



Beyond Collaboration: Decision-Making and Workplace Equity in Nigerian Multinational Companies

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study examines how distinct dimensions of organisational culture relate to workplace equity in multinational companies operating in Nigeria. The study separates diversity, equity and inclusion as an organisational outcome from equity to determine what cultural traits are most closely linked with employees' perceptions of fairness.

Design/methodology/approach: A cross-sectional survey was conducted among 363 employees of three multinational companies in Nigeria: MTN Nigeria, Total Nigeria and Mobil Nigeria. The data were analysed using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). Five organisational-culture dimensions—teamwork, ethical standards, communication style, decision-making and innovation drive—were examined as predictors of workplace equity.

Findings: All five dimensions demonstrated positive and statistically significant relationships with workplace equity ($p < .001$). Decision-making recorded the largest observed coefficient ($\beta = 0.612$; $R^2 = 0.374$), followed by innovation drive ($\beta = 0.543$; $R^2 = 0.295$), communication style ($\beta = 0.494$; $R^2 = 0.244$), ethical standards ($\beta = 0.467$; $R^2 = 0.218$) and teamwork ($\beta = 0.392$; $R^2 = 0.154$).

Originality/value: The study contributes to DEI research by separating equity from the larger DEI outcomes and showing that there are distinct observed relationships between specific cultural dimensions and workplace equity. It offers context-specific evidence from cross-border organisations in Nigeria and makes the decision-making the most observed cultural correlate of equity.

INTRODUCTION

Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) have emerged as key research and management issues in organisations, especially in multinational firms that work in different institutional and cultural settings. These ideas are closely linked, but are different organisational outcomes. Diversity is about representation and composition of social groups; Inclusion is about the participation of employees in organisational life through recognition and involvement; Equity is about fairness in regard to treatment, opportunities and outcomes within the organisation. Combining the three constructs into one DEI agenda can, therefore, mask the differences in how organisations establish equitable conditions at work. A growing body of scholarship has drawn links between DEI and organisational justice, highlighting the importance of exploring fairness in conjunction with representation and inclusion (Konrad & Bhardwaj, 2023).

This is especially important for equity in the workplace. A more diverse workforce is not guaranteed to be treated fairly or to offer similar opportunities within the organisation. Employees can be represented in an organisation when they are having differences about access to information, participation, recognition or advancement (Onyekwere, 2025). Organisational justice research thus focuses on fairness of organisational outcomes and the processes that lead to these outcomes Dada, et al., 2023). Viewing equity concerns alone can help to give a more accurate picture of whether organisational arrangements are supporting fair treatment and opportunity.

One source of these conditions may be organisational culture. Culture refers to shared values, norms and expectations which influence members of the organisation in their interactions and reactions to organisational practices (Olowookere, et al., 2021). Organisational culture is treated as a single attribute, however, this offers only limited explanation for how it might be related to workplace equity. Organisational life may be impacted by different cultural characteristics. Teamwork can influence collaboration and interpersonal relationships; ethical standards can set expectations for appropriate behaviour; communication style can impact on information sharing and transparency; decision-making can impact on participation and how organisational authority is exercised; and innovation drive can impact on opportunities for employees to contribute ideas and participate in organisational development. A multi-dimensional analysis of organisational culture is therefore required to establish if these characteristics are also linked to workplace equity.

The need for such differentiation is reflected in recent DEI scholarship. Research that has examined the relationship between DEI and organisational justice has suggested that more attention needs to be paid to the processes





by which organisations create and maintain fairness, rather than representation being the primary focus (Konrad & Bhardwaj, 2023; Hassan, 2025). Studies have grown in other areas such as DEI practices, leadership, organisational climate and employee outcomes, and that further differentiated conceptual and empirical approaches exist (Rice, et al., 2023; Adenike, et al., 2025). The development of these points implies that looking at equity as a separate outcome can be more precise than equating the cultural conditions of diversity and inclusion with equity.

The problem is especially important in multinational enterprises where international organizational principles have to be implemented in the various host-country contexts. Multinational firms are not constrained by institutional boundaries and can thus face institutional gaps between their business DEI goals and their local organisational implementation. Studies on equality, diversity and inclusion in multinational organisations identify the difficulties of implementing an organisation's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in the specific context of a national context (Farndale et al., 2023; Umeh, et al., 2023). The Nigerian multinational context thus offers a suitable context to explore whether particular organisational-cultural features are correlated with the experiences of workplace equity among employees.

