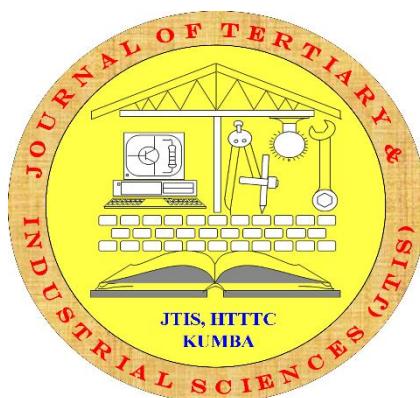


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Organisational Citizenship Behaviours in Cameroonian Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises: The Role of Perceptions of Interactional Justice

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Abstract

The main objective of this article is to demonstrate the influence of perceptions of interactional justice on employees' organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Cameroon. To this end, we have operationalised interactional justice into two dimensions (interpersonal justice and informational justice) in order to demonstrate its influence on the organisational citizenship of employees working in SMEs in Cameroon. To carry out our work, we conducted field data collection as part of the exploratory phase with eight employees in order to better contextualise the study and refine our hypotheses. Subsequently, a quantitative questionnaire survey was conducted with a sample of 200 employees from SMEs in Cameroon. Multiple linear regression was used to assess the effect of the various dimensions of interactional justice on organisational citizenship behaviours. The results obtained show that interactional justice has a positive influence on organisational citizenship behaviours. For all intents and purposes, we suggest that line managers improve the quality of their relationships with their subordinates by clearly defining the role of each member of the organisation, involving employees in decision-making and, finally, adopting fair and equitable behaviour in order to maintain a healthy and conducive atmosphere in the workplace.

Keywords: interactional justice, interpersonal justice, informational justice, organisational citizenship behaviour, SMEs.

1. Introduction

In an economic context marked by increased competition, budgetary constraints, a constant quest for performance and governance challenges, SMEs in Cameroon play a central role in economic growth and job creation. They account for approximately 98% of the formal economic sector in Cameroon, according to the Ministry of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, the Social Economy and Handicrafts (MINPMEESA, 2023). However, these enterprises face major challenges related to human resource management, particularly regarding staff retention, motivation, engagement and employee retention. Among the concepts used to understand and influence these

organisational dynamics, organisational justice more specifically, interactional justice – plays a crucial role (Engdaw and Kebede, 2024); Rbiaa and Dextras-Gauthier, 2025). This form of justice is based primarily on respect, dignity and consideration demonstrated when communicating organisational decisions. Unlike the distributive and procedural dimensions, it is particularly relevant in contexts characterised by close interpersonal relationships, such as those found in SMEs (Cropanzano and Greenberg, 1997). In the same vein, organisational citizenship behaviour defined as the set of discretionary behaviours not formally recognised by the reward system but which promote the smooth functioning of the organisation (Organ, 1988) has become a key indicator of organisational vitality.

In the specific context of SMEs in Cameroon, these behaviours therefore appear to be a strategic lever. They promote cohesion, solidarity and overall performance without requiring additional financial resources. According to Cormier (2008), organisational citizenship behaviour can enhance an organisation's ability to attract and retain employees, thereby improving organisational stability by reducing staff turnover. It has been observed that OCB plays an important role in individuals' ability to cope with changing work environments and positively impacts adaptive performance (Ji et al., 2025). Organisational citizenship therefore proves to be a key success factor, the consequences of which are beneficial not only to organisations but also to the individuals working within them, by contributing to well-being, improved working conditions and greater competitiveness. However, despite the fact that OCC appears to be a promising avenue to explore for organisational success and efficiency, its manifestations are not so common in practice. In 2017, a study conducted in the United States (Gallup) revealed that 70% of workers are unlikely to go the extra mile at work. In Cameroon too, research conducted by Ngo (2022) reveals that low productivity and the widespread slacking off or counterproductive behaviour of workers increase the risk of SME failure by 13%. The role of a leader is to ensure maximum performance by guiding, engaging and developing employees. This role is all the more crucial in SMEs, where the manager is at the heart of HRM, their strategy is intuitive, and there is a close relationship between manager and employees (Aboramadan et al., 2020). Poor HR management is likely to harm the business. In this context, the strategic HR management of through high-quality management, based on the manager's interactional justice, would be a suitable solution to encourage civic-minded behaviour and thus enhance an important dimension of performance, namely organisational citizenship behaviour. Aminatou's (2023) study on SMEs in Cameroon highlighted that ethical leadership particularly when manifested through respectful treatment, transparent communication and consideration for employees – contributes significantly to the emergence of organisational citizenship behaviour. Conversely, a lack of recognition and respect in hierarchical relationships leads to demotivation, disengagement and counterproductive behaviour (Ji et al., 2025; Rioux et al., 2020). These findings are particularly concerning in a context where nearly 60% of SMEs close before their fifth year of operation (INS, 2022), often due to internal governance issues. According to Buyukyilmaz and Kara (2025), studies linking our concepts mainly focus on large companies in developed countries, where human resource management practices are more formal than those in SMEs.

