

# Workplace Equity and Employee Productivity in Water Bottling Firms in Port-Harcourt

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**Abstract:** *The study determined the relationship between workplace equity and employee productivity of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt. The study's objective was to empirically ascertain how workplace equity relates to the employee productivity of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt in terms of timely services, daily employee output, and service quality. The study adopted the exploratory survey research design. The study population comprised two hundred and seventeen (217) employees from twenty-seven (27) Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The researcher employed a census sampling technique, which made the sample the same as the population. The instrument for primary data was a questionnaire. Two hundred and seventeen (217) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the targeted respondents. Nonetheless, the researcher could retrieve one hundred and ninety-three (193) copies of them. The hypotheses were tested using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. The empirical analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between workplace equity and employee productivity in Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt in terms of timely services, daily employee output, and service quality. It was concluded in the study that the practice of workplace equity is a cure-all for low employee productivity, which is manifested, among other things, in the form of subpar service quality, lower daily production, and delayed employee services. The study recommended, among others, that management should ensure that employees are promoted as at when due and with special considerations when need be, as this is capable of promoting the productivity of their employees through service quality, among others.*

**Keywords:** Workplace Equity, Employee productivity, Timely Services, Daily Employee Output, and Service Quality.

## Background of Study

The concept of employee productivity has grown significantly in importance within corporations. According to research findings, consumers and wholesalers of table water in Rivers State frequently express their dissatisfaction with the persistently subpar packaging and contents, as well as the delayed services they have received from the Table Water Firms and other product and service organizations. Managerial and employee influences, particularly where they are so pronounced, have significantly influenced how productive employees are. Workplace equity is one managerial aspect that can have a significant impact on increasing employee productivity. The goal of equity in the workplace is to "level the playing field" and provide each employee with the specific tools they require to take advantage of opportunities within a particular firm (McConnell, 2021). Prioritizing salary fairness, ensuring diverse cross-level representation, and putting a workforce education program in place can all help to attain this goal. The caveat is that businesses cannot simply be egalitarian on paper if they want to enjoy the full rewards. They must invest time and energy into comprehending the requirements and difficulties of particular employee groups, then work to close those gaps while keeping their corporate objectives in line. Only then can businesses create an environment that is fair and inclusive, one that attracts varied talent and unleashes each employee's full potential. Promotional equity, pay equity, and information equity are the three dimensions in which workplace equity is dimensionalized by the concept of this work.

Promotional equity is described in this work as the practice of only promoting employees based on organizational standards and individual factors, not on personal preference or sentiment. This indicates that promotions are made on the basis of fairness rather than to favor or criticize a specific person or gender. Promotional equity is defined as the practice of awarding promotions in the workplace devoid of bias and in accordance with individual preferences (Rolleri, 2013). Promotional equity describes a scenario in which employees are only promoted in accordance with the open, well-defined promotion procedure and individual considerations, such as gender, ethnicity, race, disabilities, etc., rather than in accordance with personal motives or sentiments. Pay equity refers to the right of every employee to earn an equal wage for equally valuable work. Operationally, pay equity entails compensating workers equally for work that is identical to or similar to that which they produce. Equal remuneration for comparable work is what pay equity is all about. Equal pay for work of equal worth states that employees in two distinct jobs who equally contribute to an employer's operations should be paid equally for their labor (Abraham, 2019). A workplace that values equity makes sure that all of

its employees are paid fairly. In other words, no employee is paid less than what they deserve; instead, they pay their employees what is fair for them once all required factors have been taken into account. The pay scale at such a location of employment is largely transparent.

Information equity, as used in the notion of this work, is a situation in which workers who provide the same or equivalent services are given access to the same amount of information. When an individual or group of employees are purposefully denied access to information that they are legally entitled to, it becomes unfair. In a same manner, it is unfair to deny an employee access to information that they are legally entitled to. Information shouldn't be kept secret from any employee who has a right to it in a workplace where equity is allegedly practiced. Such has the potential to decrease worker productivity as well as other organizational productivity, performance, resilience, etc.

One of the main problems that the majority of firms today confront is the desire to increase staff productivity. Employee productivity, conceptually speaking, relates to an employee's effective provision of high-quality services in a timely manner as well as increased daily output within a given time frame. Employee productivity, according to Gummesson (2017), is an evaluation of an individual employee's or group of employees' effectiveness. In reality, productivity is a factor that has a direct impact on the revenue of the business. The output of an employee during a given time period can be used to measure productivity. The quantity of a product or service that an employee handles in a certain amount of time is often a good indicator of a worker's productivity (Piana, 2018). In this study, staff productivity is evaluated in terms of service quality, daily employee output, and on-time delivery of services.

