosphere of perceived inequality in treatment. Adekeye et al. (2021) supported this by their finding that perceptions of distributive and procedural justice significantly predicted quality of work-life indicators such as job satisfaction, emotional stability, and work-life balance, noting that lecturers who perceived their workload allocation, promotion processes, and access to research funding as fair, reported lower levels of stress and greater psychological fulfillment.

Interpersonal Justice

Interpersonal justice is the subjective perception an employee holds about how coworkers and superiors treat them. It is marked by mutual respect, civility, and dignity. Ghasi et al. (2020) added that “derogatory judgements, deceptions, abusive actions, public criticism, and coercion result in decreased interpersonal justice. Findings showed that interactional justice predicts job satisfaction and performance of health professionals (Abekah-Nkrumah & Atinga, 2013). Ozer (2017) posited that, although procedural justice contributes more to employee engagement, interactional justice predicts work engagement, suggesting that when individuals feel respected, they reciprocate the respect and dignity they have been accorded.

Informational Justice

Informational justice refers to how information is disseminated within organisations. It stipulates that decisions made and outcomes decided must be conveyed in an adequate, honest, and timely manner. Representatives of organisations were to convey decisions respectfully and the reasons for the decisions, as well as procedures of implementing such decisions (Agari & Mgbemena, 2025; Colquitt, 2001), and nullify the use of derogatory judgements, deceptions, abusive actions, public criticism, and coercion in communicating and implementing decisions (Ghasi et al., 2020).

Self-Efficacy and Quality of Work-Life

Self-efficacy, one’s belief in one’s ability to manage responsibilities and handle challenges, enables individuals to shift from a victim’s mindset to a growth-oriented approach. In the academic context,

where work can be excessively stressful and challenging, and sometimes marred by bureaucratic delays or unfair performance evaluations, self-efficacy is imperative in helping academics perceive unpalatable outcomes not as defeats, but as challenges to be navigated successfully. Onyedibe and Yusuf (2023) reported that lecturers with higher self-efficacy were more likely to seek out opportunities for capacity building, apply for grants, and initiate research collaborations, thus expanding their professional influence and enhancing their perception of a meaningful work-life. 'Self-efficacy makes a difference not only to how people feel and act, but also to how they actively shape the meaning ascribed to situational characteristics (Bandura, 2000 in Nnadozie et al., 2015).

Studies have shown that self-efficacy contributes significantly to the quality of work-life. Bello and Okonkwo (2021) surveyed 354 academic staff members from five public universities across South-West Nigeria. They found a robust positive relationship between self-efficacy and multiple dimensions of work-life quality, including work satisfaction, emotional resilience, teaching engagement, and optimism for career advancement. Similarly, Ahmad (2022), found that self-efficacy is not only predictive of well-being but also of innovation and creativity. Furthermore, Egwuenu and Ehigie (2023) found in their study on the relationships between psychological capital and quality of work-life that self-efficacy contributed significantly to quality of work-life. However, Coelho et al. (2017) found no significant relationship between self-efficacy and QWL, concluding that promoting QWL does not rest solely on individual self-belief, as self-efficacy alone does not guarantee a good quality of work-life.

Moderating Role of Self-Efficacy Between Organizational Justice and quality of work-life

Self-efficacy has been found to moderate several organizational factors that promote employee wellbeing. Wang et al. (2021), in a study across universities in China, sampled 723 faculty members investigated how self-efficacy moderated the relationship between procedural justice and emotional exhaustion and reported that low self-efficacy individuals reported high levels of burnout when they perceived unfair institutional practices, while high self-efficacy individuals were largely buffered from the negative effects of unfair institutional practices with pronounced moderating effect in high-stakes settings such as promotion decisions and disciplinary actions.

Nnadozie et al. (2015) found a significant moderating effect of self-efficacy on the relationship between perceived occupational hazard and turnover intention. The negative interaction they found indicated that an increase in the interaction effect was associated with a decrease in turnover intention. This indicates that lower levels of self-efficacy are associated with higher turnover rates, and vice versa. However, the findings of Minibas-Poussard et al., (2023) showed that work self-efficacy and locus of control, could act as linkages between negative emotions and procedural justice but does not moderate the relationship between procedural justice and positive emotions positing that work self-efficacy buffers negative emotions when procedural justice is perceived as low and higher levels of perceived unfairness in procedures leading to organizational decisions, weakened self-efficacy's buffering effect leading to negative emotions and dissenting behaviours.

METHOD

The study adopted a survey research design. The study took place at the University of Delta, Agbor. The study population consisted of 560 academic staff members from the university.

