

## **ASSESSING EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT AS A FUNCTION OF ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE IN NIGERIA'S CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION**

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### **Abstract**

The goal of any organisation is to make considerable progress regardless of the situations with which the business has to contend. Organisational goals can be achieved with the right commitment of employees to assigned responsibilities. Employee commitment, however depends on how employees view the relationship they share with the organisation. In this paper, attempt was made to understand how organisational justice impact the commitment and contributions of employees towards the achievement of organisational goals within Nigeria's Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), an organisation that administers business registration and incorporation in Nigeria. The study adopted quantitative method and used some theories among which are Equity and Expectancy theories. Using simple linear regression, each dimension of organisational justice (distributive, procedural and interactional) was linearly regressed on individual types of employees' commitment (affective, normative and continuance). Using age, sex and years of experience as control variables, it was found that organisational justice in its distributive form significantly impacts the level of commitment an employee exhibits as a result of being emotionally attached to an organisation. In the same way, it was observed that employees of Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) exhibited normative commitment, since they perceived fairness of processes within the organisation. On the other hand, a smooth relationship between CAC managers and associates (interactional justice) does not necessarily translate to continuance commitment. The study concluded that if organisations including CAC deliberately implement all dimensions of organisational justice they will achieve and retain employees' commitment, which is vital for organisational survival and sustainable growth. It was recommended that organisations should strive to get at least 85% of their employees into the affective commitment loop and retain them there through the deliberate implementation of all dimensions of organisational justice. Also, organisations are encouraged to ensure that the pre-selection process evaluates and considers prospective employees' vision and other socio-cultural factors to ensure that they align with the organisations' overall vision and strategy as they influence employees' commitment.

**Keywords:** Organisational justice, Fairness, Injustice, Employee commitment, Performance, Corporate affairs commission

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

In this era of globalisation with workplace diversity as a major outcome, the quality and level of employee commitment is inevitably an area of great interest to both employers of labour, employees and management scholars (Urbsiené, 2011). This is attributable to the relationship between reward and performance resulting from emphasis on performance-based pay structure by many organisations. This gave rise to the introduction and implementation of formal performance appraisal systems and increasing employee consciousness of fairness in terms of input-outcomes ratio (Rowland and Hall, 2012). Since every employee aims at getting the best in terms

of remuneration, commitment and performance must improve in line with set parameters or targets so that performance-appraisal turns in their favour.

Employees sometimes perceive reward as not commensurate with their contributions. This is inadvertently a potential source of dissatisfaction and conflict as employees perceive injustice at play. In this circumstance, employers need to deliberately seek better and sustainable ways of administering outcomes in an equitable and sustainable manner that is mutually beneficial through the proactive use of the templates of organisational justice. Organisational justice and employee commitment are two areas that are increasingly gaining prominence and acceptability locally, especially as Nigerian employees are becoming more aware of their rights and privileges and seek implementation of same. It is for this reason that this study critically examined the subject with a view to exploring how to improve the deliberate use of organisational justice to improve and sustain employee commitment and performance thereby facilitating the achievement of profitability and organisational goals (Elanain, 2009). Organisational justice, defined as employees' perception of fairness regarding decisions of the organisation in respect of employees' welfare is posited to be a significant predictor of employee attitude and performance, which in turn influence work-related results such as commitment and satisfaction (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter and Ng, 2001). The result of this is either failure or success of the organisation (Ikramullah, Shah, Ul-Hassan, Zamman, and Khan, 2011).

Organisational justice and employee commitment can be classified as two areas that work together to create, promote and maintain peaceful as well as mutually beneficial relationship which are desired in any human association; be it small or large such as friends, family, community, work or religious organisations. Little wonder, we see governments, labour organisations, civil society groups as well as international and local organisations all showing keen interest in issues that spell injustice. This is because justice is meant to be the antidote for potential and actual conflict. Nevertheless, the result of campaigns against injustice is not really reflecting on the work environment as organisations seemingly do not get the desired level of commitment expected of their employees. This implies that most organisation still have to tackle performance and productivity issues as well as organisational harmony and sustained progress as conflicts of varying degrees with attendant ills are present in work organisations.

## **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The desire to achieve and sustain fairness is common to man everywhere; but sadly it is observed that despite man's effort to seek, achieve and sustainably retain fairness, partial success seem to have been recorded thus far. This is a worrisome global problem that seems to defy absolute solution, especially as perceived injustice is a potential cause of dissatisfaction and conflict.

With the ever-increasing competition in the global business environment and expansion of business organisations comes the need to engage high quality workforce from different backgrounds (Nkomo and Cox, 1996) with expertise in different areas. This scenario gives rise to the phenomenon of workplace diversity that comes with various opportunities and challenges. Positive opportunities of workplace diversity include increased productivity, better problem-solving and managerial skills (Cox, 1993; Cox and Blake, 1991). On the other hand, different shades of culture-provoked conflicts (Ntuli, 2012) may mar the benefits workplace diversity if not properly managed. For an organisation to be successful in the achievement of set goals, these opportunities and challenges must be properly managed to obtain maximum benefits through the templates of organisational justice, which is seen to pervade the entire fabric of any organisation. It is pertinent to state that while the purpose of fairness in an organisation is to achieve common progress, some employees fail to appreciate this role either as a result of ignorance, negligence or outright willful ignorance. This is a problem.