The study makes the ambiguous claim that adopting workplace equity through pay equity, information equity, and promotional parity can increase employee productivity, however this claim has not yet been experimentally supported. Regarding this matter, the objective of this study is to empirically establish the relationship between employee productivity at Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State and workplace equity (dimensionalized in terms of promotional equity, pay equity, and information equity). Therefore, the empirical test that will be carried out later in this study will demonstrate whether workplace equity increases employee productivity or not.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The idea for this empirical study was inspired by the reality that many workplaces only understand the idea of workplace justice and not workplace equity. Some people who are aware only do it minimally; it is not at all sustainable. In many workplaces, employees are not given special consideration when it comes to promotions; those who provide services of equal value are not taken into account for the same level of pay simply because they work in different units or departments; and occasionally, information is purposefully withheld from some employees who have the same or a similar work profile as others who have been informed. Even when an employee exhibits excellent sportsmanship or corporate citizenship behavior, even when the organizational policy supports it, it doesn't appear that they are given extra consideration when it comes to promotions and pay. Some act out of sentiment or even hatred. According to this observation, Inuwa and Idris (2017) reported in a study that many firms in the Rivers State area are guilty of workplace injustice, which may be explained by the occasionally low levels of commitment and productivity they saw. An office should not be a location where disputes between management and employees are personalized to the point where they are allowed to influence how that individual is treated in public. Managers and employees shouldn't have let personal matters get in the way of their professional transactions, yet in some organizations, this seems to be the norm.

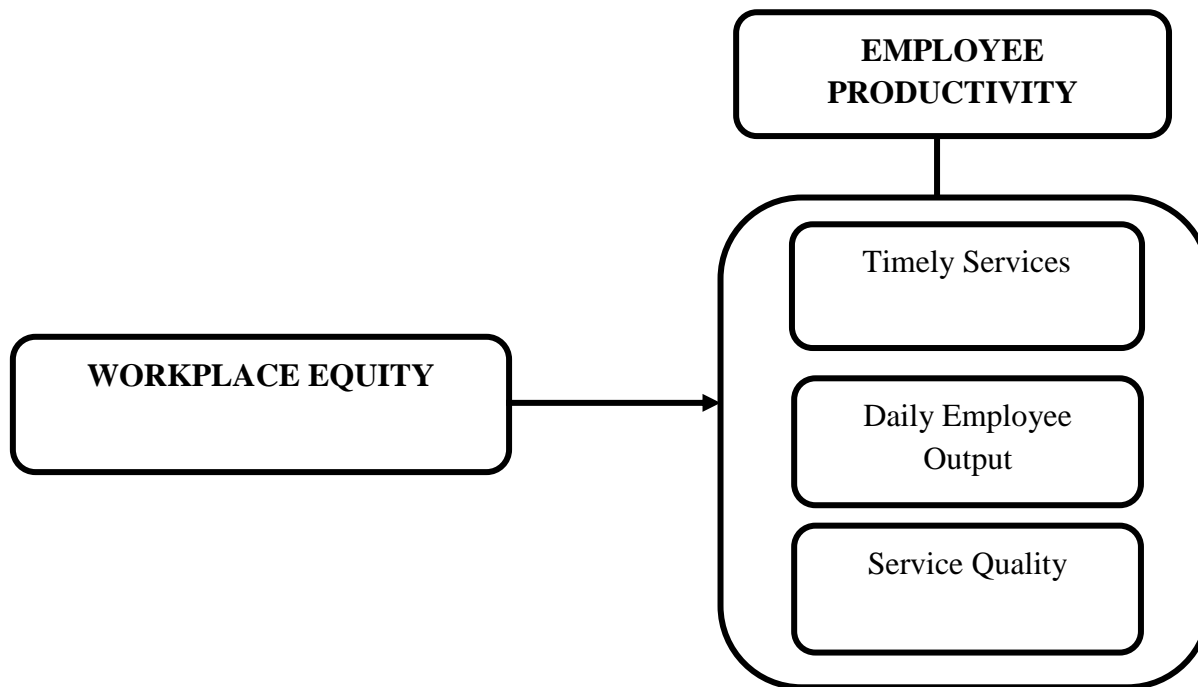
To make matters worse, some of these firms are suffering from a lack of active workplace equality adoption, particularly in the area of employee productivity. Particularly in Table Water Firms in Rivers State, there appears to have been a considerable decline in the caliber and promptness of the services provided by some of these organizations. Researchers' observations have revealed that certain customers are now dissatisfied with some companies' content and packaging quality as well as their supply timeliness. According to reports, employee daily output within the firms is declining. A threat that needs to be quickly addressed is the low quality of goods and services offered by businesses in Rivers, and even the entire nation, despite rising pricing (Inuwa & Idris, 2017). This is an emergency that needs immediate attention.