The value of our research lies in its focus on African SMEs, whose HRM practices are often characterised by a degree of flexibility and a subjective approach (Aboramadan et al., 2020). These practices, which are generally informal and sometimes perceived as arbitrary, differ markedly from those of large companies, which usually have a dedicated HR department. This is rarely the case in SMEs (Aboramadan et al., 2020). Thus, a healthy superior-subordinate relationship is essential for achieving organisational objectives and enhancing employees' individual performance within these structures, which are generally characterised by a flat hierarchy, informal communication, low employee involvement in decision-making, and non-existent professional relationships (Nizet and Pichault, 2000), as well as a low degree of procedural formalisation. The relational climate becomes a strategic lever for fostering behaviours beneficial to the organisation. However, research on organisational justice in African SMEs, and particularly in Cameroon, remains underdeveloped. More specifically, there is a lack of empirical study on how employees' perceived interactional justice influences their propensity to adopt CCOs. Yet, in an environment where financial incentives are often limited, these voluntary and unpaid behaviours can prove decisive for the survival and development of SMEs. Consequently, a central question arises: *what is the influence of interactional justice on OCB among employees of SMEs in Cameroon?* It is important and urgent to understand how interactional justice influences organisational citizenship behaviours.

To contribute to the development of business management scholarship, this paper aims to demonstrate the effect of the perception of interactional justice on organisational citizenship behaviour in SMEs in Cameroon, focusing on the managerial practices of supervisors towards their subordinates. The research question in this paper is to demonstrate the influence of interactional justice on the adoption of organisational citizenship behaviour by employees within SMEs in Cameroon.

To this end, we will present a review of the literature to introduce the various concepts discussed in this paper. Next, the study's methodology will be outlined. Finally, we will present the results, theoretical contributions, managerial implications, as well as the limitations and avenues for further research identified by our work.

2. Literature Review

In this section, we undertake a conceptual analysis of the notions of interactional justice and organisational citizenship behaviour. We build on the work of (Rbiaa and Dextras-Gauthier, 2025) and (Dirks and Ferrin, 2001), who highlight the existence of an ongoing debate regarding the effects of the various dimensions of organisational justice, and more specifically of interactional justice.

2.1. Interactional justice

All standard textbooks on organisational management acknowledge that an organisation cannot exist without its members. This statement highlights the central importance of individuals and work groups within the organisation, as well as the need for managers to demonstrate creativity by developing strategies capable, on the one hand, mobilise the positive energies of individuals who share values and needs that are sometimes very different, and, on the other hand, ensure social cohesion in order to maintain a healthy organisational climate conducive to the emergence of productive attitudes and behaviours (Kim and Beehr, 2020).

From this perspective, interactional justice emerges as a key concept, the dimensions and implications of which must be regarded as a *sine qua non* for the emergence of healthy, high-performing and sustainable organisations (Adamovic, 2023). It refers to the assessment of the interpersonal aspects of allocation decisions, particularly regarding the quality of communication and the explanations provided when decisions are implemented by line managers (Lee and Rhee, 2023). Thus, interactional justice is defined as employees' perception of their line manager's fairness, the quality of social relations, and the level of communication and transparency during the application of organisational procedures (Bies and Moag, 1986; Bies, 2001). This definition, widely used in the literature, serves primarily to assess the perception of fair or unfair treatment, as highlighted by (Paterson et al., 2002). It refers in particular to elements such as courtesy, honesty, respect for rights and decency in managerial behaviour. In the same line of reasoning, Folger and Skarlicki (1999), as well as Shah et al. (2022), emphasise social sensitivity and refer more specifically to the concepts of respect and dignity. Further research has expanded on this approach in the field of inter, proposing a two-dimensional conceptualisation of interactional justice that distinguishes between interpersonal justice and informational justice (Greenberg, 1993).

Interpersonal justice refers to the behaviours adopted by members of the organisation, colleagues or line managers in their interactions with others (Colquitt et al., 2001; Adamovic, 2023). As for informational justice, it corresponds to the perception of fairness regarding the quality, clarity and sincerity of the information and explanations provided during interpersonal exchanges (Ji et al., 2025). These two dimensions reflect the roles that a line manager should assume in their interpersonal relationships with their subordinates. Closely linked to the person conveying the information, interactional justice thus refers to the individual's perception of the degree of respect, consideration and dignity they receive from their superiors.