Adhering to the principles of organisational justice is beneficial as they enhance employee commitment, nib conflict in the bud and successfully manage all diversity related matters, leading to workplace harmony and other positive work-related outcomes such as achievement of organisational goals, employee motivation and retention. Conversely, neglecting the templates of organisational justice result in many adverse situations that revolve around deviant behaviours from employees that perceive injustice (Ambrose, Seabright, and Schminke, 2002). This is another problem area necessitating the study especially as it seems that some employers have either not identified or successfully applied the templates of organisational justice. Hence, employee dissatisfaction continues and even assumes unimaginable dimensions because commitment is either low or non-existent.

## 1.2 Objectives of the Study

Broadly speaking, this study sought to understand the extent to which employees' commitment and contribution towards the achievement of organisational goals is affected by employees' organisational justice perception.

The specific objectives of the study are to:-

1. Examine how distributive justice influences the commitment shown by employees.
2. Ascertain how employees' commitment is impacted by procedural justice.
3. Investigate the influence of interactional justice in promoting employees' commitment in the workplace.

## 1.3 Research Questions

Much resource is being expended by organisations to ensure justice and fairness in order to achieve employee commitment. Yet, violence and threats of conflict continues. This naturally raises the questions that this study seeks to address:-

1. How does distributive justice influence employees' affective commitment?
2. What is the role of procedural justice in employees' normative commitment?
3. How does interactional justice promote employees' continuance commitment?

## 1.4 Research Hypotheses

From the specific objectives already mentioned, this study will verify the hypotheses stated below;

Ho1: Distributive justice does not significantly relate to affective aspects of employee commitment.

Ho2: Procedural justice does not significantly relate to normative aspects of employee commitment

Ho3: Interactional justice does not significantly relate to continuance aspects of employee commitment



Figure 1: Conceptual model for organisational justice and employee commitment<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Employees' commitment comprises of normative, affective, and continuance which are used as explanatory variables in this study

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study adds up to literature in the field of human resource management. Organisational justice is an uncommon phenomenon in some organisations in developing countries. Many studies have been carried out satisfaction, performance, motivation, etc., but the behavioural construct considered in this study and situations is unique. Employers will gain better knowledge from this study as it will enlighten them on the dynamics of a potent management tool called organisational justice and how to apply same for mutual benefit. Additionally, employers will understand better, the antecedents and dynamics of human behaviour and how to deal with it. Employees will better appreciate the significance and operations of fairness in the workplace. Thus, they will know their boundaries and be armed with knowledge of how to navigate and achieve desired goals. Stakeholders outside the workplace will also benefit. Precisely, researchers and scholars will have a reference resource with local application; while government and regulatory bodies will have better understanding of the ideals of organisational justice and human behaviour. This will equip them in the discharge of their policy-related functions within the constantly evolving business environment.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Conceptual Framework**

The origin of the theory of organisational justice is traceable to “Equity theory of Adam (1965)” that is founded upon the principle of social exchange which sees relationships as a give and take affair with parties performing their allotted parts and receiving something in return. Applying this concept to workplace relationship, the employee provides service with required skills being displayed, while the employer provides remuneration for service received. This make the employee-employer relationship transactional (Normala, 2010).

Organisational justice studies shows how employees view and react to perceived unfairness in work organisations. Hence, it can be asserted that organisational justice is examined from the perspective of the employees who assess the actions of leaders (Folger and Cropanzano, 2001). Employee perspective or perception of organisational justice is very important as it influences their behaviour and attitude towards work, which ultimately affects organisational performance. In this vein, when employees perceive fair treatment, they behave well and are more productive and verse versa (Ambrose, *et al*, 2002). Organisational justice has been classified as the most sensitive factor that enhances organisational commitment and employee productivity. This is because organisational justice is perceived as a concept of fairness and justice (Deutsch, 1975).

### **2.2 Organisational Justice (OJ)**

As a management concept, organisational justice, was propounded by Greenberg (1987). In recent years, the concept has been defined by various scholars and practitioners alike. Generally, organisational justice may be described as the views held by employees with respect to how fair and honest their employer is towards them as well as how fair organisational processes and outcomes are (Elovainio, Van den Bos, Linna, Kivimaki, Ala-Mursula, Pentti, and Vahtera, 2005). Against this backdrop, it can be posited that organisational justice is concerned with the appropriateness or moral justification of an action viewed from specific contextual standpoints that include ethics and law.

Organisational justice, which explains workplace fairness in relation to the judgments of the employees is rooted in general justice. It is a term that is synonymous with the ethical or moral correctness of decisions, actions and outcomes. Individuals can assess ethical or moral correctness on basis of socio-cultural and religious beliefs, law and equity. In the organisational context, justice, sometimes referred to as fairness is appraised in respect of matters related to recruitment, remuneration, training and development opportunities as well as participation in the decision making processes and promotion (Tabibnia, Satpute, and Lieberman, 2008).

### **2.3 Dimensions of Organisational Justice**

Organisational justice is traditionally made up of three dimensions (Cropanzano, Rupp, Mohler and Schminke, 2001; Konovsky, 2000), which are distributive, procedural and interactional (Wang and Nayir, 2010; Tuytens and Devos, 2012). In its distributive form, organisational justice deals with fairness of outcomes; whereas, justice in its procedural form focuses on fairness of processes. Interactional justice on the other hand, deals with the quality of workplace interpersonal relationships (Al-Zu'bi, 2010; Tuytens and Devos, 2012). Hitherto there were arguments as to whether interactional justice should stand-alone or be categorized as a subset of procedural justice (Tuytens and Devos, 2012). However, interactional justice remains independent as it has been confirmed

the third dimension of organisational justice (Rowland and Hall, 2012) and is divided into two subsets; one that deals with workplace communication referred to as informational justice and the other that focuses on workplace relationships known as interpersonal justice (Al-Zu'bi, 2010; Day, 2011; Colquitt and Rodell, 2011; Rowland and Hall, 2012). It is instructive to note that owing to the multi-dimensional nature of organisational justice, two other dimensions have evolved: they are temporal justice focusing on use of personal time and spatial justice, which deals with allocation of work resources.