The dearth of research on the idea of workplace equity and employee productivity of Table Water Firms in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State is another problem that made this study necessary. There is no study on this in the currently available literature, both online and offline. Evidently, Inuwa and Idris (2017) investigated the impact of job equity on employee performance of non-academic staff of Bauchi State University, Gadau and found that there is positive and significant relationship between job equity and performance of non-academic staff of the University; Taghrif (2019) examined the indirect relationship between organizational justice and employees' affective organizational commitment via the mediating effect of job satisfaction and the study revealed that job satisfaction plays a mediating role between organizational justice and affective commitment; Edeh and Ugwu (2019) investigated the relationship between organizational justice and employee commitment of private secondary school teachers in Nigeria using survey design. It was found that organizational justice has positive significant

association with employee commitment. Additionally, Orishede and Bello (2019) examined the effect of organizational justice on employees' performance in selected Banks in Asaba. The finding shows that positive relationship exist between distributive justice and employees' performance, procedural justice and employees' performance and, interactive justice and employees' performance.

The vast majority of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt and the entire Rivers State gravely beg for research on workplace equity and employee productivity. The need for more study on workplace equity and worker productivity is therefore great. Therefore, our work aims to close this information gap as described.

Fig. 1.1: Relationship between workplace equity and employee productivity.



Source: Desk Research, 2022.

#### Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to determine the relationship between workplace equity and employee productivity of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt. The specific objectives of the study include the following:

1. To ascertain the relationship between workplace equity and timely services of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt.
2. To examine the relationship between workplace equity and daily employee output of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt.
3. To determine the relationship between workplace equity and service quality of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt.

#### Research Hypotheses

Based on the above objectives, the researcher formulated the below research hypotheses:

- Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between workplace equity and timely services of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between workplace equity and daily employee output of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt.
- Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between workplace equity and service quality of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt.

#### Theoretical Framework

The study's theoretical underpinning was the Social Exchange Theory. According to the Social Exchange Theory, social behavior or interpersonal interactions are the results of the exchange process (Blau, 1964). The exchange is meant to maximize gains and cut down on expenses. George Homans, a sociologist, proposed the idea that individuals balance the advantages and disadvantages of social interactions. People will end or depart a relationship when the risks outweigh the benefits. Although most partnerships involve some giving and receiving, this does not imply that the exchanges are always equal. According to social exchange, our decision to stay in a social relationship depends on how much we value its advantages and disadvantages. Feelings of duty between the parties are established when an exchange begins with one party providing a benefit to another and the recipient reciprocates, leading to a

succession of advantageous exchanges (Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2015). The social exchange theory aids in helping individuals comprehend relationships; it clarifies why certain relationships succeed while others fail, why we start and maintain particular connections, and it shows that communication and interaction are key factors influencing human interaction (Riley, 1993). It claims that humans base their actions on logical calculations intended to maximize their gain. Due to the fact that most individuals place a high value on acceptance, fidelity, financial security, love, and companionship, we may find it satisfying to be in a relationship with someone who raises our social status (Riley, 1993).

The exchange framework is predicated on fundamental beliefs about the character of people and the nature of relationships (Sabatelli & Shehan, 1993). The following are the theoretical presumptions relevant to this investigation:

1. When interacting with others, individuals seek to maximize profits for themselves while minimizing costs. Because it is not possible to know the actual rewards and costs involved in interacting with another before interactions occur, individuals guide their behavior through their expectations for rewards and costs.
2. Individuals are rational beings and, within the limitations of the information that they possess, they calculate rewards and costs and consider alternatives before acting.
3. The standards that individuals use to evaluate rewards and costs differ from person to person and can vary over time.
4. Social exchanges are characterized by inter-dependence, that is, the ability to obtain profits in a relationship is contingent on the ability to provide others with rewards.
5. Trust and commitment result from the emergent experiences of individuals within relationships and help to stabilize relationships over the longer term.
6. The dynamics of interaction with relationships and the stability of relationships over time result from the contrasting levels of attraction and dependence experienced by the participants in the relationship.

#### **Implication of Social Exchange Theory to the Study**

Taking all the suppositions into account, an organization and its employees have ideas about what they want to gain from working together, and such a connection (i.e., an employee and organization working together) will only last as long as both parties benefit from it. An organization will act fairly with the primary goal of encouraging workers to increase their performance and productivity by, among other things, service quality, everyday employee production, and prompt services. Because they will ultimately benefit from the organization, employees will be more committed to higher levels of production. When one of them (the organization or the workers) slacks off for an extended period of time, it will cause the other to do the same. This means that employees in all firms are productive in their work simply because of the gains they have already realized or anticipate achieving in the future, no matter how minor. No one or any organization is actually willing to commit to something that has not already benefited them or that they do not foresee as having any future benefits.