However, although the literature generally agrees on the importance of interactional justice in the quality of hierarchical relationships, empirical findings remain mixed regarding the extent of its effects on employees' attitudes and behaviours. Some studies highlight a direct and significant effect of interactional justice on positive behavioural variables such as organisational commitment or performance (Ji et al., 2025; Kim and Beehr, 2020). Other research, however, emphasises that this effect is highly dependent on the organisational and cultural context (Rahman and Karim, 2022).

Furthermore, although the distinction between interpersonal justice and informational justice is widely accepted, it remains a matter of debate. Some authors consider that these two dimensions act in a complementary manner (Colquitt, 2001), whilst others believe that informational justice plays a more decisive role in contexts where procedures are less formalised, particularly within SMEs (Ji et al., 2025). These differences suggest that the influence of interactional justice cannot be fully understood without a detailed consideration of the specific context in which it operates.

2.2. Organisational citizenship behaviour

Over the past thirty years, organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) has attracted growing interest in organisational behaviour research. According to Podsakoff et al. (2014), more than two thousand one hundred (2,100) publications have been produced on this subject, nearly half of which since 2010, demonstrating the relevance of this field.

According to Katz and Kahn (1966), organisations not only expect employees to carry out the tasks prescribed by their role, but also value behaviours that go beyond formal requirements, such as proactivity and innovation. However, this distinction between formal tasks and discretionary behaviours raises a central question: to what extent are these behaviours truly voluntary or implicitly expected by the organisation? Organ (1988), a pioneer of the CCO concept, defines these behaviours as “discretionary individual behaviours that are not directly or explicitly recognised by the formal reward system, and which contribute to the effective functioning of the organisation”. According to Kim and Beehr (2020), CCOs not only contribute to the organisation’s operational functioning but also ‘lubricate’ its social system. Niehoff and Moorman (1993) emphasise the voluntary and non-compulsory nature of CCOs. However, this conceptualisation has been criticised for its reliance on employees’ subjective perceptions, which limits the clarity of empirical measures.

In response to these criticisms, Organ (1997) broadened the definition of CCOs by considering them as “a contribution to maintaining and improving the social and psychological environment that supports performance in work tasks”, thereby highlighting the importance of context and social interactions.

Podsakoff et al. (1990) identify five categories of civic-minded behaviour: altruism, courtesy, conscientiousness, sportsmanship and civic virtue. Building on this typology, Williams and Anderson (1991) proposed a two-dimensional model distinguishing between organisation-oriented CCOs (CCO-O) and individual-oriented CCOs (CCO-I). This distinction remains widely used and has given rise to several measurement tools (Henderson et al., 2020). Other authors, such as Hui et al. (2004) and MacKenzie et al. (1998), favour a unidimensional approach, aggregating all facets of OCC into a single construct—an approach adopted in the present study. Despite these advances, the literature has several limitations. The voluntary nature of CCOs remains a matter of debate: some researchers point out that, in highly regulated contexts, behaviours that are initially discretionary become implicitly expected (Podsakoff et al., 2014). Furthermore, the majority of empirical studies focus on large formal organisations, mainly in developed countries (Podsakoff et al., 2014), which limits the generalisability of the results to SMEs, where the boundaries between formal tasks and discretionary behaviour are often blurred due to hierarchical proximity and the low level of formalisation of human resources practices (Ji et al., 2025).

The diversity of CCO models and classifications reveals a lack of theoretical consensus and highlights the importance of studying CCOs alongside other organisational variables, such as interpersonal and informational justice, to better understand the psychological and social mechanisms that underpin employee performance and wellbeing.

2.3. Theoretical contribution and development of hypotheses

We will begin here with the contribution of social exchange theory. Next, we will demonstrate the link between interpersonal justice and CCO, and finally the link between informational justice and CCO. The two links discussed here will form the basis of our research hypotheses.

2.3.1. Social exchange theory

Social exchange theory, formulated by Blau (1964), distinguishes between two types of exchange: economic exchange and social exchange. The former is based on clearly defined obligations, formalised by a contract, ensuring that each party fulfils its commitments. The second, by contrast, is based on more diffuse obligations, not codified in a contract, and fulfilled at the discretion of the parties (Blau, 1964). It is this second approach that is of particular interest to us in the context of this research, as it allows us to analyse behaviour beyond formal requirements. Organ (1990) emphasises that social exchange is based on 'good faith' and the mutual recognition of contributions, highlighting the relational and implicit dimension of these interactions. Applied to the superior-subordinate relationship, social exchange theory provides a relevant conceptual framework for explaining employees' positive attitudes and behaviours (Stinglhamber and Vanderberghe, 2003). Two fundamental principles characterise this exchange: firstly, when an individual renders a useful service to another, they create an implicit obligation in the latter; secondly, the latter feels morally bound to return a benefit in return.