Although there has been a growing body of research on organisational culture, DEI, and organizational justice, there is a gap in the literature on which dimensions of organizational culture are specifically linked to workplace equity. Research on equity tends to be part of the overall DEI agenda or focuses on organisational culture as an organisational attribute. These strategies offer little insight into whether specific cultural dimensions are related to equity in particular ways. This constraint is particularly important in multinational organizations doing business in Nigeria where empirical research on the cultural basis of workplace equity is relatively sparse. However, this study aims to address this gap by investigating the relationship between five dimensions of organisational culture (teamwork, ethical standards, communication style, decision making and innovation drive) and workplace equity among workers of selected multinational companies in Nigeria. Building on the competing value framework and the organisational justice theory, the study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on organisational culture and DEI. The study examines the organisational culture–equity relationship in a differentiated way, by exploring five cultural dimensions instead of the organisational culture as a single construct.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Theoretical Foundation

Competing Values Framework

This study draws on the Competing Values Framework (CVF) as its main theoretical underpinning for understanding organisational culture. The framework emerged from two orientations regarding the focus and flexibility of the organisation: clan and adhocracy, market and hierarchy (Aichouche et al., 2022). The framework suggests that organisations vary in their values placed on collaboration, adaptability, control and organisation focus. Later empirical studies have shown that these cultural arrangements are associated to organisational and employee outcomes, but in different ways in different contexts (Ogbari, et al., 2025; Tortorella et al., 2024).

The CVF is relevant to the present study because the five dimensions of organisational-culture that were investigated in the thesis are not a single homogenous condition, but rather, are different aspects of how an organisation works. They should not, however, be considered direct substitutes for the four CVF culture types. The CVF, on the other hand, offers a more general theoretical underpinning for the cultural contexts in which these organisational practices are set. Teamwork reflects collaborative and internally oriented characteristics, innovation drive reflects flexibility and adaptation, while communication and decision-making concern how organisational interaction and authority are enacted. Ethical standards refer to the expectations that are considered to be good or bad about the way an organisation acts. This distinction is important because the four CVF culture types are not directly tested in the empirical model. The study, however, focuses on whether each of the five culture dimensions operationalised in the thesis are related to workplace equity. The theoretical function of the CVF, therefore, is to explain why organisational culture is multidimensional and why the relationships between the various cultural features and organisational outcomes may differ.

Organisational Justice as the Equity Mechanism

The Organisational Justice perspective offers the complementary theory framework to understand the link between organisational culture and workplace equity. Organisational justice involves the employees' perceptions of fairness in organisational outcomes, procedures and interpersonal treatment. Recent studies also highlight the need to consider justice in different cultural and diverse work environments, which makes the view very relevant to DEI research (Adamovic, 2023; Edewor, et al., 2026). This perspective provides a direct theoretical connection to equity. Diversity is about the make-up of the workforce; inclusion is about who is included in the organisation and how they feel; equity is about how organisational processes and outcomes are perceived as fair. The organisational-justice literature thus offers a foundation for studying equity as an experience as opposed to a demographic state, as it is influenced by organisational practices and interactions. In recent years, a specific focus has been placed on the intersection between organisational justice and diversity and equity research (D&D) as an area of empirical





development that deserves further research (Konrad & Bhardwaj, 2023). The two theoretical perspectives consequently perform different functions in this study. CVF helps to explain the organisational-cultural context and Organisational Justice Theory helps to explain why certain cultural practices are linked to employees' experiences of fairness. This combination does not "genricize" the Equity relationships and gives a theoretical foundation to study the five cultural dimensions separately.

Equity as a Distinct DEI Outcome

Diversity, equity and inclusion are intertwined but separate concepts. Whereas diversity is about representation and inclusion is about participation and belonging, equity is about fairness in treatment, processes and opportunities in an organisation. The difference is important because progress in one area does not necessarily mean progress in the other areas. Organisational justice research shows that fairness is assessed by several aspects of an organisational experience, such as procedures, interpersonal treatment and outcomes (Adamovic, 2023). Equity and organisational justice are also more strongly connected, as is supported by recent DEI scholarship. According to Konrad and Bhardwaj (2023), organisations are systems that can increase or decrease inequality in the distribution of rewards, opportunities and treatment. Bosch (2024) also shows that workplace equity also requires competing notions of fairness and equality, merit and need, and that equity is not just about representation.

This distinction poses a particular empirical issue. When diversity, equity and inclusion are viewed only as an outcome, it is challenging to identify specific organisational practices that are linked to equity. This study tackles this issue by separating Equity from the larger DEI framework included in the thesis and exploring the connection between Equity and five aspects of organisational culture. The focus is not on whether organisational culture is important for overall DEI, but whether there is a link between workplace equity and specific cultural characteristics, and whether the relationships vary across these characteristics.