### 2.3.1 Distributive Justice

Perceived fairness in the decision and distribution of outcomes, particularly remuneration among employees is known as distributive justice (Aggarwal-Gupta and Kumar, 2010). Employees keenly monitor actual outcomes received against expected outcomes (Alder and Ambrose, 2005). By this employees look forward to receiving outcomes that are proportional to their contributions based on the input-output ratio. In this vein, employees regulate their contribution to match remuneration, which is in sync with the assertion of equity theory and corroborated by empirical studies (Wang, Liao, Xia and Chang, 2010). Evidently, workers not just compare individual input – output ratio, they also compare their earnings with that of those of colleagues as highlighted by the relative deprivation theory (Aggarwal-Gupta and Kumar, 2010). As such, their observation of fairness influences how well they manage conflict in course of their interaction with peers, superiors and other stakeholders in the organisation (Rowland and Hall, 2012; Geeta, Pooja and Renu, 2011).

### 2.3.2 Procedural Justice

Procedural justice is concerned with the processes that govern determination of outcomes. It focuses on employees' perception of the fairness of processes, policies and procedures as well as decisions and application of rules that depict confidence reposed in employees and the management team (Day, 2011; Aggarwal-Gupta and Kumar, 2010). Employees are most likely to perceive means of determining outcomes as fair, provided they are part of the process. Consequently, the scope of organisational justice is broadened from interest in allocation or distribution of outcomes to the procedures that govern its determination – procedural justice (Bernerth, Feild, Giles and Cole, 2006).

Procedural justice is achieved and accepted when employees perceive fairness in rules. This simply implies that the means of determining outcomes are perceived as devoid of prejudices, consistent and has a functional feedback mechanism to review and constantly improve decision making (Ding and Lin, 2006; Aggarwal-Gupta and Kumar, 2010; Day, 2011). This facilitates effective organisational change leading to enhanced commitment of workers and satisfaction derived from the job (Geeta *et al.*, 2011). Thus, it is expected that for employees to perceive procedural justice as functional, the system must be ethical, consistent, precise and devoid of potential or actual discrimination. This will boost the confidence and voluntary cooperation level of employees in the execution of strategic decisions of management. It is note-worthy that procedural justice has specific models such as control model that highlights some indirect relationship between workers and the results of decision-making as well as employees' representation in processes leading to the decisions. This is known as *process control* (Hegtvedt, Clay-Warner, and Johnson, 2003)

### 2.3.3 Interactional Justice

Interactional justice concerns itself with the relationship that exists between a supervisor, associate and peers. Interpersonal justice and informational justice make up interactional justice. The former explains the quality of treatment associates get from superiors, while the later deals with structured explanations of the reasons behind outcomes (Thurston and McNall, 2010). Employees tend to rate the quality and adequacy of explanations given as reasons for outcomes in terms of specificity, clarity, correctness, and timeliness (Colquitt, 2001). Outcomes in this context are the product of the superior or supervisor as posited by the agent-system model, which states that the supervisor is empowered to influence outcome decisions like appraisal rating on performance, satisfaction level derived from the job and employee behaviour (Day, 2011; Al-Zu'bi, 2010).

From the aforementioned, it is clear that performance management is a good example of interactional justice as it portrays the dynamics of the relationship between superior and associate, which determines the employee's perception. Interactional justice is made up of relationship and information as well as the employee's reaction. Interactional justice focuses on employees' perception of interpersonal behaviours exhibited by superiors in the process of implementing policies, procedures and decision making as well as subsequent actions. Employees rate socially sensitive actions bordering on dignity and respect, empathy and care shown in respect of

employees' concerns (Colquitt, 2001). Spatial and temporal justices are two other aspects of organisational justice identified in literature. Allocation of official resources among staff and branches based on distance, appropriateness of distance and non-discriminatory budget is referred to as spatial justice. The appropriateness of time allocated and spent with spouse, children and friends as well as for personal activities such as exercise, rest and sleep is the focus of temporal justice. The effects of work time on personal time and extra hours of work are also included (Cropanzo, Bowen and Gilliland, 2007).

## 2.4 Employee Commitment

The step to define commitment is a difficult one (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001), even though it can be applied to various areas which include occupation and organisation, supervisor and team, customer and association (Neubert and Cady, 2000). Regardless of the associated challenge, there are quite some definitions of commitment in existence. Some are similar in definition, while others differ significantly. Defining commitment depends on two unique perspectives; organisation and employee perspectives. This study focuses on employees' perspective, which looks at commitment in career, work and organisational life.

Meyer and Herscovitch, (2001) define "*commitment*" as "a form of extraordinary willingness by an individual toward a specific course which is key to achieving a particular aim/goal". For instance, an employee's devotion to an organisation (Akintayo, 2010). Ongori (2007) explained commitment in terms of the degree of employee's affective response and loyalty to the entirety of an organisation. Employee commitment on its own is defined as the attitude displayed by an employee toward issues relating to an organisation (Zheng, Sharan and Wei, 2010) or as the psychological feeling an employee has for an organisation (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1989).

