



Journal of International Business, Innovation and Strategic Management

2020: 4 (1): 98 - 117

ISSN: 2617-1805

EFFECT OF DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT OF EMPLOYEES OF GARISSA UNIVERSITY

¹ Hassan M. Abdi, ² Peter Butali & ³ Joel Ayora

¹ MBA Student, Garissa University, Kenya

² & ³ Lecturers, Garissa University, Kenya

² butalipeter@gmail.com, ³ joelayora@gmail.com

Corresponding Author email: dagane227373@gmail.com

To Cite this Article:

Abdi, H. A., Butali, P. & Ayora, J. (2020). EFFECT OF DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT OF EMPLOYEES OF GARISSA UNIVERSITY. *Journal of International Business, Innovation and Strategic Management*, 4 (1), 98 - 117

ABSTRACT

Over the past years, organizations around the globe have adopted distributive justice to enhance personal outcomes like satisfaction with one's salary and other rewards. This has improved fairness within the organization which is very important in decision making and most of the human resource practices in general. The study examined the effect of distributive justice on organizational commitment of employees of Garissa University. This study adopted a mixed methodology design. The study targeted a total population of 253 members of staff within Garissa University and a sample size of 155 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling and simple random sampling techniques. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected using questionnaires.



The study used descriptive statistics to analyse quantitative data using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. Qualitative data was analysed through discussion. Results were presented in prose and tabular form. The findings indicated that there was distributive justice in the organization studied in terms of sharing of responsibilities among the workers. It therefore follows that there exists distributive justice in the organization studied, a fact that contributes to workers' commitment to their organization. The study thus concluded that the organization studied exhibited much of the various attributes of distributive justice and thus recommends that organization needs to work towards improving this element of its justice system.

Key words: *Distributive justice, Organizational justice, Employee commitment*

INTRODUCTION

Private and public organizations around the world are largely practising organizational justice as a key strategy to improve their overall performance. Organizational justice refers to the discernment of the workers about justice or fairness within the organization (Asadullah et al., [2017](#)). The perception of workers on organizational justice has been associated with the success of many organizations. As such, many organizations try to encourage organizational justice in most of the activities they perform. According to Akanbi & Ofoegbu (2013), the need for fairness in organizational activities also contributes to employee commitment to the organizations. Roch and Shannock (2006) assert that majority of behaviour and attitude in an organization are closely associated with employees' perception of justice within the organization. Accordingly, factors such as monetary resources allocation, policy and decision making, recruitment and selection of employees in the organization need great interest as far as justice in the organization is concerned (Colquitt, Greenberg, & Zapata-Phelan, 2005).

Distributive justice is one the forms of organizational justices that have been recognized to arbitrate different results on attitude. Distributive justice relates to personal outcomes like satisfaction with one's salary and other rewards and according to Roch & Shanock (2006), it emphasizes economic return. Usmani and Jamal ([2013](#)) conducted a study on the influence of distributive, interactional, interpersonal and justice on job satisfaction. The study deduced that all these forms of organizational justices positively relate with job satisfaction. Karanja (2016) conducted a study on the effect of organizational justice on workers commitment in secondary schools and commercial banks, and found distributive justice to be a major predictor of affective commitment of the workers in secondary schools and banking institutions. The author suggested that further study be conducted on other work environments in order to have a holistic understanding of the relationship between the variables in work environments. According to Özbek et al., ([2016](#)), a high perception of organizational fairness tends to enhance the workers' view towards the firm he/she works in, while observation of low organizational justice levels tend to create dissatisfaction and negative feelings by employees. Owing to this gap, the study aimed at establishing the level to which organizational justice influences the commitment of workers, with respect to Garissa University.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study was to the effect of distributive justice on organizational commitment of employees of Garissa University.



RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the effect of distributive justice on organizational commitment of employees of Garissa University?

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study employed Meyer and Allen's concept of organizational commitment as its theoretical basis. The theory describes employees' commitment to their organization. This concept relies on the psychological link between workers and the organization that they work for (Meyer and Allen (2002). The notion consists of three independent basics. These are the affective, normative and continuance commitment. Affective commitment designates workers' emotional affection to the work place. An employee with an elevated level of affective attachment identifies oneself with the organization and is highly committed to the matters related to it. Continuance employee commitment, on the other hand, arises from worker's belief that the costs arising from exiting the organization is too high and there may be no better opportunities for employment.