It is based on the theory's connection to workplace equity through promotional equity, pay equity, and information equity that it is used as the theoretical framework for this study. The fact that this theory explains and predicts that the level of individual and collective gains that occur over time as a result of workplace equity will determine whether such relationships will continue to be effective to the point of bringing about service quality, increased daily employee output, and timely services among the employees, individually and collectively, is another factor that made this theory appropriate to be adopted as the theoretical foundation of this study.

#### **Concept of Workplace Equity**

Equity means justice and equality in outcomes, not merely in terms of assistance and resources (Jackson, 2017). Employers seek to recognize and identify particular needs relating to demographics including ethnicity, race, gender and gender identity, impairments, and more through workplace equity. Decisions on inclusion initiatives and workplace diversity take into account the demands and difficulties faced by specific individuals. All employees should feel fully supported in order to achieve in an inclusive workplace where they are empowered to give their best efforts. Instead of only forming diverse teams and providing equal resources to all employees, it is more crucial to be able to listen and empathize with them. Building a culture of equity within a diverse workforce is obviously made more challenging by the need for c-suite leaders to make better decisions that are deliberate and intentional.

The goal of equity in the workplace is to "level the playing field" and provide each employee with the specific tools they require to take advantage of opportunities within a particular firm (McConnell, 2021). Prioritizing salary equity, ensuring diverse cross-level representation, and implementing a workforce education program are all ways to promote workplace equity. The caveat is that businesses cannot simply be egalitarian on paper if they want to enjoy the full rewards. They must invest time and energy into comprehending the requirements and difficulties of particular employee groups, then work to close those gaps while keeping their

corporate objectives in line. Only then can businesses create an environment that is fair and inclusive, one that draws talent from a variety of backgrounds and unleashes each employee's full potential.

The idea of workplace equity is to offer equal opportunity to all of your employees based on their unique needs. Although they sound similar, equity and equality are not the same thing. It is critical to comprehend these terms' differences in order to effectively plan for a more equitable workplace. Regardless of any pre-existing obstacles, equality aims to give all employees access to the same resources. This can relate to the equitable distribution of funds, assets, or opportunities among employees of comparable skill levels. In many ways, the idea of equality is advantageous and can influence workplace culture for the better. But it frequently ignores issues with underrepresentation or an unfair status quo.

In contrast to equality, equity does not provide everyone the same opportunities and resources. An organization will acknowledge equity when it acknowledges that each employee has varying access to resources and privileges. Additionally, those who have less access would require additional assistance in order to fairly benefit from chances within a particular organization. It might be challenging to establish equity at work. This is due to the fact that what constitutes fair and equal treatment is frequently arbitrary and specific to each employee's circumstances.

To that purpose, workplace equity is described in this work as the practice of fairness at a workplace that takes into account factors such as ethnicity, race, gender, and gender identity, as well as disability and other factors. Giving everyone in the workplace similar chances is only one aspect of workplace equality; another is taking into account each person's unique circumstances. An employee who is a nursing mother, for instance, cannot be regarded like a male employee or an employee who is not a nursing mother at a company like a table water company. A process known as "creating equality in the workplace" tries to ensure that every person in a company has an equal opportunity to succeed, regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, or country of origin (Mcconnell, 2021). By initially acknowledging this reality, a business can demonstrate equity in the workplace. The first step in fostering an egalitarian workplace is to create a secure setting that permits honest communication and comprehension (Michael, 2021).

### **Concept of Employee Productivity**

Employee productivity measures a worker's or a group of workers' effectiveness. In reality, productivity is a factor that has a direct impact on the revenue of the business (Gummesson, 2017; Sels *et al.*, 2016). An employee's production during a given time period can be used to measure productivity. A worker's productivity is often measured by the number of units of a specific good or service that they handle in a certain amount of time (Piana, 2018). Staff productivity has become a key goal for corporations because employee productivity is mostly what determines an organization's success (Cato & Gordon, 2014; Gummesson, 2017; Sharma & Sharma, 2014).