Organisational Culture and Workplace Equity

Organisational culture and equity can be seen as the interplay between cultural expectations and organisational justice. Culture influences norms by which employees interact with each other and through which organisational practices are enacted, and justice gives the evaluative basis by which employees interpret the practices as fair or unfair. This implies that the linkage between culture and equity will depend on the cultural mechanisms in an organisation.

This argument aligns with evidence that organisational culture has the potential to impact on employee experiences in multiple ways, not just a single general way. The CVF research, for instance, studies show that there are varying relationships between cultural configurations and employee and organisational outcomes (Zhao et al., 2024; Adenike, et al., 202). likewise, recent organisational-justice research points to the importance of justice in various work contexts and the cultural nature of justice as areas that need more empirical investigation (Adamovic, 2023). For the present study, the five cultural dimensions represent different organisational mechanisms through which employees may experience fairness. Teamwork involves interaction among people; ethical standards set expectations for behavior in the organisation; communication style affects the way information is shared; decision-making relates to choice and authority in the organisation; and innovation drive relates to support for new ideas and adaptation within the organisation. These dimensions thus offer a theoretically differentiated foundation for the analysis of workplace equity.

Teamwork and Workplace Equity

Teamwork concerns the extent to which employees cooperate, coordinate responsibilities and work collectively towards organisational objectives. In the CVF, collaborative traits are in general similar to clan orientation that focuses on internal integration, participation and relationships between members of the organization (Aichouche et al., 2022). Studies of organisational culture also indicate that organisational culture elements can have an impact on employee attitudes and experiences (Zhao et al., 2024; Ogbari, et al., 2026). Teamwork can contribute to equity from an organisational-justice point of view through opportunities for interaction, information sharing, and contribution. Interpersonal engagement and minimisation of barriers to participation may be achieved through collaborative working arrangements. But, team working is mostly about group interaction and is not necessarily about the allocation of organisational opportunities or resources. This makes it a theoretical possibility, but an empirical question, concerning its connection to equity. The present study therefore tests:

H1: *Teamwork has a significant positive relationship with workplace equity.*

Ethical Standards and Workplace Equity

Ethical standards define expectations of how organizations should behave and create norms for employee and management behaviour. They are relevant to equity because decisions and interactions within the organisation must be made and conducted under consistent standards and not arbitrary or discriminatory treatment.

Organisational justice theory provides a direct explanation for this relationship. Employees assess not just the outcomes of the organization but also if the processes and the interpersonal treatment of the outcomes is in line with the





accepted standards of fairness (Adamovic, 2023). Ethical standards can thus contribute to equity when they are clearly communicated and applied, and give employees a basis for assessing the behaviour of the organisation. The relationship must not, however, be limited to the presence of formal ethical policies. The theoretical proposition concerns the organisational culture of ethical standards measured in the study and whether employees' perceptions of those standards are associated with workplace equity. Accordingly:

H2: *Ethical standards have a significant positive relationship with workplace equity.*

Communication Style and Workplace Equity

Communication style refers to how information, expectations, decisions and feedback are communicated within the organisation. The relevance to equity is the way information is used by employees in the understanding of organisational processes. Employees might be better placed to understand the decisions made by the organisation and the rationale behind opportunities and responsibilities within the organisation if the information is communicated clearly and consistently.

This correlation is in line with the informational and interpersonal components of organisational justice. Along with outcomes and procedures, the way in which organisational processes are communicated and how employees are treated throughout the processes affects their assessment of fairness (Adamovic, 2023). Communication is not therefore to be considered as equity for itself. Rather, communication constitutes a cultural mechanism through which organisational processes become visible and interpretable to employees. The relevant empirical question is whether the type of communication style that is received in the organization has a positive relationship with workplace equity. The study therefore proposes:

H3: *Communication style has a significant positive relationship with workplace equity.*

Decision-Making and Workplace Equity

Decision making is especially important for equity as it shapes priorities, responsibilities and opportunities within organisations. The CVF categorises cultural orientations based on the level of flexibility and control that are highlighted in organisational processes (Aichouche et al., 2022; John, et al., 2025). One organisational setting in which these competing orientations can manifest themselves is in decision-making.