Sampling and Sampling Technique

A sample size of 233, comprising male and female academics, representing 23.57%, was determined using the Taro Yamane formula. Sampling techniques were simple random and convenience sampling methods. Random sampling involved assigning numbers to the 12 faculties of the university from which five faculties with odd numbers were chosen, namely, the Faculties of Social Sciences, Computing, Management Sciences, Environmental Sciences, and Sciences. Thereafter, 233 academics of these faculties were chosen to participate in the study.

Instruments

The Organisational Justice Scale by Colquitt (2001) consisted of 20 items (distributive justice = 5; procedural justice = 6; and interactional justice = 9) scored on a 5-point Likert scale (strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, undecided = 3, agree = 4, strongly agree = 5). Similarly, the Quality of Work Life Scale by Walton (1973) consist 16 items scored on a 5-point Likert scale (strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, undecided = 3, agree = 4, strongly agree = 5) while the General Self-Efficacy Scale by Schwarzer & Jerusalem (1979) consisting of 10 items have the response format, (Exactly true = 4; Moderately true = 3; Hardly true = 2; Not at all true = 1). Questionnaires were used as designed by their authors. 250 questionnaires were distributed with a 100% return rate, but only 132 were properly filled and used for data analysis. Instruments were tested for reliability using the Cronbach alpha coefficient. The organizational justice scale achieved strong reliability with Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.93$, Walton's quality of work-life with Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.71$, and the General Self-Efficacy Scale with Cronbach's α values typically ranging between 0.82 and 0.88 (Olawale, 2021).

Ethical Considerations

Participation was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all academic staff involved in the study at the University of Delta, Agbor. Respondents were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, and no identifying information was collected or disclosed. They were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without incurring any penalty or consequence. The research instruments were devoid of items that could cause psychological harm or discomfort, and data were handled with strict adherence to privacy and data protection protocols.

Method of Data Analysis

The influence of organizational justice on QWL was tested using multiple regression analysis. The influence of self-efficacy on QWL was tested with simple linear regression analysis, while the moderating role of self-efficacy was examined using the Hayes Process Macro version 4.2.

Formulated hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1:

This hypothesis stated that there will be a significant influence of perceived organizational justice (distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice) on the quality of work-life among academics. This hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis, and the result is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of multiple regression analysis showing the influence of perceived organizational justice (distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice) on quality of work-life among academics.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient		
1	Predictors	<i>B</i>	Std. Error	β	<i>T</i>	<i>Sig</i>
Quality of Working Life	Constant	21.9	3.050		7.212	<.001
	Distributive Justice	.927	.140	.529	6.620	<.001
	Procedural Justice	-.182	.249	-.085	-.732	>.05
	Interp. Justice	.507	.285	.230	4.776	<.001
	Inform. Justice	.046	.206	.025	.225	>.05
	R			.619		
	R ²			.383		
	F (4, 127)			19.717		<.001

The result in Table 1 shows that perceived organizational justice (distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice) had a significant joint influence on quality of work-life among academics of the University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State [$R = .619$ and $R^2 = .383$, $F(4, 127) = 19.717$; $p < .001$]. Observation of the coefficient of determination [$R^2 = .383$] shows that all the dimensions of perceived organizational justice (distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice) significantly and jointly accounted for 38.3% of the variance observed in quality of working life. Based on this result, hypothesis one was confirmed.

Furthermore, the result showed that independently, distributive justice [$\beta = .529$, $t = 6.620$; $p < .001$] and interpersonal justice [$\beta = .230$, $t = 4.776$; $p < .001$] significantly influenced and contributed to the quality of working life among academics in University of Delta, Agbor whereas the contributions of procedural ($\beta = -.085$, $t = -.732$; $p > .05$) and informational justice ($\beta = .025$, $t =$

.225; $p > .05$) were not significant implying that they had no influence on quality of work-life of academics.

Hypothesis 2:

This hypothesis stated that there will be a significant influence of self-efficacy on the quality of work-life among academics in the University of Delta, Agbor. This hypothesis was tested using simple linear regression, and the result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of simple linear regression analysis showing the influence of self-efficacy on quality of life among academics in the University of Delta, Agbor

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	T	Sig
1		B	Std. Error	β		
Quality of Working Life	Constant	21.999	3.050		7.212	.001
	Self-Efficacy	.818	.182	.366	4.487	.001

The results in Table 2 indicate that self-efficacy has a significant influence on the quality of work-life among academics at the University of Delta, Agbor [$\beta = .366$, $t = 4.487$; $p < .001$]. The results further showed that academics with high levels of self-efficacy scored significantly higher on quality of work-life, and vice versa. Based on this result, hypothesis two was accepted.