Normative commitment element is related to the moral obligations that an individual feels to remain as an employee in the same organization. It is exhibited through the loyalty of the said worker to the organization in which the individual works. Distributive justice is about employee appreciating the salaries and other forms of rewards given to them by employers. As postulated by this theory, when there is distributive justice, employees will feel the need to commit more to the organization. This is also because of the satisfaction they get which yields loyalty and creates positive attachment with the company. Distributive justice also emphasizes on economic return. The three facets of Meyer and Allen's concept are associated with work satisfaction that results in positive level of citizenship behaviour. With this there are economic benefits resulting from increased employee commitment.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Colquitt (2001) considers this form of organizational justice as the perception of workers resulting from a comparison of commitments the employee develops towards his/her organization and the effects of these commitments like rewards, tasks and obligations with other workers' commitments and the outcomes accruing to the other workers due to their commitment. Distributive organizational justice deals with workers' perceptions of fairness of resource sharing among them in the organization (Greenberg and Baron 2003). It includes the equality in the quantity of reparation that accrues to employees. In general, distributive justice concentrates on the equality of the appraisal that an employee receives in relation to the duties performed by the individual.

According to Cropanzano *et.al.* (2007), there are three sets of laws of distribution that directs to distributive justice when they are appropriately used. These are equality, equity and need. Equality implies that each worker is given the same amount of reward, equity implies each worker is compensated equally in accordance to their equal effort, while need implies that each is compensated in accordance to their urgency. In this respect, distributive justice holds that not all employees may be regarded equally and the distribution of results depends on the prevailing circumstances of the various employees. Loi *et.al.* (2006) asserts that distributive justice performs a salient function for the employees in appraising the organization for which they work. Accordingly, employees get more attached to their current organizations if they consider that they cannot get similar or better compensations from any other organization.



Distributive justice deals with the fairness of results as perceived by workers. It is closely associated with behavioural, cognitive, and affective responses to specific results (Cohen & Spector, 2001). When employees realize that the organization exhibits distributive justice for instance, in the distribution of resources and/or rewards, the employees tend to exhibit positive attitudes towards the organization. They therefore become more supportive and aim at satisfying customers' needs, thereby positively influencing employees' customer-oriented behaviour (Ashar & Shahbaz, 2013). This aspect of organizational justice therefore deals with just allocation of outcomes and duties in the organization, implying that more duties should attract higher returns than fewer duties. According to Niazi & Ali (2014), procedural and distributive justices have positive effect on the commitment of employees to the organization, but it influences employee turnover negatively. Nevertheless, the contribution of procedural justice in forecasting employee loyalty is greater than that of distributive justice. Cohen and Charash (2001) as well as Chang (2002) in separate studies found a significant and positive association between distributive justice and organizational commitment. A study by Erkuş (2011) concluded that the employees' perception of the fairness of their organization can result to an improvement or reduction in their commitment to their job depending on if the perception is negative or positive. Positive perception of fairness leads to greater commitment while negative perception results to reduced commitment to the organization.

Cohen-Charash and Spector (2001) stated that an outcome that is considered to be unfair negatively influences workers' emotions like happiness, pride or guilt, anger, as well as their cognitions and behaviour such as performance and withdrawal. Campbell et al. (2013) emphasizes that distributive justice perception is generally involved with resources allocation. Workers perceive fairness when they hold the view that resources have been distributed impartially and restocked sufficiently. A study by Fields et al. (2000) among workers in Hong Kong concluded that there is higher influence of distributive justice on the readiness of workers to continue working in the same place and their job contentment. However, procedural justice was found to have a higher effect on their assessment of regulation. Cropanzano et al. (2002), on the other hand, proposed that there is a strong and positive correlation between distributive justice and workers' response to particular outcomes, but relatively relate less strongly with responses to the supervisor of the organization. However, distributive justice was found to predict sacrifice aspect of organization's entrenchment more than procedural justice (Ghosh et al., 2017).