A more direct explanation is provided by Organisational Justice Theory. Procedural justice is one of the issues related to the fairness of the process used to make organisational decisions. Employees can consider decisions based on their outcomes as well as on the consistency, legality, and inclusiveness of the procedures. This is especially relevant to equity in terms of fairness in organisational processes and outcomes, which is a dimension of decision-making. The connection is thus theoretically separate from teamwork. Teamwork is about how employees work together, while decision making is about the way organisational decisions are taken. The latter may have a more direct connection with employees' perceptions of procedural fairness. The study consequently hypothesises:

H4: *Decision-making has a significant positive relationship with workplace equity.*

Innovation Drive and Workplace Equity

Innovation drive reflects an organisational orientation towards new ideas, experimentation, adaptation and improvement. In the CVF, these traits are generally similar to the adaptability and responsiveness to the outside world of adhocracy-oriented cultures (Edewor et al., 2026). Empirical studies have validated the relationship between adhocracy-oriented cultural traits and innovation related measures, thus justifying the relevance of flexibility-oriented culture to organisational behaviour (Zhao et al., 2024; Aichouche et al., 2022). The potential relationship with equity arises from the opportunities that innovation-oriented environments may provide for employee contribution and organisational voice. Opportunities for contribution may be less reliant on existing organisational practices when employees are encouraged to suggest ideas and to be involved in improvement. But innovation orientation does not necessarily mean access to such opportunities is equal. Its relationship with equity therefore requires empirical examination. Accordingly:

H5: *Innovation drive has a significant positive relationship with workplace equity.*



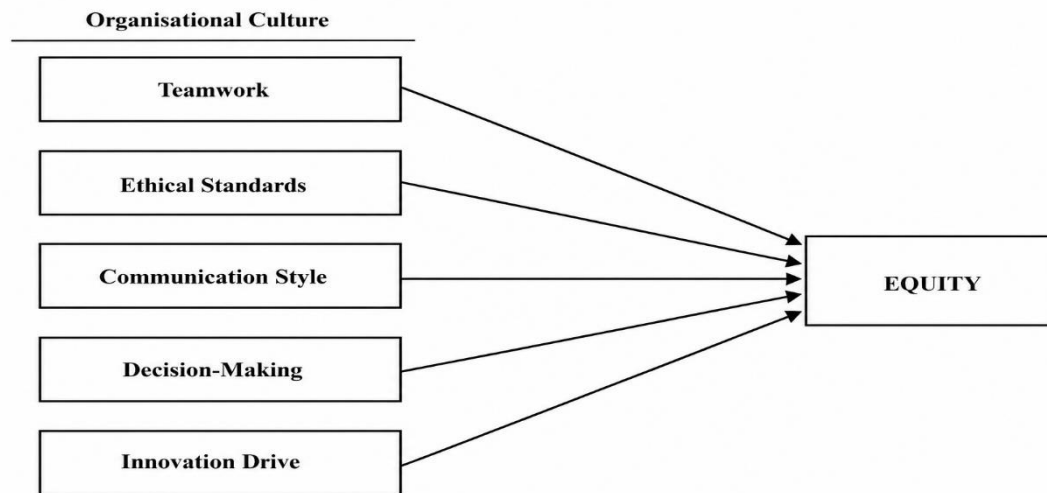


Figure 1. Conceptual model of organisational culture and workplace equity

Figure 1 presents the proposed relationships examined in the study, linking the five organisational-culture dimensions—teamwork, ethical standards, communication style, decision-making and innovation drive—to workplace equity. The model provides the structural basis for the hypotheses tested using PLS-SEM.

Literature Synthesis and Research Gap

The literature shows that organisational culture is multidimensional. The CVF shows that organisations vary in their focus on collaboration, flexibility, control, and organisational orientation; empirical evidence confirms that these cultural orientations can be related in different ways to organisational outcomes (Aichouche et al., 2022; Tortorella et al., 2024). Second, equity is essentially about fairness, which means that an organisational-justice perspective is important. Recent scholarship calls for greater integration between organisational justice and DEI research and identifies justice in diverse work environments as an important area for further investigation (Adamovic, 2023; Konrad & Bhardwaj, 2023). Third, these two literatures leave a more specific empirical question unanswered: How do different dimensions of organisational culture relate to workplace equity when studied in the same organisation? This question is especially significant to the multinational companies that are doing business in Nigeria as the global organisational practices are implemented in a given institutional context. The present study aims to fill this gap by studying five cultural dimensions as individual predictors of workplace equity: teamwork, ethical standards, communication style, decision-making, and innovation drive. This approach avoids treating organisational culture as a single undifferentiated construct and avoids assuming that all dimensions of DEI respond to identical organisational mechanisms.

METHOD

Research Design and Context

This study used a cross sectional quantitative survey design to explore the relationship between five dimensions of organisational culture and workplace equity. Data were collected from employees of three multinational companies operating in Nigeria: MTN Nigeria, Total Nigeria and Mobil Nigeria. The present article focuses on the quantitative component of the broader thesis because it specifically examines the five hypothesised relationships between organisational culture and workplace equity. The stages of the research process, from the research design to hypothesis testing, are presented as a flowchart in Figure 2.