The significance of employee commitment cannot be over emphasized, as high employee commitment leads to high levels of favorable work outcomes, especially if the conditions are right. This infers that there are antecedents of employee commitment, which leads to higher employee performance (Ali, Rehman, Ali, Yousaf and Zia, 2010; Ajila and Awonusi, 2004). As a result, research on commitment has increased tremendously over the years, as employees continue to serve as organisations' drivers of competitive advantage as well as achievement of excellence (Akintayo, 2010; Tumwesigye 2010). Antecedents such as the style of leadership (Lo, 2009), fairness within the organisation (Ponnu and Chuah, 2010), firm's corporate social responsibility (Ali *et al*, 2010), job enrichment, employee empowerment and compensation (Ongori, 2007) as well as educational level, personality and position (Camilleri, 2002) all make up employee commitment.

## 2.5 Types of Commitment

Meyer and Allen (1997) identified three distinct commitment types; normative, affective, and continuance. Affective commitment, often referred to as the form of commitment mostly preferred by organisations, has to do with a feeling of emotional attachment to the organisation by the employees. For this to hold true, the employee must embrace organisational values and should be willing to remain and contribute meaningfully to the achievement of corporate goals. Employees that are affectively committed identify with the organisation as organisational goals are compatible with theirs. In its developmental stages, affective commitment allows that the employee identify with the organisation, so that organisational values are rapidly internalized (Beck and Wilson, 2000). It is important to note that certain factors influence affective commitment; among these are job challenges, clarity of roles and goals, management response, dependability and feedback as well as equity, team cohesion and self-worth.

Normative commitment is a situation in which an individual is personally convinced to continue with a firm. This decision is based on a moral feeling that he or she is obliged to the firm mainly for the many derivable benefits; irrespective of the effect of actual experience. An example of normative commitment is unwillingness to exit and work for a competitor in consideration of all that the present employer has done (Meyer and Allen, 1997).

Continuance commitment refers to a situation in which an employee falsely desires and decides to stay with an organisation due to fear of ease of finding a new employment or possible cost implications, should he or she leave the job immediately (Meyer and Allen, 1997). Since better alternatives are not yet available, employees choose to remain: However, they still hold strong intentions to leave. Hence, as soon as the chance to exit shows up, they rarely ever think further before exiting decisions are made

### 2.5.1 Antecedents of Commitment

Demographic factors have been posited to influence employees' commitment. Precisely, older employees are

identified to have higher commitment than the younger ones. This may not be unconnected with length of service, height attained and likely difficulty of getting new employment (Dunham, Grube and Castaneda, 1994; Mathieu and Zajac 1990). Female employees have also been reported to show more commitment than males colleagues. This is attributable to their struggle to attain high positions in the organisation (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). Married employees have been found to be more committed than their unmarried counterparts. Financial and family responsibilities are some identified reasons for this, which as it were holds such an employee back (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). However, this is continuance commitment, which is not the best commitment type.

### 2.5.2 Organisational Climate and Visibility

Some studies reveal that employees want to belong to organisations with comfortable work environment, where their social needs can be met (Troy, 1998). When this is achieved, commitment is enhanced. It is posited that employees start developing need to belong to an organisation even before they join. Thus, it is imperative for organisations to make available clear information about their vision, mission and culture as well as expectations from prospective employees. This will help attract prospective employees whose commitment will be high, all things being equal.

### 2.5.3 Workplace Relationship

Cordial workplace relationship is another antecedent of employee commitment. Studies have shown that both vertical and horizontal relationships are good in promoting employee commitment. This infers that good relationship between managers and associates; and between co-employees promotes employees commitment. (CIPD, 2001; Settoon, Bennet and Liden, 1996; Green, Anderson and Shivers, 1996). Identifying and promoting the special features that distinguishes a group also promote commitment to the group. As a result, organisations have to work out deliberate ways of promoting group identify by establishing boundaries and offering what is meaningful to group members (Hogg Terry and White, 1995).

## 2.6 Theoretical Framework

Some theoretical underpinnings considered in this study include equity theory, expectancy theory and Howard's bet side theory.

### 2.6.1 Equity Theory

According to Adams (1963; 1965) one way by which people perceive allocation of outcome is by carrying out a comparison of their input-outcome ratio among peers to ascertain fairness of rewards (Cohen-Charash and Spector, 2001). This comparison lead employees to respond accordingly by modifying their contributions to equal perceived level of reward, causing trouble in the system or exiting the organisation. While input refers to a person's perceived contribution for which a just return is expected, outcome refers to the reward received from the exchange in form of pay or intrinsic satisfaction. Consequently, it is expected that allocation of outcomes should be equitable within a given group, failure of which inequity is perceived, giving way to unpleasant feelings and actions (Folger and Cropanzano, 2001). Perceived inequity generally motivates employees to seek equity or reduce inequity either behaviorally or cognitively via six ways that include modifying input, altering outcomes, exiting the field and cognitively changing input or outcome. Others are distorting the input and outcome of others and complete change of job (Adams, 1965). In the same vein, Walster, Walster, and Berscheid (1978) posited that perceived inequity produce employees' reactions that will balance the situation. These reactions include definition of equity by groups, sanctions for group members, varied levels of psychological distress depending on gravity of inequity and attempt to restore equity. Sometimes, employees choose to ignore perceived inequity and replace same with make-belief existence of equity (Leventhal, 1976a).