This perspective helps to explain why employee-supervisor relationships influence the adoption of behaviours that benefit the organisation. The perception of social exchange, often measured by the quality of perceived support from the supervisor, reflects the employee's appreciation of the supervisor's willingness to care for their well-being and to value their contributions (Kollock and Sharatinski, 1998). These perceptions generate a sense of moral obligation, prompting the employee to 'repay' the favourable treatment received through positive behaviour, both towards the manager and towards the organisation (Wayne et al., 2002). Thus, social exchange theory provides a robust explanatory framework for analysing how the quality of hierarchical interactions can foster the adoption of organisational citizenship behaviours and other proactive attitudes in the workplace. It also helps to understand the implicit and relational dimension of exchanges, which is often overlooked in strictly contractual or formalised models.

2.3.2. Interpersonal Justice and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

Interpersonal justice is defined as the quality of the relationships that superiors maintain with their subordinates when making managerial decisions (Greenberg, 1993). It encompasses sincerity, respect, politeness, dignity and acts of courtesy, including refraining from making disparaging remarks about employees (Bagger et al., 2014). Meltz (1989) also considers justice to be the fair treatment of individuals in the workplace, without favouritism or discrimination. Obalade et al. (2024) emphasise that interpersonal justice generally has a positive effect on employee performance. However, some employees, motivated by a sense of professional duty or a desire to do a good job, may continue to carry out their tasks even in situations of injustice. Despite this, fair treatment has numerous positive effects on attitudes and behaviours, as shown by research in organisational behaviour (Cropanzano et al., 2007). This idea is illustrated by the interview with interviewee 7: *'I'll stay calm and carry on doing my job, as that's what I'm paid for, but I won't really feel like talking to him anymore. In fact, the atmosphere between us will be frosty.'* Lee and Rhee (2023) confirm that interpersonal justice positively influences employees' performance and civic behaviours, whilst Fall (2014) shows that it is linked to recognition by superiors and work motivation. These findings suggest that the quality of hierarchical interactions plays a decisive role in organisational behaviour.

The literature generally highlights a positive relationship between interactional justice and organisational citizenship behaviours (Engdaw and Kebede, 2024; Selvarajan et al., 2018). However, the strength and nature of this relationship vary across studies. Some research highlights interpersonal justice, due to its direct impact on employees' perceived respect and dignity (Bagger et al., 2014; Lee and Rhee, 2023), whilst others emphasise the importance of informational justice, particularly in contexts where access to information is limited or asymmetrical (Christian et al., 2011; Cropanzano et al., 2001). Based on these findings, we formulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Interpersonal justice positively influences organisational citizenship behaviour.

2.3.3. Informational Justice and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

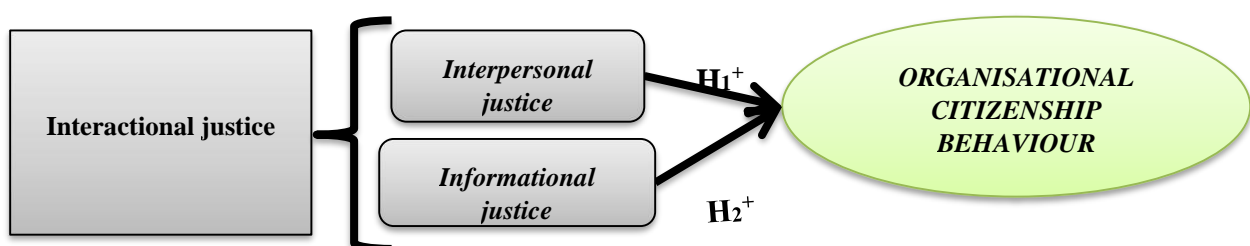
Informational justice refers to employees' perceptions of the quality, accuracy and transparency of the information provided by their superiors (Colquitt et al., 2001). Whilst most studies treat organisational justice in a generalised manner, some highlight that the informational dimension is a more relevant predictor of organisational citizenship behaviour than the distributive or procedural dimensions (Cropanzano et al., 2002). Ji et al. (2025) and, Changaranchola and Samantara (2024) explain that informational justice creates a sense of security among employees by providing them with clear information on the distribution of resources and decisions. Employees are therefore more inclined to adopt citizenship behaviours when managers communicate fairly and transparently. Christian et al. (2011) reinforce this idea by showing that information and feedback from managers are major antecedents of citizenship behaviours. The interview with Interviewee 8 illustrates this point: "What is fair about our manager is that she collaborates and is available to give us explanations, communicates with complete transparency and sometimes even gives me personal advice."