Based on the foregoing, a table water company will measure employee productivity as the quantity of water packs a particular employee or group of employees create in a given amount of time relative to the cost of the endeavor. When compared to the company's input, if the number of water packs is higher, the employee is considered productive. In this case, productivity is not possible. It can be difficult to compare the outcomes because many research have concentrated on one or two productivity measurement methods (Nollman, 2013). Overall, there is a lack of a reliable and consistent method to measure production. In addition to how much an employee is "mentally present" or productively functioning while on the job, Sharma and Sharma (2014) claim that employee productivity is reliant on how much time an employee spends physically present at work. Such problems should be addressed by businesses to guarantee high worker productivity. According to Ferreira and Du Plessis (2019), productivity can be measured as the amount of time an individual actively does the work for which they were hired in order to generate the intended results specified in their job description.

The advantages of staff productivity, which would result in organizational success, have been clearly described in prior literature. Sharma and Sharma (2014) assert that increased productivity leads to increased economic growth, increased profitability, and social advancement. Employees can only gain improved pay, working conditions, and employment possibilities through increasing productivity. The performance of an organization is significantly influenced by how the strategic vision and staff productivity are aligned, as illustrated by Cato and Gordon (2014). Employees would be inspired and motivated by this alignment to be more innovative, which would ultimately improve their performance effectiveness to meet organizational goals and objectives. (Obdulio, 2014; Morales *et al.*, 2016). Additionally, increased productivity typically boosts competitive advantage by lowering costs and improving output quality.

Employee productivity, conceptually speaking, relates to an employee's effective provision of high-quality services in a timely manner as well as increased daily output within a given time frame. It should be emphasized that one of the most crucial resources that affects an employee's productivity in any firm is the human resource. Since it is only human capital that makes a difference in

performance, institutions are encouraged to respect their people resource. A motivated, dedicated, and committed employee will perform better. Any firm should make an effort to maintain its human resources by making sure variables that influence productivity are continuously tracked. Technology, training, policies, possibilities for upward career advancement, and managerial attitude are a few examples of these aspects. If properly utilized, these productivity-enhancing variables inspire employees to work hard and give it their all. They encourage innovation and empower workers to accept accountability for their work. As a result, less time is lost on reworks, mishaps, and wastes. As a result, there is increased productivity, output, and quality. According to Koretz (2018), there are four productivity factors: “too much work, inadequate rewards and opportunities for advancement, poor supervision and employee involvement in decision-making”.

Employee creativity has a big impact on productivity since it allows employees to think of new, useful ideas for the company (Gong *et al.*, 2013). These creative concepts involve creating new methods or strategies for carrying out tasks or identifying goods or services that boost client pleasure (Nankervis, 2016; Nassazi, 2015). Reviewing current procedures or processes to improve institutional efficiency and effectiveness is another example of an innovative approach. When staff members use original thinking to enhance their workflow, the entire organization benefits (Nassazi, 2015). The measures of employee productivity in this study are timely services, daily employee output and service quality.

**Timely Services:** The term “timely services” refers to timely service delivery. Organizations can decrease customer attrition, boost client happiness, and realize operational efficiencies that lower costs and boost productivity by prioritizing timely service delivery. It is easier to deliver services at scale when you have a business infrastructure that regularly supports in-time performance because you can schedule tasks with a higher degree of confidence that they will be completed by the deadline (Michael, 2019). However, this timely, regular service delivery does not occur naturally. Planning, company-wide support, and protocols that direct corrective action when deadlines are missed are all necessary. Here is a look at how to make sure that your firm delivers services on time.

Giving consumers and other stakeholders support at the right time is referred to as providing timely services (Steven, 2017). An essential component of providing excellent customer service is promptly responding to requests from customers or stakeholders and resolving any problems they may have. Employee response to customer orders is necessary for timely services. While it is unacceptable to provide an explanation for missing a deadline or forgetting about a client during a busy period, mistakes do occur. The best course of action for an employee is to accept responsibility and attempt to address any outstanding customer inquiries.

To improve productivity, customer satisfaction, and growth, timely services conceptually relate to the delivery of services to customers and other stakeholders on a timely basis. Any company that considers delivery time a given is doomed to failure. Businesses that are thriving are typically those who are committed to promptly addressing organizational and customer demands. By doing this, the company and its clients are kept in good condition, and more clients are drawn in for purchases and other kinds of business. Therefore, a company that sells table water should position its staff so that they can meet organizational and customer demands in a timely manner.

**Daily Employee Output:** Daily employee output is another statistic employed in measuring employee productivity, as this work deems it necessary. When evaluating an employee’s productivity, companies like Table Water Firms and other companies don’t just consider the caliber of the job they do or the level of service they provide. In relation to the organization’s input, they also consider how many units of work a particular person or group of employees generate in a given day. Productivity and efficiency are mutually exclusive terms. After a day of work, an employee’s daily output is the total of all the services they provided to clients (Kirikal & Tallinna, 2016). Employees in a table water company must make sure to manufacture more units of water and make an effort to fulfill every customer’s water supply order throughout the day in order to enhance production in a day. Every day, many consumers make requests for water delivery. In order to make room for others, personnel must see to it that customers’ needs are satisfied as swiftly as possible while also upholding their loyalty. When this is accomplished, it demonstrates a considerable increase in everyday employee output.