Hypothesis 3:

Hypothesis 3 states that self-efficacy will significantly moderate the influence of perceived organizational justice on the quality of work-life among academics at the University of Delta, Agbor, and was tested using Hayes Process Macro. The result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of process macro showing the moderating role of self-efficacy on the influence of perceived organizational justice on quality of work-life among academics in the University of Delta, Agbor

Variable	R	R ²	F	Df	B	T	Sig	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	.615	.378	25.89	3, 128					
P. O. J					.462	2.39	<.05	.0798	.8450
Self-Efficacy					.269	2.13	<.05	.0806	2.26
Int 1 (X * M)					-.011	-.888	>.05	-.0352	.0134

**** $p < .001$: P.O.J. = Perceived Organizational Justice**

The result shown in Table 3 shows that self-efficacy did not significantly moderate the influence of perceived organizational justice on quality of work-life among academics in the University of Delta, Agbor [$R = .616$, $R^2 = .378$, $F(3, 128) = 25.89$, $Int_1(X*M)$ ($\beta = -.011$, $t = -.888$; $p > .05$]. This means that self-efficacy has no multiplier effect, such that it can boost the influence of perceived

organizational justice on quality of work-life among academics in the University of Delta, Agbor. Based on this result, hypothesis three was rejected.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study revealed that perceived organizational justice—specifically, distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice—significantly and jointly influenced the quality of work-life (QWL) among academic staff at the University of Delta, Agbor, and accounted for 38.3% of the variance in QWL. The findings of this study align with those of Alshurideh et al. (2021), who asserted that perceived justice has a greater impact on employees because they evaluate it as more valuable to their workplace well-being than monetary benefits.

Furthermore, the study demonstrated that distributive and interpersonal justice significantly contributed to the quality of work-life. This finding aligns partly with those of Adekeye et al. (2021). They found that distributive and procedural justice significantly predicted QWL indicators such as job satisfaction and emotional balance. The significant contribution of distributive justice to QWL demonstrated that employees' perceptions of how organizational resources were allocated mattered. Ekundayo and Ayodele (2019) added that perceiving responsibilities and benefits as shared equitably creates a sense of belonging that fosters commitment to the organization. These authors support Ogbemudia and Ezeani's (2022) assertion that disparities in distributive justice in areas of pay and promotion predict burnout and attrition, resulting in emotional detachment from their organisations and creating a transactional relationship rather than one based on mutual exchanges.

On the other hand, this study found that procedural justice did not make significant contributions to the quality of work-life. This may suggest that academic staff of the university viewed the decision-making processes of the institution as basically inconsequential to their quality of work-life, or have experienced procedural injustice for prolonged periods and have learned to respond adaptively to unfair situations. This finding is supported by those of Adekeye et al. (2021), they reported that academics who viewed the decision-making mechanisms of their universities as biased and flawed, suffered loss of identity, pride, and commitment to the institution but contrast that of Ozer (2017) who found procedural justice to contribute largely to employee engagement, highlighting that failure to set clear criteria for decisions, especially those relating to career advancement, led to dissatisfaction (Ghasi et al., 2020).

Moreover, the independent influence of interpersonal justice found in this study underlines the critical role of respectful and dignified treatment from supervisors and colleagues. It shows that the university's academics viewed being treated with dignity and respect as crucial. The findings of this study align with those of Ozer (2017), who found that interactional justice predicted work engagement, indicating that a system of mutual trust and respect promotes employee loyalty, in turn, quality of work-life. Additionally, Alshurideh et al. (2021) found that interactional fairness, particularly in interpersonal relations with department leadership, promotes emotional engagement, inclusion, and professional confidence. Abekah-Nkrumah & Atinga (2013) corroborated this finding by reporting that interactional justice predicts quality of work-life indicators, including job satisfaction and performance. In hierarchical organisations such as universities, workplace civility

creates an atmosphere of mutual respect and collegiality which buffers the effects of stress and other institutional deficiencies even in the absence of procedural transparency.

Furthermore, this study found that the contribution of informational justice to the quality of work-life was not significant. This may be attributed to a perceived lack of transparency or inconsistency in how policies are communicated or implemented. This suggests that information transparency does not weigh as much as fairness in reward distribution or interpersonal relations in influencing the overall quality of work-life. Agari and Mgbemena (2025) alluded to this by positing that when organisations communicate decisions and procedures for implementing such decisions clearly, respectfully, and on time, employees feel respected and appreciated. Thus, it is possible that academic staff members of the university perceived the end results, such as promotion and pay, as fair and cared less about the process by which such outcomes were achieved. It could also indicate a broader communication gap within the institution, where academics are not informed about policy decisions, performance expectations, or institutional changes.