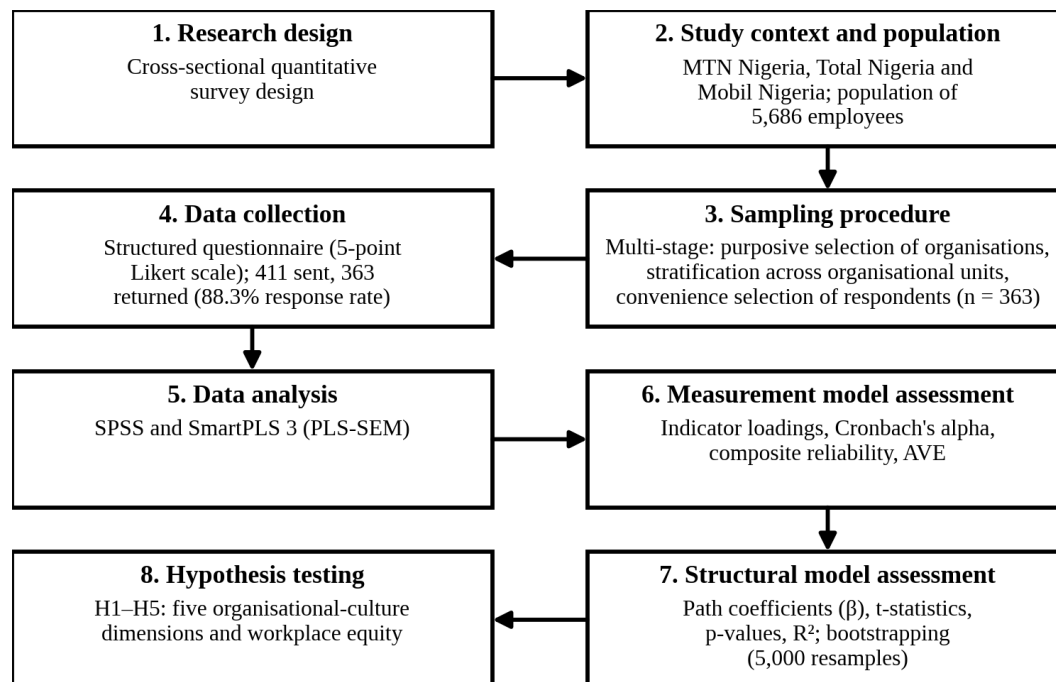


Figure 2. Flowchart of the research process

Population and Sample

The study population consisted of 5,686 employees in the three chosen organisations. A sample of 363 respondents was determined using the sample-size procedure adopted in the underlying study and proportionally allocated across MTN Nigeria (126), Total Nigeria (114) and Mobil Nigeria (123). A multi-stage sampling procedure was used, involving purposive selection of the organisations, stratification across organisational units and convenience selection of individual respondents. A total of 411 questionnaires were sent and 363 were returned, with a 88.3% response rate.

Measurement

Data were gathered by administering a structured questionnaire that comprised multi-item measures adapted from existing scales. All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Each of the five independent constructs (teamwork, ethical standards, communication style, decision making and innovation drive) was assessed on four items. Workplace equity, the dependent construct examined in this article, was also measured with four items.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS and SmartPLS 3. PLS-SEM was employed to estimate the relationships between the five organisational-culture dimensions and workplace equity. The measurement model was assessed using indicator loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE). The structural model was evaluated using path coefficients (β), t-statistics, p-values and coefficients of determination (R^2). Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was used to assess the significance of the structural relationships. $p < .05$ and $t > 1.96$ were used to determine statistical significance.

Measurement Quality

The construct reliability and convergent validity of the measurement were acceptable, as reported. The indicator loadings were above the minimum cut-off value that was used in the study, and composite reliability and AVE were within the recommended acceptance values. The Cronbach's alpha values for the five constructs of organisational culture ranged from 0.673 to 0.804, and for the Equity construct was 0.865. The study therefore proceeded to structural-model assessment using the validated constructs.

Methodological Boundaries

The cross-sectional design allows for statistical relationships to be evaluated but does not allow for causal relationships to be inferred. In addition, the sampling procedure limits the generalisability of the findings beyond the





sampled organisations. The underlying analysis did not include HTMT, f^2 or Q^2 diagnostics; consequently, these measures are not reported in this paper.

RESULTS

Measurement Model

The measurement model was assessed using indicator loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE). The findings show that the constructs had satisfactory internal consistency and convergent validity.

Table 1. Measurement Model: Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Items	Loading range	CR	AVE	Cronbach's α
Teamwork	4	0.640–0.804	0.820	0.535	0.727
Ethical standards	4	—	0.803	0.508	0.673
Communication style	4	—	0.884	0.656	0.826
Decision-making	4	0.778–0.872	0.858	0.603	0.780
Innovation drive	4	—	0.870	0.627	0.804
Equity	4	0.802–0.887	0.907–0.908	0.710–0.712	0.865

Note. Equity values vary marginally across the hypothesis-specific measurement models. The reported Equity indicators were EQ1 = 0.848, EQ2 = 0.802, EQ3 = 0.887 and EQ4 = 0.831.