These results show that the relationship between informational justice and OCB depends heavily on the organisational context, management style and institutional framework. However, empirical studies focusing specifically on African SMEs, and particularly those in Cameroon, remain limited. This gap justifies an empirical examination of the influence of the informational dimension of justice on organisational citizenship behaviour in this specific context. Based on these arguments, we formulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Informational justice positively influences organisational citizenship behaviour.

In summary, the analysis of the theoretical relationship between the dimensions of interactional justice and OCB within SMEs in Cameroon was made possible by the formulation of two hypotheses in our study. Consequently, these hypotheses are represented in the following theoretical model:

Figure1: *Theoretical model of the study*



Source: Authors.

3. Methodology

This research follows a mixed-methods approach with a quantitative focus. It combines an exploratory qualitative phase and a confirmatory quantitative phase. The qualitative phase, conducted through semi-structured interviews with eight employees of Cameroonian SMEs, aimed to better contextualise the concepts under study, identify employees' perceptions of interactional justice, and refine the research hypotheses. The quantitative phase then enabled the formulated hypotheses to be empirically tested using a questionnaire administered to employees of SMEs in Cameroon. This sequential exploratory approach thus ensures a better contextualisation of the theoretical model within the specific context of Cameroonian SMEs. The use of a mixed-methods approach allows the interpretative richness of qualitative data to be combined with the statistical robustness of quantitative analyses. This methodological complementarity facilitates a better understanding of the phenomenon under study within the specific context of Cameroonian SMEs.

3.1. The exploratory study

Exploratory research offers a number of benefits. In particular, it helps us understand how employees perceive their superiors' fair attitudes.

Table 1: *The interview guide*

<p>Theme I: Awareness of the supervisor's interactional justice (informational justice, interpersonal justice) at work</p>

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you mean by fairness in the workplace? 2. How does the exchange of information between you and your line manager work? Compared to exchanges with others, do you find them fair? 3. What do you perceive as fair and what do you perceive as unfair in your relationship with your line manager? 4. Do you think that the fair treatment you receive from your line manager within the company can have an effect on your behaviour at work? |
|--|

<p>Theme II - Identifying organisational citizenship behaviours</p>
--

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- What do you mean by 'citizen behaviour' in the workplace? 2- When you are doing your job, do you carry out tasks that you are not obliged to do or that you feel you are not paid to do? Please explain. 3- Do you think there is a link between your manager's behaviour and your willingness to go the extra mile in your company? 4- How might your manager's poor behaviour affect your behaviour in the workplace? |
|---|

Source: authors

The aim of this initial study is to clarify the effects of attitudes deemed fair on the part of the manager and their repercussions on employees' organisational citizenship behaviours. Thus, the main objective of this study is to better understand the impact of interactional justice on citizenship behaviours and to revisit the workers' comments to

strengthen our theoretical framework. Based on semi-structured interviews conducted with eight (08) employees of SMEs in Cameroon, we were able to collect the following data, as suggested by the approach adopted in Table 1 of our interview guide. Two themes are addressed in this guide. Each interview lasted on average between 20 and 35 minutes. With the participants' consent, the discussions were recorded and then transcribed in full to facilitate data analysis using Nvivo version 25 software.

3.1.1. Results of the exploratory study

Analysis of the semi-structured interviews conducted with eight employees of Cameroonian SMEs highlights several aspects relating to the perception of interactional justice and its effects on organisational citizenship behaviour.

Firstly, employees primarily associate interpersonal justice with respect, consideration, being listened to, and the absence of humiliation in hierarchical relationships. Several respondents believe that a respectful manager fosters a positive working atmosphere and encourages employees to go the extra mile at work.

Secondly, informational justice is primarily perceived through the transparency of decisions, the availability of information and the quality of communication from the line manager. Employees particularly appreciate clear explanations regarding decisions taken within the organisation.

The results also show that a manager's behaviour directly influences employees' voluntary commitment. Employees who feel they are treated fairly report being more willing to help their colleagues, go the extra mile and adopt behaviours that benefit the organisation.

Conversely, behaviour perceived as unfair leads to a decline in motivation, psychological withdrawal and, at times, counterproductive behaviour.

These exploratory findings have helped to better contextualise the research hypotheses and confirm the relevance of the link between interactional justice and organisational citizenship behaviours in Cameroonian SMEs.

3.2. The quantitative study

This section focuses on the various techniques used for collecting quantitative data. Specifically, it aims to present the sample for this research, measure the variables discussed in the study, and finally apply the method for analysing the quantitative data collected.

The population for this research consists of all employees working in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Cameroon who have a direct hierarchical relationship with a superior. This choice is justified by the fact that perceptions of interactional justice and organisational citizenship behaviours develop primarily within the context of interactions between subordinates and their line managers.