### 2.6.2 Expectancy Theory

Originally developed by Vroom (1964), the theory of expectancy was later modified by other scholars. Focusing on the cognitive processes, expectancy theory posit that employees believe that there is an underlying relationship between the level of effort put into work, the performance achieved as well as the reward obtainable. Specifically, expectancy theory is based on four assumptions, which are employees joining organisations with their needs, motivation, past experiences and viewing individual reactions as a result of conscious choice. In general, employees have varied expectations from different employers, as such they choose alternatives that will give them better advantage or reward (Vroom, 1964). Based on the aforementioned assumptions, expectancy theory has three major elements; *expectancy, instrumentality, and valence*.

Expectancy is a situation in which an employee holds the belief that with the level of effort expended on a particular organisational assignment, the performance thereof will be accepted. The instrumentality element holds that employees believe that performance will bring rewards, while the valence element is a condition in which employees expect the value of rewards to be highly positive. Apparently, there is a relationship between motivation and expectancy, instrumentality and valence. Concisely, motivation will be high when expectation, instrumentality and valence are high and vice versa (Vroom, 1964). Relating expectancy theory to organisational justice and employee commitment, organisations must ensure that outcome allocation is as put forward by distributive justice. Hence, performance-based pay system should be applied in order to ensure fairness in rewarding employees. By so doing, employees will be motivated and satisfied, which are key ingredients for commitment within the organisation.

### ***2.6.3 Howard Becker's Bet Side theory***

Howard Becker's bet side theory asserts that the employer-employee relationship is based on economic gain and that in most cases; employees often have bet sides, which are more or less vested interests. As a result, employees always lean towards perceived better rewards. In addition, the commitment shown by the employee is a pointer to voluntary turnover intention that is connected to Allen and Meyer's continuance commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1997). As such, to gain and sustain employee commitment organisational justice must be implemented in full to attract and retain quality and productive employees.

## **2.7 Empirical Framework**

### ***2.7.1 Relationship between Distributive Justice and Employees' Affective Commitment***

Literature on the relationship between distributive justice and employee commitment exist and clearly show employees' views of the degree of fairness organisations show to them. Some studies carried out in various parts of the world corroborate this assertion. In a study by Muhammad and Basharat (2011) to ascertain the extent to which organisational justice impacted the commitment of staff members of a University faculty in Pakistan, it was found that there is a significant relationship between distributive justice and employee commitment. This result was corroborated by the findings of Ponnu and Chuah (2010) in Malaysia. The latter study found that perceived justice in its distributive form is responsible for variance in employee commitment to their organisations. In a medical school in India, Bakhshi, Kumar and Rani (2009) found employee commitment to be positively related to distributive justice. Hence, it is safe to state that distributive justice influences employee commitment; implying that organisations should proactively handle matters that relates to distributive justice.

### ***2.7.2 Relationship between Procedural Justice and Employees' Normative Commitment***

As the name implies, procedural justice focuses on fairness of processes. It is connected to employee commitment and ultimately, performance. Employee performance refers to the quality and quantity of employee contribution in relation to expectation or set target. This is because knowledge of processes and procedure is an antecedent to taking appropriate action, which determines employee performance. Simply put, procedure, communication and action (performance) equals an interdependent tripod. Procedural justice has been found to produce a feeling of legitimacy of managerial and organisational decisions (Tallman, Phipps, and Matheson, 2009; Robbins, Summers, and Miller, 2000), thus enhancing employees' commitment and performance. This means that not communicated or vaguely communicated procedure is inimical to commitment. As a result, managers must be able to communicate effectively to enable employees perform optimally and by so doing produce desired results. In essence, properly communicated procedure will enhance employee commitment; while poorly communicated processes and procedures will result in poor performance. Sinha (2012) carried out a study that asserted that communication is a component of quality of work life which improves work related outcomes including performance (Wright and Bonett 2007). At this point, it is safe to postulate that procedural justice affect employee commitment, which ultimately determines organisational performance. Consequently, organisations must ensure that they have functional structures in place with clearly defined communication channels in order to enhance sustainable employee commitment and performance.

### ***2.7.3 Interactional Justice and Employee (Continuance) Commitment***

Interactional justice comprises two parts; interpersonal justice and informational justice (Thurston and McNall, 2010). Interactional justice is crucial in promoting commitment and lasting harmony in the workplace. Precisely,



informational justice gives procedural explanation of outcomes; thus people are duly informed and empowered to carry out their various assignments devoid of ambiguity and its consequences. Although a supervisor may choose to influence outcomes in the determination of performance rating, as long as employees are well informed, it is unlikely that employees' commitment and behaviour will be affected adversely (Al-Zu'bi, 2010; Day, 2011). When outcomes are perceived fair and properly communicated, employee's satisfaction level will be high; thereby reducing the likelihood of agitation and conflict as questions arising will be answered promptly. Furthermore, timely and clear information to employees gives them a sense of dignity and respect. This inadvertently, enhances harmony and commitment. On the other hand, interpersonal justice is concerned with the quality of workplace relationship between supervisor and associates as well as between colleagues at all levels. As previously highlighted, good workplace relationships enhance commitment and performance as it checks inimical workplace behaviours (Osibanjo, Falola, Akinbode, and Adeniji, 2015). Consequently, organisations must strive to maintain structures and systems that facilitate good workplace relationships (interactional justice) at all levels in order to enjoy employee commitment and its numerous gains.