Convergent validity and internal consistency were supported by all AVE values being greater than 0.50 and composite reliability values being greater than 0.70. The measurement properties of the Equity construct were excellent, with an AVE of 0.710-0.712, a CR of 0.907-0.908 and Cronbach's alpha of 0.865. Discriminant validity was also tested by comparing the squared correlation between constructs with the AVE of each construct. The reported results suggested discriminant validity as the AVE values were found to be higher than the squared correlations.

Structural Model and Hypothesis Testing

The structural model was assessed using path coefficients (β), bootstrapped t-statistics, p-values and coefficients of determination (R^2). Each of the five hypotheses relationships was positively and statistically significant at $p < .001$. The PLS-SEM model is obtained from SMARTPLS see table 2

Table 2. Structural Model Results for Workplace Equity

Hypothesis	Structural path	β	t	p	R^2	Decision
H1	Teamwork $\rightarrow$ Equity	0.392	5.390	$< .001$	0.154	Supported
H2	Ethical standards $\rightarrow$ Equity	0.467	6.710	$< .001$	0.218	Supported
H3	Communication style $\rightarrow$ Equity	0.494	6.961	$< .001$	0.244	Supported
H4	Decision-making $\rightarrow$ Equity	0.612	12.092	$< .001$	0.374	Supported
H5	Innovation drive $\rightarrow$ Equity	0.543	10.543	$< .001$	0.295	Supported

Note. t-statistics were obtained using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples.

The structural model provides consistent evidence across the five models. Decision-making produced the highest observed association with workplace equity ($\beta = 0.612$; $R^2 = 0.374$), followed by innovation drive ($\beta = 0.543$; $R^2 = 0.295$), communication style ($\beta = 0.494$; $R^2 = 0.244$), ethical standards ($\beta = 0.467$; $R^2 = 0.218$) and teamwork ($\beta = 0.392$; $R^2 = 0.154$). Table 2 present the structural model results.

Teamwork had a positive and statistically significant relationship with workplace equity ($\beta = 0.392$, $t = 5.390$, $p < .001$), explaining 15.4% of the variance in equity. It was thus decided that H1 should be supported. Ethical standards were also positively associated with workplace equity ($\beta = 0.467$, $t = 6.710$, $p < .001$), with the model explaining 21.8% of the variance in equity. H2 was supported. Communication style was significantly and positively correlated with workplace equity ($\beta = 0.494$, $t = 6.961$, $p < .001$) with 24.4% of the variance accounted for. H3 was supported. The path coefficient for the Decision-making factor was the highest ($\beta = 0.612$, $t = 12.092$, $p < .001$) and accounted for 37.4% of the variance in workplace equity. H4 was supported. The workplace equity construct was positively related to innovation drive ($\beta = 0.543$, $t = 10.543$, $p < .001$) accounting for 29.5% of the variance. The support of H5 was therefore given.

The observed coefficients were between 0.392 and 0.612 in the five relationships, the highest coefficient being for decision-making and the lowest for teamwork. The five relationships were all statistically significant, meaning that each of the cultural dimensions studied was positively related to workplace equity.

DISCUSSION

The findings confirm that all five organisational-culture dimensions were positively associated with workplace equity. The strength of the observed relationships differs by dimension, with the dimension of decision making having





the highest coefficient ($\beta = 0.612$), followed by the dimension of innovation drive ($\beta = 0.543$), the dimension of communication style ($\beta = 0.494$), the dimension of ethical standards ($\beta = 0.467$), and the dimension of teamwork ($\beta = 0.392$). In this discussion, therefore, organisational culture is not used as a blanket explanatory variable but rather the differentiated pattern is discussed with respect to its contribution to understanding workplace equity.

Decision-Making as the Most Prominent Cultural Correlate of Equity

The relationship with workplace equity was largest with decision making ($\beta = 0.612$, $p < .001$; $R^2 = 0.374$). This finding aligns with the organisational justice theory, as decision processes influence the involvement of employees in organisational processes and the use of authority. The importance of procedural fairness lies not just in the results of the organizational decisions, but also in how these decisions are made, and how they are perceived as fair (Adamovic, 2023). The finding also extends the Competing Values Framework by focusing on an organizational mechanism rather than on general cultural orientations. Decision-making has a more organisational nature and relates more to the exercise and distribution of organisational authority, than to dimensions primarily related to interpersonal interaction, and therefore is closer to procedural fairness than to interpersonal dimensions. Korkmaz et al. (2022) also highlight practices that facilitate employees' participation and contribution in organisational processes.