SMEs were selected as the framework for analysis due to their significance within Cameroon's economic fabric and the managerial characteristics that define them, notably hierarchical proximity, the low level of formalisation of human resources practices, and the importance of interpersonal relationships.

3.2.1. Sampling

Determining a sample is often a complex and demanding step for the researcher. For this study, the target population consists mainly of employees working in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Cameroon, which account for over 98% of the national economy and contribute significantly to economic growth and job creation (National Institute of Statistics, 2023).

On this basis, a sample of 60 SMEs was selected, spread across three regions of the country (North, Centre and Littoral) and covering various sectors of activity (industry, commerce and services). Within these enterprises, 200 employees in subordinate positions with a direct line manager were selected to complete a questionnaire administered either face-to-face or via self-administration, using a reasoned nonprobabilistic approach.

The choice of these employees is justified by the fact that organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) is primarily exhibited by subordinates, regardless of whether their line manager is present or not. The geographical distribution of the sample is as follows: Douala (100 employees, 50% of the sample), Yaoundé (80 employees, 40%) and Garoua (20 employees, 10%), these cities having been selected due to their high concentration of SMEs. Of the 200 questionnaires distributed, 191 were returned and 185 deemed usable. The reasoned non-probability sampling method was chosen due to the absence of a comprehensive survey database of SME employees in Cameroon and constraints on access to businesses. This approach allows for the selection of employees in subordinate positions with a direct line manager, and who are therefore directly concerned by perceptions of interactional justice and the expression of CCOs. It is commonly used in management science research on SMEs, particularly in the African context characterised by a high degree of organisational informality and a scarcity of reliable data (Senol et al., 2025).

Finally, the regional distribution aims to ensure geographical and sectoral diversity whilst covering the areas where the bulk of SME activity in Cameroon is concentrated. The Littoral region, particularly Douala, constitutes the country's main economic hub and is home to a significant proportion of industrial, commercial and service SMEs. The Centre region, including Yaoundé, is home to numerous SMEs operating in the service, trade and administrative sectors. Finally, the North region allows for the inclusion of different managerial and socio-economic realities, thereby contributing to a more representative sample (INS, 2023).

3.2.2. Measurement of variables

For the purposes of this study, we have two categories of variables: a dependent or explained variable, which is organisational citizenship behaviour, and an independent or explanatory variable, which is interactional justice. We used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'Strongly disagree' to 'Strongly agree' to measure these two variables.

Interactional justice (the independent or explanatory variable) is measured using eight items developed by Colquitt (2001). This scale is multidimensional and subdivides interactional justice into two dimensions: interpersonal justice (four items) and informational justice (four items). An example of an item used to measure interactional justice is: "My manager ensures a good flow of information within my organisation". The two dimensions mentioned above were grouped together following a factor analysis of the

eight measurement items. al organisational citizenship behaviour (dependent or explained variable) is measured by 7 items proposed by Adamovic (2023). An example of an item is: "I voluntarily give my time to help colleagues who are experiencing difficulties in their work".

3.2.3. Quantitative data analysis method

We used SPSS version 25 to process our statistical data. Thus, a flat sort, reliability test and multiple regression were performed. After verifying the bivariate correlations of the factors derived from the PCA with communalities greater than 0.5 (which are acceptable), it appears that the Pearson correlation coefficients for all factors are below the threshold of 0.8 according to Lind et al. (2007), with significance levels of 0.000. We can therefore conclude that no bivariate correlation is excessive or problematic. The factors are thus homogeneous with one another. Consequently, we took all factors into account and performed the regression analysis. The linear model of the influence of interactional justice on organisational citizenship behaviour is presented as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y = organisational citizenship behaviour; X1 = interpersonal justice; X2 = informational justice; $\beta_0 \dots n$ = the constant; ε = error term.

4. Empirical Results and Discussion

In this section, we will present the various results of the statistical analyses and model validation, followed by a discussion of our research findings.

4.1. Results of statistical analyses and model validation

Our analyses were conducted on a sample of two hundred (200) employees, of whom 185 were truly usable, representing 80.1% men and 19.9% women. Our principal component analysis revealed, for the most part, three factors within the scope of our research. To be specific, these are primarily two so-called explanatory or independent factors: interpersonal justice and informational justice. In short, there is a single factor for the explained or dependent variable: organisational citizenship behaviours. Thus, Table 2 here presents the results of the reliability and validity analyses. The Principal Component Analysis carried out on interpersonal justice reveals the existence of a single factor axis that explains 58.713% of the initial variance. Thus, the items selected for this purpose are well represented. Furthermore, we also have a satisfactory internal consistency coefficient of approximately $\alpha = 0.861$. Following the factor analysis conducted on the items measuring the variable, informational justice explains 61.870% of the total variance and demonstrates good internal consistency among the items, as Cronbach's α is 0.891. Finally, our dependent variable (organisational citizenship behaviour) is measured by a set of 7 items. The results of this analysis indicate a KMO index of 0.856 (very good), a Bartlett's sphericity test that is highly significant at around 0.000, and a Cronbach's alpha of 0.858. These findings already support the conclusion that the factor analysis carried out is valid.