The Table Water Firm computes the total number of customers attended to for each employee, among other employees, at the conclusion of each working day, much like other organizations of a similar nature. The overall output by employee, day, is considered to have improved when this is satisfying in comparison to what the firm has invested. This is considered to mean that the individual had a high level of productivity on that particular day when it is comparatively high, and vice versa. Additionally, this calculation provides the daily average of all employee output.

Operationally, the computation of all organizational services a worker provides in a given day is what is meant by daily employee output. Employees must continually think of new ways to increase daily water production while also providing improved customer service. As a result, both the company’s consumer base and the number of things produced each day will rise. Effective customer service is essential to establishing a good name and gaining their loyalty as well as that of rival businesses (Merrez, 2016). Keeping up a strong reputation for customer service is nearly as crucial as offering high-quality products and/or services. Customers are more

likely to voice their displeasure when they are dissatisfied with the level of customer care they receive or when they have a bad experience with a company than when they have a good one. Consumers who are upset often post critical reviews and warnings on online forums, scaring off any possible new customers. This is not to infer that these customers are evil; it's more likely that they are simply trying to protect others as they would want people to do for them. As a result, it's critical to give each and every customer a favorable customer service experience in order to prevent any negative associations with the company and to uphold its good reputation. This will undoubtedly increase the number of consumers who visit the banking hall and those who use the bank online each day.

**Service Quality:** The quality of service provided by an employee at a table water firm can be used, among other things, to gauge employee's productivity. Poor customer service cannot be considered productive in any way by an employee. The term "quality" refers to both the finished product's correctness or efficacy as well as how well the employee performed their duties. Accuracy, attractiveness, utility, or efficacy are examples of quality (Ben, 2017). The amount of customer satisfaction, as judged by customer surveys, and the number or percentage of errors permitted in the work unit are used to quantify quality. One factor used to assess employee productivity is service quality, which is the ability of the employee to create work that is totally acceptable, with minimal errors and loss of time or resources, and that can be relied upon to meet predetermined quality requirements. (Rouse, 2019).

Service quality is, operationally, the level to which the work performed by an employee fulfills organizational standards. Service quality is excellence or the absence of flaws, shortcomings, and notable differences in a task. It is caused by a stringent adherence to predetermined standards that result in product consistency in order to meet certain client or user requirements. Quality is described as "the sum of qualities and attributes of a product or service that bears its ability to satisfy expressed or implied needs" in the ISO 8402-1986 standard ([www.businessdictionary.com](http://www.businessdictionary.com)). According to De-Koeijer (2014), human resource management is essential for raising service standards for both employers and employees (in terms of employee well-being-happiness, health and trusting relationships). He contends that effective HRM (HRM systems, policies, and practices that promote productivity and quality) is essential to generating gains for both employees and enterprises. Work quality might also be defined as adequate completion in an organization to its highest or expected standard using resources in the best way feasible in less time and effort (Gareth, 2013).

When an employer and employee engage in the workplace, whether it be for a task or a service, the work either gains or loses value. Service quality is a crucial indicator of employee productivity. The worth of a work rises due to quality. It is clear that workers are starting to understand how crucial quality is to how businesses think and behave. In order to be productive, employees' work product and services must be of the needed caliber. Particularly, this applies to employees working for both public and private organizations. Another prerequisite for an organization's positive reputation is service excellence.

## Methodology

The study adopted the exploratory survey research design. The population of the study consisted of two hundred and seventeen (217) employees from twenty seven (27) Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The researcher employed census sampling technique, which made sample same as the population.

The instrument for primary data was a questionnaire. The design of the questionnaire was a four (4) point rating scale format with the following response options: Very Great Extent = 4, Great Extent = 3, Moderate Extent = 2, and Low Extent = 1. The instrument was face and content validated by the researcher's supervisor and two research experts in the Management Department of Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt, Rivers State. Cronbach's alpha via SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The least Cronbach's alpha level obtained was 0.82 which indicated a highly reliable coefficient. Based on Nunnally (1978) criterion of 0.70, reliability coefficient above 0.70 was considered as indicating good or reliable instruments.