This understanding is especially important for multinational companies that are doing business in various institutional settings. The experience of authority and participation is not necessarily the same in local subsidiaries as it is globally. Farndale et al. (2023) identify the issues for multinational organisations in making the commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion a reality in different national contexts. The present finding indicates that the organisational process by which decision is made should be given special consideration when equity is the outcome being considered. However, the outcome should be interpreted carefully. Path coefficients were not formally compared by statistics, but the coefficient of 0.612 is the highest among the five path coefficients. Therefore, the finding reinforces the identification of decision-making as the strongest observed relationship in the estimated models, but does not confirm that the relationship has a higher level of statistical significance than all other cultural dimensions.

Innovation Drive and Equity

The second largest observed relationship with workplace equity was with the variable of innovation drive ($\beta = 0.543$, $p < .001$; $R^2 = 0.295$). This result reflects the flexible and adaptable orientation within the Competing Values Framework (Aichouche et al., 2022). This is also reflected in the findings of Tortorella et al. (2024) that show that cultural orientations have different relationships with organisational outcomes. Equity can be seen in the relationship of employee opportunity and participation. An environment that values innovation allows staff to suggest ideas, question current practices and help the organisation improve. These practices can provide more opportunities for employees to voice their ideas in the organisation. But the innovation orientation, alone, is not enough to ensure equitable access to such opportunities. The observed relationship thus suggests that a culture conducive to innovation is correlated with workplace equity, but does not imply that workplace equity is a direct result of innovation practices. This is important because innovation and equity are two conceptually distinct outcomes of the organisation. The contribution of the finding is not that innovation is an equity, but that a cultural orientation towards experimentation, contribution and adaptation is related to employees' perceptions of equitable organisational conditions.

Communication Style and Equity

Communication style was positively associated with workplace equity ($\beta = 0.494$, $p < .001$; $R^2 = 0.244$). This is in line with the informational and interpersonal aspects of organisational justice. Employees need to be able to access information regarding organisational procedures, expectations and decisions to assess their treatment and if organisational processes are applied consistently (Adamovic, 2023). Communication is thus a means of making organisational processes visible to the employees. Ambiguity in organisational decisions and opportunities may be reduced by clear and consistent communication, while inconsistent access to organisational information may make it more challenging to assess differences in treatment. The finding adds specificity to the culture–equity relationship. The results suggest that equity is not a given in an organisation with a generally supportive culture, but that the communication of information and organisational decisions is related to equity. This supports the broader argument that organisational culture should be examined through identifiable practices and processes rather than treated solely as an aggregate organisational attribute.

Ethical Standards and Equity

Ethical standards were positively associated with workplace equity ($\beta = 0.467$, $p < .001$; $R^2 = 0.218$). This relationship can be explained directly by organisational justice because the treatment of employees is assessed based on some extent of consistency, appropriateness and fairness (Adamovic, 2023). Ethical standards set expectations of behaviour for managers and employees and when applied consistently, can limit arbitrary treatment. The relevance of their role to equity is not just the presence of formal ethical policies, but how far ethical expectations influence organisational behaviour. The finding is consistent with the broader DEI literature's increasing attention to fairness as





an organisational process rather than solely a question of workforce composition. Konrad and Bhardwaj (2023) call for more connection between equity and organisational justice, especially in respect to the impact of organisational systems on opportunity and treatment. This study gives empirical evidence to support this line of reasoning in multinational organisations in Nigeria.

Teamwork and Equity

The coefficient of teamwork was positive and significant with workplace equity ($\beta = 0.392$, $p < .001$; $R^2 = 0.154$), but the smallest of the five cultural dimensions. The discovery lends weight to the hypothesis that the collaborative work environment is related to employees' perceptions of fair treatment.

Within the Competing Values Framework, teamwork reflects collaborative and internally oriented cultural characteristics (Aichouche et al., 2022). Working together can help to create opportunities for interaction, information sharing and opportunities for contribution, which can shape employees' experience of organisational treatment. The comparatively smaller coefficient is theoretically informative. The emphasis of teamwork is on how employees coordinate and interact with each other, while the emphasis of equity is on how opportunities, authority, and resources are distributed among employees within the organisation. This means that collaborative interaction could be part of an approach to creating equitable experiences, but not the only way to create equity. The finding should not be interpreted as a lack of importance for teamwork. Instead, it suggests that the relationship between its observed and equity is less than the relationships observed for the other four cultural dimensions in this sample. The study does not imply that the differences among the five coefficients are statistically significant, since formal coefficient-comparison tests were not performed.