Table 2: Results of the reliability and validity analyses

Variable	KMO	Bartlett's test	Number of items retained	Cronbach's alpha
Interpersonal justice	0.825	0.000	4	0.861

Informational justice	0.777	0.000	4	0.891
Organisational citizenship behaviour	0.856	0.000	7	0.858

Source: our analyses

Following the factor and reliability analyses of the study variables, it is necessary to carry out a correlation test between these variables to ensure the continuity of the analysis. Table 3 summarises the findings of our bivariate correlation analysis regarding the factors derived from the principal component analysis. It shows that the Pearson correlation coefficients for all factors are below the 0.8 threshold with significance levels of 0.000, which is acceptable for model fit.

Table 3: Summary of correlations between variables

Study variables	(1)	(2)	(3)
Interpersonal justice (1)	1		
Informational justice (2)	,775**	1	
CCO (3)	,385**	,256**	1

** The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

Source: our analyses

Multiple linear regression is used in this study. The results of this regression are presented in Table 4. From Table 4, we can see that there is a strong correlation between the two dimensions of interactional justice and civic behaviour, given that the correlation coefficient of 0.623 is acceptable. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination between the two dimensions of interactional justice and citizenship behaviour is 0.345, which attests to the good quality of the model between the study's variables; in other words, this means that 34.5% of the variation in organisational citizenship behaviour is explained by the dimensions of interactional justice, namely interpersonal justice and informational justice. Finally, the robustness of the model is indicated by Fisher's F-statistic, which is 12.986 at a significance level of 0.000. Overall, the model is accepted as the relationship between the study's variables is significant. Furthermore, the beta coefficients () are positive, confirming the positive effect of interactional justice on organisational citizenship behaviour.

Table 4: Multiple regression of interpersonal and informational justice on organisational citizenship behaviours

Model	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Standard error			
			Beta		

(Constant)	3.881E-013	,086		,000	1.000
1 Interpersonal justice	,239	,146	,253	2,201	,002
Information justice	,145	,184	,130	2.031	,002
R = 0.623	Adjusted R² = 0.345		F = 12.986	P = 0.001	

Source: our analyses

With this in mind, based on the results obtained previously, we can express our model in the following mathematical form:

$$Y = 0.239X_1 + 0.145X_2$$

(2.201) (2.031)

Where: Y = Organisational citizenship behaviour

X_1 = Interpersonal justice

X_2 = Informational justice

(.) = Student's t-test.

The constant is statistically insignificant.

4.2. Discussion

The results of this study highlight that the two dimensions of interactional justice – namely interpersonal justice and informational justice – exert a positive and significant influence on employees' organisational citizenship behaviours within Cameroonian SMEs. These findings confirm the notion that the quality of interactions between line managers and subordinates is a key driver in the adoption of discretionary behaviours that benefit the organisation, particularly in contexts characterised by a low level of formalisation in human resource management practices.

These findings are consistent with the work of Aminatou (2023), which shows that hierarchical relationships based on respect, recognition and fair communication foster employee engagement and civic behaviour. Unlike many studies conducted in developed countries, where formal procedures and control systems strongly shape behaviour, African SMEs rely more heavily on close-knit social relationships, which gives interactional justice a decisive role in regulating organisational behaviour (Hamza, 2019). Furthermore, the results show that interpersonal justice has a more pronounced effect on organisational citizenship behaviour than informational justice. This predominance can be explained by the cultural and organisational specificities of Cameroonian SMEs, in which human relationships occupy a central place. Indeed, in a context where hierarchical relationships are highly personalised and where the manager often embodies organisational authority, displays of respect, dignity and consideration appear as powerful signals of social recognition (Lee and Rhee, 2023; Obalade et al., 2024). Employees therefore attach particular importance to the way they are treated on a day-to-day basis, sometimes more so than to the formal quality of the information received. These findings corroborate those of Lee and Rhee (2023), who highlight that, in Cameroonian industrial SMEs, interpersonal justice is a major predictor of performance and positive behaviours, particularly due to the flat hierarchy and the absence of formalised HR departments. They also align with the findings of Fall (2014) and Engdaw

and Kebede (2024), according to which the feeling of being treated fairly and with respect strengthens intrinsic motivation and encourages employees to adopt behaviours that go beyond their contractual obligations.