### *2.8 Organisational Justice and Employee Commitment: The Nigerian Perspective*

Having discussed organisational justice and employee commitment from a global perspective, it is important to understand the relationship from the perspective of a developing economy. In Nigeria, the perceptions and experiences of employees and employers does not differ significantly from what is obtainable globally. In recent years, Nigeria's employees are becoming more aware of their work environment, being more informed of their rights and privileges as well as challenges arising therefrom. Consequently, employees expect fairness in outcomes and processes as well as in relationships. Hence, organisational justice is gradually been internalized in Nigeria's work environment. Studies by Martínez-Tur, Peiró, Ramos and Moliner (2006) as well as Odunayo, Ayodeji and Omotolani (2015) have shown that perceived organisational justice is positively related to employee commitment. The former study found that teachers went the extra mile to provide extra moral classes to their students without being asked or paid to render the service. This extra commitment stemmed from perceived fairness and respect shown by the school Principal. This motivated the teachers to identify with the school, retain their membership and offer extra services voluntarily. In the same vein, a questionnaire survey administered to members of staff of Nestle Nigeria PLC found that procedural and distributive justice both have significant influence on employee commitment. This result is further supported by the works of Akanbi and Ofoegbu (2013) and Ibadunni, Olokundun, Kehinde, Falola, Borishade and Olusanmi (2018, who observed that commitment on the part of employees is significantly related to distributive justice

Although a number of studies had been carried out locally on organisational justice as it impacts employee commitment, it is pertinent to mention that fairness is yet to be rightly and fully administered across Nigeria's work environment.

#### *2.8.1 Nigeria's Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC)*

Nigeria's Corporate Affairs Commission was formed by section 1 of the Companies and Allied Matters Act (CAMA), of the laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 2004 (CAMA, 2004). It is a body saddled with the responsibilities of regulating incorporation and registration of companies and businesses in Nigeria, following laid down rules by Companies and Allied Matters Act (CAMA, 2004). Before CAC came into existence, the Ministries of Trade and Justice collaborated to manage the affairs of companies' registry in Nigeria (Orojo, 2008). In addition to the roles of incorporation and regulation, CAC is empowered to provide companies information for issues bothering on authenticity of business among other things. The body has offices in all thirty-six states of Nigeria, as well as the Federal Capital Territory (FCT)

### **3. METHOD**

This survey adopted quantitative method and was conducted in 12 (twelve) state offices of Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) in Nigeria that were purposively selected. Literature has it that employees gather experience and information on processes and outcomes with time (Ambrose and Cropanzano, 2003) and this ultimately reflects in their attitude towards the different dimensions of organisational justice. As a result, sample selection was based on the understanding that time (12 months period) should be sufficient to allow employees perceive distributive, procedural and interactional justice at the place of work. Hence, sample population was scrutinized and subsequently screened to exclude employees with less than 12 months experience on the job. Following the screening, copies of questionnaire was distributed to 200 CAC employees across the 12 states. Some retrieved copies of questionnaire had errors of missing data which rendered them unfit for analysis within the study. Only

155 of the retrieved copies of questionnaire were used for further analysis, accounting for a response rate of 77.5%. Age, sex and years of experience on the job were used as control variables, similar to what is seen in literature (Avolio, Zhu, Kho, and Bhatia, 2004; Ghosh, Rai, and Sinha, 2014). Correlation of variables was first carried out to ascertain whether or not to progress with linear regression analysis.

### Exploratory variables

Employees' commitment for this study was based on a commitment measurement scale proposed by Meyer and Allen (1997). It covered 18 items: 6 for each of affective, continuance and normative aspects of employee commitment. The scale was employed on a five-point Likert scale which includes; 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3= Indifferent, 4 = Agree, and 5 = strongly agree.

### Predictor variables

Organisational justice was based on a justice perception scale put forward by Niehoff and Moorman (1993). It bears smaller aspects that cater for procedural, distributive and interactional justice dimensions and covers 20 questions, 5 for distributive justice, 6 for procedural justice and 9 for interactional justice. A similar scale as with the exploratory variable was used

## 4. RESULTS

Table 1 shows the demography of surveyed respondents; there is seemingly an overall balance in the distribution of sexes of respondents. In terms of age, respondents of ages; 35-50 years are the most represented group accounting for 46.3%. Regarding number of years on the job (i.e. length of engagement with Corporate Affairs Commission), respondents with 36-72 months of engagement accounts for approximately 43% and have the highest representation. On the other hand 12.26% of respondents have served within the organisation for 72 months or more. To conclude demographic information, 56 respondents which accounts for 36.13% belong to the low management hierarchy of CAC as compared to 29.68% of middle management and 34.19% of top management level

**Table 4.1: Demography of respondents**

| Sex    | Frequency (%) | Age                | Frequency (%) | Years of engagement | Frequency (%) | Management level | Frequency (%) |
|--------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|
| Male   | 75 (48.4)     | Less than 35years  | 52 (33.6)     | 12-36months         | 70 (45.16)    | Top              | 53 (34.19)    |
| Female | 80 (51.6)     | 35-50 years        | 67 (43.2)     | 36-72months         | 66 (42.58)    | Middle           | 46 (29.68)    |
|        |               | More than 50 years | 36 (23.2)     | 72monthS or more    | 19 (12.26)    | Low              | 56 (36.13)    |
|        | 155(100)      |                    | 155(100)      |                     | 155(100)      |                  | 155(100)      |