Two hundred and seventeen (217) copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the targeted respondents. Nonetheless, the researcher was able to retrieve one hundred and ninety-three (193) copies of them. The test of hypotheses was done using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. The Spearman's (rho) correlation was used to analyze the relationship between independent and dependent variables at  $P < 0.05$  (two-tailed test). The formula is presented below:

$$r = 1 - \frac{6\sum d^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

Where:

$\Sigma$  = Summation.

n = number of pairs of data

d = difference between the ranking in each set of data.

Decision Rule: The tests of hypotheses were considered two tailed and was carried out at a 95% confidence interval.

**Results**

- Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between workplace equity and timely services of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between workplace equity and daily employee output of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt.
- Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between workplace equity and service quality of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt.

**Table 1: Correlations between Workplace Equity and Employee Productivity**

		Workplace Equity	Timely Services	Daily Employee Output	Service Quality	
Spearman's rho	Workplace Equity	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.548**	0.622**	0.536**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	250	250	250	250
	Timely Services	Correlation Coefficient	<b>0.548**</b>	1.000	0.785**	0.786**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	250	250	250	250
	Daily Employee Output	Correlation Coefficient	<b>0.622**</b>	.785**	1.000	0.646**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	250	250	250	250
	Service Quality	Correlation Coefficient	<b>0.536**</b>	0.786**	0.646**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	250	250	250	250

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

Source: SPSS Output

A significance level of 0.00 in column two of table 1 above indicates a r value of 0.548, which is lower than the alpha level of 0.05 chosen for the hypothesis linking workplace equity with timely services. The null hypothesis (Ho<sub>1</sub>), which asserts that there is no significant relationship between workplace equity and timely services of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt, was rejected since the significance value is less than the alpha level of 0.05. This suggests that there is a direct link between workplace equity and the timely services of Table Water Firms' services in Port Harcourt.

The r value in column three of table 1 above, which is less than the alpha level of 0.05 chosen for the hypothesis linking workplace equity and daily employee output, is 0.622 at a significance level of 0.00. The null hypothesis (Ho<sub>2</sub>), which asserts that there is no significant association between workplace equity and daily employee output of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt, was rejected since the significance value is less than the alpha level of 0.05. This suggests that workplace equity and daily employee output at Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt are strongly positively correlated.

The r value in column four of table 1 above, at a significance level of 0.00, is less than the 0.05 alpha threshold established for the hypothesis linking workplace equity and service quality. The null hypothesis (Ho<sub>3</sub>), according to which there is no significant association between workplace equity and service quality of Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt, was rejected since the significance value is less than the alpha level of 0.05. This suggests that workplace equity and service quality by Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt are strongly positively correlated. These findings demonstrate that workplace fairness boosts worker productivity across all enterprises, particularly in table water manufacturing firms.



## Summary of Findings

From the above empirical analysis, the following findings were made:

1. There is a direct link between workplace equity and the timely services of Table Water Firms' services in Port Harcourt.
2. Workplace equity and daily employee output at Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt are strongly positively correlated.
3. Workplace equity and service quality by Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt are strongly positively correlated.

## Discussion of Findings

### Workplace Equity and Timely Services

The tests of hypothesis one ( $H_{01}$ ) in table 1 revealed that there is a direct link between workplace equity and the timely services of Table Water Firms' services in Port Harcourt. Undoubtedly, giving workers in the same or similar job functions access to the same information at work results in, among other advantages, faster service delivery. When workers believe that information is not distributed fairly at work, there is a significant sense of marginalization. Information equity is one of the aspects that can have a significant impact on how employees behave and perform, according to Inuwa and Idris (2017). Employees who provide the same or similar services but do not have access to the same degree of information about their workplace are more likely to not provide timely services. For instance, it becomes very challenging for personnel in the supply unit of a Table Water Company to complete their supply with the same level of timeliness when they are purposefully denied access to the same amount of information. Or perhaps there is a sudden change in the corporate supply pattern, but a particular employee is purposefully kept in the dark about it. Such a circumstance has the potential to reduce that employee's productivity because he is prone to making mistakes that require him to go back and make the proper decision later. He will lose time doing all of these back and forth tasks, which will lower his output. Therefore, it is important for businesses to implement information equity in order to improve their employees' service responsiveness.

The issue of information equity in the workplace is also evident in the way that information is distributed among employees throughout time varies. An employee may occasionally be kept in the dark about important information at work with the intention of revealing it to him after his coworkers have been told. This might cause a lot of negative emotions, which decreases dedication and productivity, among other things. Therefore, organizations that want to have a workplace that is enhanced by timely service from employees should make sure that employees have access to information equity. This means making sure that all employees, regardless of level, are informed about workplace developments simultaneously, unless circumstances make it impossible.