However, the significant influence of informational justice should not be underestimated. In an organisational environment characterised by information asymmetry and opaque decision-making, the transparency and clarity of explanations provided by line managers help to foster a climate of trust and psychological safety (Cropanzano et al., 2001; Christian et al., 2011). The findings thus confirm that fair and sincere communication is a key factor in the emergence of organisational citizenship behaviours, particularly when employees perceive that decisions affecting them are explained in an honest and understandable manner.

These findings are fully consistent with social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), according to which employees tend to reciprocate fair and respectful treatment received from their superiors through positive behaviour towards the organisation. In Cameroonian SMEs, where financial incentives are often limited, this logic of social exchange appears all the more decisive. Behaviours of organisational citizenship thus become a form of symbolic reward granted to a superior perceived as fair, respectful and transparent.

In summary, this study highlights that interactional justice, through its interpersonal and informational dimensions, constitutes a strategic managerial lever for Cameroonian SMEs. It also emphasises that, in this context, the quality of human relationships takes precedence over formal mechanisms, which gives interpersonal justice a particularly central role in the adoption of organisational citizenship behaviours.

5. Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to demonstrate the influence of interactional justice on employees' organisational citizenship behaviours in SMEs in Cameroon. Based on an empirical study conducted among 200 employees of Cameroonian SMEs, of whom 185 questionnaires were usable, the results show that interactional justice positively influences organisational citizenship behaviours through its two dimensions: interpersonal justice and informational justice. The analyses reveal, in particular, that interpersonal justice exerts a greater influence on employees' civic behaviours, thereby highlighting the importance of the quality of human relations in the context of Cameroonian SMEs.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to enriching the literature on organisational justice and organisational citizenship behaviour, particularly in the context of African SMEs, an area that has been little explored by previous research. Whilst research on organisational justice has long focused on the distributive and procedural dimensions, this study highlights the importance of interactional justice in employee-supervisor relationships. It shows that, in Cameroonian SMEs characterised by a low level of formalisation in human resource management practices, a flat hierarchy and the importance of interpersonal relationships, perceptions of justice play a decisive role in the adoption of behaviours that benefit the organisation.

This study also contributes to the application of social exchange theory in the context of Cameroonian SMEs. The results show that employees tend to reciprocate treatment perceived as fair, respectful and transparent through voluntary behaviours that benefit

the organisation. Thus, organisational citizenship behaviours appear as a form of social reciprocity resulting from hierarchical relationships perceived as equitable.

From a managerial perspective, the findings highlight the strategic importance of the quality of interpersonal relationships in employee engagement within Cameroonian SMEs. Managers and line supervisors would therefore benefit from promoting managerial practices based on respect, active listening, consideration for employees, transparency and fairness in day-to-day interactions. Improving internal communication, clarifying organisational decisions and involving employees in certain decision-making processes could help to strengthen the climate of trust and further encourage organisational citizenship behaviour. In a context where the financial resources of SMEs often remain limited, the quality of human relations thus constitutes an important strategic lever for improving employee engagement and organisational performance.

In light of the findings, several recommendations can be made to the managers of Cameroonian SMEs. It appears necessary to promote an organisational culture based on mutual respect, fairness and recognition of employees. Line managers should also ensure that internal communication mechanisms are improved to guarantee a clear, regular and transparent flow of information within the organisation. Furthermore, strengthening managers' interpersonal and managerial skills through training in leadership, organisational communication and human relations management could foster an organisational climate more conducive to the emergence of civic-minded behaviour.

Despite the theoretical and managerial contributions of this study, certain limitations must be highlighted. The first limitation lies in the fact that the study was conducted solely among employees of SMEs, which limits the generalisation of the results to other types of organisations, notably large enterprises and public administrations. The second limitation concerns the study sample, which is restricted to three regions of Cameroon (Littoral, Centre and North), even though these regions account for a large proportion of the country's economic activity. Furthermore, the use of a non-probabilistic purposive sampling method may also limit the scope of the findings.

Given these limitations, several avenues for future research can be explored. Future research could extend the study to all ten regions of Cameroon in order to improve the geographical and contextual representativeness of the findings. It would also be relevant to examine the relationship between interactional justice and organisational citizenship behaviours in other organisational contexts, such as large corporations, family businesses or public administrations. Furthermore, the inclusion of mediating or moderating variables such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, ethical leadership or organisational trust would deepen our understanding of the mechanisms underlying organisational citizenship behaviours. Finally, a longitudinal approach could provide a better understanding of how perceptions of interactional justice evolve and their effects on organisational behaviours over time.

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