Table 2 shows the mean, standard deviation and correlation across variables. Correlation serves an initial test to check the assumption of a linear regression; a positive relationship exists between the different dimensions of organisational justice. At  $\alpha=.05$ , the relationship between DJ and PJ was found to be 0.765; between DJ and IJ, 0.620. In the same way, aspects of employees commitment also share positive relationships; AC and PC was found to be 0.610, AC and IC, 0.622

**Table 4.2: Mean, Standard deviation and Correlation of variables<sup>2</sup>**

|   | Variables | SD    | Mean | 1 | 2       | 3       | 4       | 5       | 6       |
|---|-----------|-------|------|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1 | DJ        | 0.613 | 3.21 |   | 0.765** | 0.620** | 0.550** | 0.533** | 0.510** |
| 2 | PJ        | 0.711 | 3.26 |   |         | 0.611** | 0.568** | 0.558** | 0.523** |
| 3 | IJ        | 0.893 | 3.19 |   |         |         | 0.571** | 0.577** | 0.581** |
| 4 | AC        | 0.534 | 3.27 |   |         |         |         | 0.610** | 0.622** |
| 5 | PC        | 0.513 | 3.61 |   |         |         |         |         | 0.710** |
| 6 | IC        | 0.722 | 3.92 |   |         |         |         |         |         |

\*, \*\* correlation significance at  $\alpha=0.05$

To answer the research questions for this study, a simple linear regression was carried out on each pair of variables. Figure 4.1 shows the result of the regression analysis predicting AC. By controlling the relationship using age, sex and years of experience on the job, the relationship between DJ and AC was found to be significant ( $r = 0.006$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Only one of the control variables, number of years on the job was found to be significant in predicting employees' affective commitment within CAC. As a result of this values calculated for  $r$ , null hypothesis  $H_01$  is rejected. It can then be stated that distributive justice significantly relates to affective aspects of employee commitment within Nigeria's Corporate Affairs Commission.

| Call:   |          |        |            |         |           |
|---|----------|--------|------------|---------|-----------|
| formula = lm (AC ~ DJ + Age + Sex + Experience)               |          |        |            |         |           |
| Residuals:  |          |        |            |         |           |
| Min   | 1Q       | Median | 3Q         | Max     |           |
| 1.000   | 1.3760   | 3.0451 | 0.0349     | 5.000   |           |
| Coefficients:   |          |        |            |         |           |
|   | Estimate |        | Std. Error | t value | Pr (> t ) |
| (Intercept)   | 0.261    | 0.173  |            | 2.074   | 0.001 **  |
| DJ  | 0.075    | 0.013  | 1.553      |         | 0.006 **  |
| Age   | -0.156   | 0.112  | -1.544     | 0.158   |           |
| Sex   | -0.030   | 0.013  | -0.818     | 0.500   |           |
| Exp   | -0.190   | 0.071  |            | -2.182  | 0.003 **  |
| ---   |          |        |            |         |           |
| Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1 |          |        |            |         |           |
| Residual standard error: 1.321 on 151 degrees of freedom      |          |        |            |         |           |
| Multiple R-squared: 0.04519, Adjusted R-squared: 0.01236      |          |        |            |         |           |
| F-statistic: 1.376 on 4 and 151 DF, p-value: 0.145            |          |        |            |         |           |

**Figure 4.1: Regression output of distributive justice on affective commitment**

For research question 2, figure 4.2 shows how normative commitment is predicted by procedural justice with age, sex and experience as control variables. The figure shows that procedural commitment has a significant relationship with normative commitment at  $r = 0.007$ . For this relationship, all control variables except experience were found to be significant. Consequently,  $H_02$  is rejected; hence, it can be said that procedural justice significantly relates to normative aspects of employee commitment within Nigeria's Corporate Affairs Commission.

<sup>2</sup> DJ; distributive justice, PJ; procedural justice, IJ; interactional justice, AC; affective commitment, NC; normative commitment, CC; continuance commitment, Exp; Experience on the job

```

Call:
lm(formula = Im (NC ~ PJ + Age + Sex + Experience))
Residuals:
    Min       1Q   Median       3Q      Max
 1.000  4.160  2.0491  0.0791  5.000
Coefficients:
              Estimate            Std. Error    t value    Pr(>|t|)
(Intercept)  0.671            0.337          3.117    0.024 **
PJ           0.527            0.551          1.938    0.007 **
Age          -0.387           0.133         -2.815    0.040 *
Sex          -0.071            0.016         -0.118    0.001 **
Exp          -0.573            0.075         -4.292    0.769
---
Signif. codes:  0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Residual standard error: 1.298 on 151 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared:  0.06535, Adjusted R-squared:  0.0332
F-statistic: 2.034 on 4 and 151 DF, p-value: 0.0208
    
```

**Figure 4.2: Regression output of procedural justice on normative commitment**

For research question 3, the result of the linear regression between interactional justice and continuance commitment was found to be insignificant ( $r = 0.113$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). As a result of the values deduced from this relationship, H03 is accepted and the hypothesis restated in its alternative form; that interactional justice does not significantly relate to continuance aspect of employee commitment within Nigeria’s Corporate Affairs Commission.

```

Call:
lm(formula = Im (CC ~ IJ + Age + Sex + Experience))
Residuals:
    Min       1Q   Median       3Q      Max
 1.000  1.6101  3.1041  0.0321  5.000
Coefficients:
              Estimate            Std. Error    t value    Pr(>|t|)
(Intercept)  0.611            0.221          2.231    0.099 **
IJ           0.347            0.133          1.837    0.113
Age          -0.272           0.177         -1.121    0.081 *
Sex          -0.019            0.022         -0.523    0.003 **
Exp          -0.321            0.067         -2.111    0.679
---
Signif. codes:  0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

Residual standard error: 1.402 on 151 degrees of freedom
Multiple R-squared:  0.01903, Adjusted R-squared: -0.0118
F-statistic: 0.6172 on 4 and 151 DF, p-value: 0.8142
    
```