### Workplace Equity and Daily Employee Output

The tests of hypothesis two ( $H_{02}$ ) in table 1 revealed that workplace equity and daily employee output at Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt are strongly positively correlated. Furthermore, as pay equity increases employee productivity per day, among other things, firms who embrace it do so for their own benefit as well. According to Edeh and Ugwu (2019), an employee's sense of marginalization has the potential to decrease their level of commitment and productivity. Equal remuneration for comparable work is what pay equity is all about. Equal pay for work of equal worth states that employees in two distinct jobs who equally contribute to an employer's operations should be paid equally for their labor (Abraham, 2019). The process of reducing employee compensation disparities based on race, gender, and other factors is known as pay equity (Lucid Content Team, 2020). Grading employees compensation based on their job roles and not based on the value their job roles provide to the organization does not portray justice in pay. When deciding how much an employee should be paid, consider the values that each person's job position contributes to the company.

In an organization like a Table Water Firm, the absence of equal payment has the potential to spark employee complaints, leading to friction at work. There is going to be some sense of mistreatment when an employee observes that he gets paid less than another employee who provides services to the company that are of same value. In reality, doing so will not only cause problems at work but also lessen the employee's commitment, performance, and output. Inequitable compensation can also make teams less cohesive. Employees who operate as a team in the same or different units but feel marginalized in the area of payment equity risk losing their bond. It is therefore advised that employees who provide services or products of equal value in a company be paid at the same rate, as this improves their output, dedication, performance, and teamwork, among other things.

### Workplace Equity and Daily Employee

The tests of hypothesis two ( $H_{03}$ ) in table 1 revealed that workplace equity and service quality by Table Water Firms in Port Harcourt are strongly positively correlated. This research suggests that fair promotion practices, wherein special considerations are given,

have a favorable impact on the caliber of services employees provide. Inuwa and Idris (2017) concluded that there is a positive and substantial association between work equity and the performance of the university's non-academic staff in a study on the impact of job equity on employee performance of non-academic employees at Bauchi State University, Gadau. Some companies have used promotional equity to increase employee loyalty, performance, and productivity. Promotional equity enables firms to treat all of their employees fairly and to give them additional consideration in addition to just promotions based on justice. Employee promotions are not enough, and unique instances should also be taken into consideration. According to Demir (2017), when employees know that their benefits, particularly promotional benefits, won't be withheld, they perform better at work and foster a spirit of healthy rivalry. Therefore, if an organization wants its employees to increase their productivity and other factors necessary for an organization to develop, it is vital to offer them fair promotion possibilities, among other things.

One of the powerful factors that can affect or improve the level of service provided by their employees is pay equity. Promotional equity describes a condition in which employees are exclusively promoted based on the open, well-defined promotion procedure and individual factors, such as gender, ethnicity, race, impairments, etc., and not on subjective considerations. In this view, Rollieri (2013) defined promotional equality as the process of promoting employees without discrimination or consideration of personal preferences. Sometimes at the workplace, those in charge of the affairs favor those they want to when it comes to promotions, without adhering to the criteria that entitle an employee to a promotion and without taking individual employees' circumstances into account.

Employees are more content to provide high-quality services and are hence more productive when fairness in promotions is present and truly understood. This suggests that companies like Table Water Firms can increase employee productivity through service quality and other factors by making sure that there is fair promotion. It makes sense that Taghrid (2019), citing research, asserted that when organizations simply promote based on organizational justice, it causes them to remain blind to some particular circumstances of considerations and instills emotions of unfairness in the hearts of their employees. During promotion processes, employees who have demonstrated a high level of organizational citizenship and dedication ought to receive special consideration. This shows that there is promotion equity in this type of workplace. According to this finding, staff productivity is increased by promotional equity, especially in terms of service quality.

## **Conclusions**

The research has empirically demonstrated a substantial relationship between employee productivity at Table Water Firms and workplace equity in terms of timely services, daily employee output and service quality. This suggests that implementing pay equity, information equity, and promotional equity in the workplace has the potential to significantly increase service delivery, everyday employee output, and timely services for their employees. Based on these findings, the study comes to the conclusion that the practice of workplace equity is a cure-all for low employee productivity, which is manifested, among other things, in the form of subpar service quality, lower daily production, and delayed employee services. Promotional equity, pay equity, and information equity, among others, should be heavily implemented by organizations that experience low staff productivity.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Management should adopt the practice of pay equity through their Human Resource department, thereby promoting increased daily output of their employees.
2. Management should ensure that employees are promoted as at when due and with special considerations when need be, as this is capable of promoting the productivity of their employees through service quality, among others.
3. Management should ensure that information such as letters, memos, notifications, and other administrative information are disseminated to all that are concerned and at the right time. This causes improvement on employee productivity through timely employee services.

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