The second hypothesis confirmed that self-efficacy has a significant influence on the quality of work-life among academic staff at the University of Delta, Agbor. Self-efficacy demonstrated a positive predictive influence on QWL, by contributing significantly. This result suggests that academics who have strong beliefs in their capability to manage work-related challenges experienced more favorable perceptions of their quality of work-life. This outcome is consistent with those of Egwuenu & Ehigie (2023). These authors found that self-efficacy significantly contributes to the quality of work-life. Also, Bello and Okonkwo (2021) opined that self-efficacy significantly predicted work satisfaction, emotional resilience, and teaching enthusiasm among academic staff and concluded that individuals with higher self-efficacy reported having better control of their professional responsibilities and were better equipped to balance academic duties with personal demands as well as influence how employees interpret and respond to their work environment.

Consequently, Ahmad (2022) noted that self-efficacy fosters innovation, creativity, and institutional commitment, even in suboptimal work conditions, suggesting that self-efficacy serves as a psychological buffer or adaptive mechanism that empowers academics to sustain motivation and satisfaction despite external stressors, such as bureaucratic inefficiencies or limited resources. This may explain why academics in institutions where perceptions of injustice are widespread can achieve success despite systemic limitations, such as delays in salaries and promotions, neglect, and a failure to implement agreements on the welfare of academics. Onyedibe and Yusuf (2023) noted that high self-efficacy academics sought opportunities for capacity development and collaborative ventures in a bid to enhance their professional identity and sense of purpose.

Furthermore, contrary to expectations and prior research, the third hypothesis revealed that self-efficacy did not significantly moderate the relationship between perceived organizational justice and quality of work-life among academic staff at the University of Delta, Agbor. The interaction term ($X*M$) in the regression model was non-significant [$\beta = -0.011$, $t = -0.888$, $p > .05$], indicating that, although both perceived justice and self-efficacy independently influence QWL, self-efficacy does not amplify or diminish the effect of justice perceptions on work-life outcomes in this academic context. This result suggests that the protective function of self-efficacy may not extend

to moderating systemic or structural experiences, such as organizational justice, at least in this institutional setting. This finding diverges from the study by Wang et al., (2021) that posited a moderating effect. They found that high self-efficacy buffered the emotional toll of perceived procedural injustice during high-stakes institutional decisions. It agrees with the findings of Minibas-Poussard et al. (2023) that self-efficacy and locus of control can shield one from negative emotions when work procedural justice is perceived as low. The absence of a moderation effect in this study may reflect contextual nuances—perhaps in the degree or form of injustice perceived by academic staff of the University of Delta.

Nonetheless, it could also suggest that cultural, environmental, or institutional factors within the University of Delta moderate the potency of self-efficacy. This is because in highly bureaucratic or politically influenced environments, self-efficacy might not translate into practicable control or outcomes, thereby limiting its potential as a moderator. This corroborates Preacher et al.'s (2007) assertion that the strength and direction of moderation effects are often conditional and are influenced by situational factors. In a similar vein, Judge et al. (2007) asserted that although self-efficacy predicts many positive work behaviors, its moderating influence may be suppressed in organizations where procedural irregularities are perceived as immutable or deeply entrenched.

Conclusion

The findings of this study underscore the critical role of fair reward systems and respectful interpersonal interactions in shaping how academic staff perceive their work experience. It indicates that, although procedural and informational justice are important in theory, they are often limited by environments where structural or cultural challenges prevail in practice. Additionally, the significant influence of self-efficacy on quality of work-life showed that academics who believed in their ability to handle job-related demands tended to experience greater satisfaction and a better perception of quality of work-life, despite the challenges inherent in academic roles.

Recommendations

1. University management should prioritize equitable distribution of rewards and responsibilities and conduct periodic reviews of reward structures and fairness and ensure transparency of procedures for decision-making, grievance redress, performance evaluation, and information dissemination. Regular feedback mechanisms should be employed to ensure policy fairness.
2. Universities should foster a culture of mutual respect, civility, and inclusive communication within departments. Heads of departments and senior administrators should model respectful leadership and be trained in emotional intelligence and conflict resolution.
3. Universities should design and implement capacity-building initiatives aimed at enhancing the confidence and competence of academic staff. These may include mentorship programs, leadership development workshops, and training on effective coping and time-management strategies.

Limitations of the Study

The major limitation of this study is its focus on the academic population of a single state university, which may make generalizing the findings to the larger academic population difficult. Since the research context is limited to academics from a single university, the results may reflect the peculiar characteristics or be policy-specific. Future research should incorporate multiple universities.

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