**Figure 4.3: Regression output of interactional justice on continuance commitment**

#### 4.1 Discussion

This research examined the different dimensions of organisational justice; distributive, procedural and interactional justice as possible factors that drive affective, normative and continuance commitment on a sample of employees of Nigeria’s Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC). The organisation plays a vital role in the

determination of who carries out business in Nigeria. Thus, performance of employees of will ultimately have an influence on the overall economic development of the nation. Due to the increasing menace of unemployment in Nigeria, many individuals have turned to entrepreneurial skills and businesses, further increasing the sensitivity of the roles of employees of CAC. With the government's recent pegging of the cost of business registration in Nigeria, it becomes important to consider how well employees of CAC are committed to effectively carry out their job.

Until now, there has been no study found to directly compare the dimensions of organisational justice (distributive, procedural and interactions) to the different constructs of employee commitment (affective, normative and continuance) within the Nigerian business environment. Therefore, this study was carried out to delineate how an understanding of organisational justice at workplace may impact commitment on the part of employees. The relationship between the first dimensions of organisation justice otherwise referred to as distributive justice was found to positively predict emotional ties of CAC employees to the Commission; thereby influencing their commitment. Similarly, procedural justice was found to positively predict normative commitment within CAC; implying that employees agreed that procedures and processes that lead to work outcomes are fair enough. As a result, they have decided to remain with CAC based on the perceived procedural justice and the benefits derivable from their job.

Furthermore, this study provides us with some interesting findings. First, a positive correlation was observed amongst the dimensions of justice. Although each explains justice in different forms, they were all found to be correlated and with the types of commitment. Thus, this study supports the work of Ghosh, *et al*, (2014) who found correlation in the dimensions of justice while studying workers engagement in public sector banks in India. Our results show that distributive and procedural justice are related to affective and normative commitment. Therefore, it can be inferred that the distribution of rewards and organisational procedures from which outcomes are determined greatly influences commitment. Since interactional justice was found not to relate to continuance commitment, it implies that a positive interpersonal treatment by supervisors will not guarantee that an employee will remain committed to CAC.

Findings from this study show that that employee commitment is more rightly predicted by distributive and procedural justice. In addition, it was found that there is a chance for employees to improve on their level of commitment when they find that outcomes are at par with expended efforts and time (Gupta and Kumar, 2012). This explains the importance of justice in its distributive form as it impacts on commitment (Ghosh, *et al*, 2014).

## **5 IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT**

Organisational justice is an essential management tool that facilitates the understanding of employee perception and reaction to the allocation of outcomes, which many organisations do through structured performance management process. Consequently, managers must possess and exhibit relevant and adequate knowledge in administering outcomes in order to enhance the commitment shown by employees towards fostering sustainable organisational growth and success since these depend on employee performance, which is invariably tied to their commitment.

Simply put, employee commitment is essential for the achievement of excellent employee performance and achievement of corporate goals and survival. So far, this study explained the imperatives for managers to continually intervene in employee welfare matters through the deliberate implementation of all aspects of organisational justice in order to enhance and sustain employee commitment, especially as commitment determines employee performance which ultimately drives organisational performance as corroborated by Thanasagree, Anton and Yvonne, (2015). The consequences of failure in this area, is quite grave as it could lead to poor organisational performance and stunted growth, which may lead to eventual organisational extinction. To remain relevant in the ever-dynamic and increasingly competitive business environment, organisations, particularly, CAC must invest in skilled manpower that are experienced in organisational justice practices as this will facilitate the enhancement of employee commitment and thus guarantee the achievement of desired organisational goals.

### **5.1 Conclusion and Recommendations**

The significance of organisational justice in fostering a mutually beneficial employer-employee relationship through employee commitment and superior performance cannot be overemphasized as it remains a crucial factor in the determination of sustainable organisational success in an ever-dynamic and competitive business

environment. Be that as it may, poor employee commitment is inimical and must not be allowed to occur. Therefore, organisations should deliberately implement all aspect of organisational justice in order to gain and retain employees' commitment which is vital for organisational survival and sustainable growth. In concluding this work, the following recommendations are made:-

1. Pre-selection process must evaluate and consider prospective employee's vision and other socio-cultural factors to ensure alignment with organisation's overall vision and strategy. Moreover, organisations must plan and execute proper induction programmes aimed at enhancing commitment from the outset of the employment relationship.
2. Fairness must be deliberately entrenched in organisational outcome allocation systems. In addition, organisations must deliberately work out ways to improve and sustain good manager-associate relationship as it promotes employee commitment.
3. Good horizontal relationship and group cohesion should be encouraged within organisations, as these factors promote cordiality and mutual respect within a diverse and multi-cultural environment leading to increased commitment.
4. Trust must be deliberately built among employees to promote acceptability of organisational initiatives.
5. Processes and procedures must be clearly set out and communicated to employees, avoiding ambiguity in order to satisfy the principles of informational justice.
6. Organisations must also strive to get at least 85% of their employees into the affective commitment loop and retain them there through the deliberate implementation of all dimensions of organisational justice.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Authors will like to appreciate Covenant University, Nigeria for sponsoring the publication of the findings from this study.

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