Theoretical Contribution

The study offers three major theoretical contributions. First, it provides evidence against treating organisational culture as a homogeneous predictor of workplace equity. The five dimensions analyzed show varying degrees of connections that have been observed to equity. This aligns with the Competing Values Framework (Aichouche et al., 2022; Tortorella et al., 2024) approach to organisational culture that considers five dimensions of the culture to be empirical, and not necessarily the same as the four CVF types of culture. Second, the findings strengthen the connection between organisational culture and organisational justice. All cultural dimensions studied were linked to one of the five organizational mechanisms (collaboration, ethical conduct, communication, decision making or innovation) and all were positively related to equity. This reinforces the notion that equity is not a part of an overall DEI outcome but is considered as an organisational process that influences employees' perceptions of equity (Adamovic, 2023; Konrad & Bhardwaj, 2023). Third, the study provides context-based evidence from multinational organisations in Nigeria. There has been a lack of existing DEI scholarship in institutional contexts outside Sub-Saharan Africa, and multinational organisations are required to enact global organisational commitments in host-country contexts (Farndale et al., 2023). The current results thus offer empirical evidence of the relationship between different cultural features and equity in this context.

Practical Implications

The findings have implications for workplace-equity interventions in multinational organisations. To evaluate the involvement of employees in decision making, not just on a general level about inclusion. Some mechanisms that offer employees the opportunity to make meaningful contributions to decisions that are relevant to their organisation may be worthy of special attention because of the size of the decision-making–equity relationship observed. Second, ethical considerations should be integrated in the processes of equity strategies. Ethical expectations need to be clearly stated, communicated and applied to all employees and managerial levels. Third, the organisations need to increase the access to organisational information. Communication systems should enable workers to have information about organisational procedures, expectations and decisions that are relevant to their work and advancement. Fourth, organisations need to have avenues for employee participation and innovation. The innovative practices can provide further opportunities for employees to make suggestions on improvement and engage in organisational development. Finally, joint projects should be preserved, but they should not form the bulk of the equity approach. The observed pattern suggests that teamwork is related to equity, but the coefficient was lower compared to the other patterns observed for decision making, innovation drive, communication style and ethical standards. Equity interventions need to then include collaboration and focus on organisational processes, information and authority.

Collectively, the results suggest that there are several dimensions of organisational culture that are related to workplace equity, and that these dimensions do not have the same relationships with the outcome. The strongest observed relationship concerns decision-making, whereas teamwork has the smallest observed coefficient. The principal implication is therefore not that one cultural dimension can independently secure equity, but that equity-oriented organisational design requires attention to the specific cultural mechanisms through which participation, information, conduct, authority and employee contribution are organised.





CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between organisational culture and workplace equity among employees of multinational companies in Nigeria. The findings of the analysis show that the cultural dimensions analyzed in this study are significantly related to equity, suggesting empirical evidence of a differentiated culture–equity relationship in this study context. The key strength of the study is that it considers equity as a unique organisational outcome and explores its association with specific cultural dimensions, rather than embedding it in a broader DEI indicator. This approach provides a more precise basis for examining how organisational practices relate to employees' experiences of fairness.

Limitations and Suggestion for future studies

The findings should be interpreted within the boundaries of the research design. The cross-sectional design prevents assessment of temporal ordering and does not permit causal conclusions. Convenience sampling was also employed at the respondent level in the study for the employees of three multinational companies in Nigeria. Therefore, the results cannot be extrapolated to other similar organizational contexts without additional empirical evidence. Furthermore, the constructs were measured by self-reported measures among the employees. This means that the findings reflect employees' perceptions, not necessarily actual organisational practices or outcomes. Finally, the PLS-SEM assessment did not report HTMT, f^2 or Q^2 . Without these diagnostics, the validity of the discriminant validity, the predictor-specific effect contribution and the predictive relevance beyond the measures presented in the study can only be assessed to a limited degree.

Therefore, future research should use a longitudinal design to determine if changes in organisational culture come before changes in workplace equity. This would address the temporal limitation inherent in the present cross-sectional design. Replication in other multinational and domestic organisations in Nigeria and other African economies would yield evidence of the transferability of the observed relationships across organisational and national settings. Future studies should also use formal statistical comparisons of path coefficients to determine whether differences between the observed relationships are statistically significant. This is especially true when one cultural component gives rise to a higher coefficient than others. Further research could examine theory-driven mediating or moderating mechanisms linking organisational culture to equity. Such studies would build on the direct-effects model used here, and offer support for the processes by which specific cultural conditions could impact equity. Finally, subsequent PLS-SEM studies should report HTMT, f^2 and Q^2 alongside the measurement and structural statistics used in the present analysis. This would give a more complete measure of discriminant validity, effect sizes and predictive relevance.

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