Zaman, Ali and Ali (2010) studied the effect of distributive and procedural justice on the commitment of private school teachers working in Pakistan to their work place. The study reported a substantial positive effect of distributive and procedural justice on the teachers' commitment to their organization. Bakhshi, Kumar and Rani (2009) conducted a similar study among employees of medical college in India. The study concluded that procedural and distributive justices related positively to the workers' commitment to their organization. An investigation by Ponnu and Chuah (2010) on the influence of organizational justice on employee commitment in various organizations in Malaysia found that procedural and distributive justice significantly explained the variance in organizational commitment. As much as distributive justice related positively with employee commitment, different employees may perceive it differently in the same organization since the employees assess their own effort and productivity in different methods, or compare the inputs and results to those of their colleagues in different environments (Janssen *et al.*, 2010). Lambert *et. al.* (2005) emphasizes that distributive justice is not only limited to employee incentives but also takes into consideration the punishment meted out to workers – whether they are fair and just to all. According to (Colton, 2002), distributive justice can be said to be at play if management actions lead to desirable and satisfactory outcomes for all workers in general.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a mixed methodology design. Mixed methodology design focuses on research questions that call for real-life contextual understandings, multi-level perspectives and cultural influences. The study targeted all members of staff within Garissa University. The total population of staff in the university is 253 (strategic plan, 2018-2022). They were stratified into two groups of management and non- management employees. This study adopted a combination of stratified random sampling and simple random sampling to get respondents for the study. The study employed the Yamane's formula Israel (1992) for sample size determination and a sample size of 155 was computed. Questionnaires were the only instruments used for data collection. A self-designed questionnaire was used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part consisted of information on respondents' demography, while the second part contained information on the various dimensions of organizational justice and organizational commitment.

Validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of data actually represent the phenomenon being studied (Hair, 2010). In this study, content, internal and external validities of the instruments were sought. Content validity was established through the use of supervisors who were requested to advice on whether the instruments accurately represent the concept to be studied and if not, how to adjust them to achieve this. Reliability is concerned with how well a method provides a researcher with the same results if the method is repeated under the same circumstances (Sandin, & Simolin, 2006). In this study, Split-half method together with the Spearman Brown Prophecy Formula was applied to calculate and determine the reliability of the instruments (Gay, 1996). The study yielded both quantitative and qualitative data. The study used descriptive statistics namely percentages, means and frequencies to analyse quantitative data using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 to aid in this analysis. Qualitative data was analysed using qualitative data analysis methods. In this case, the qualitative data was analysed through discussion. Qualitative data analysis is usually based on an interpretative philosophy that is aimed at examining meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data. Results were presented in tabular and prose form. To uphold research ethics, the researcher ensured confidentiality of information provided by the respondent by ensuring that the identity of the respondent was concealed completely, and no other person gets access to the information provided in the instruments. The researcher also ensured that all authors quoted in the study were acknowledged.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The study sought to examine how distributive justice affect human resource practices and organizational commitment at Garissa University. The study established that the level of distributive justice was high as a significant number, (61%) of the workers agreed that there was fairness of the salary awarded to the workers. Further, 58% of the workers considered the rewards accorded to them as being fair whereas 69% agreed that the workload they are assigned compared to that assigned to other workers was fair. With regards to the responsibilities accorded the workers in the organization, 73% agreed that it was fair.

From this analysis on distributive justice, it is observed that in the four cases analysed, there exists distributive justice in the organization since in all cases majority of the workers report fairness in the distributive justice. In most cases, a large majority of workers are in total agreement with the fairness aspect, except in the case of rewards to workers that has a



small majority of 58% of the workers. But in general, there is distributive justice in the organization studied.

The results of linear regression between distributive justice and employee organizational commitment shows that $R = 0.943$ while $R^2 = 0.889$. This indicates a strong relationship between distributive justice and employee commitment to their organization. This emphasizes that indeed distributive justice has positive influence on the organizational commitment of the employee as illustrated in table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1: Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.943 ^a	.889	.869	.158

These findings therefore imply that there is distributive justice in the organization studied in terms of sharing of responsibilities among the workers. It therefore follows that there exists distributive justice in the organization studied, a fact that contributes to workers' commitment to their organization.

CONCLUSION

From the study findings described in the previous section, it can be concluded that the organization studied exhibited much of the various attributes of distributive justice. Among the attributes of distributive justice all attributes studied were found to be positive to the respondents. For instance, the workers considered their salaries to be fair compared to that of other workers, they agreed that they were fairly rewarded for their efforts, had fair distribution of workload among employees and there is a fair apportioning of responsibilities among workers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Results from the study indicate that the organization studied exhibits much of the attributes of justice, with only a few areas left to be ironed out for greater employee commitment. It is through the application of the many attributes of organization that the workers were found to be quite committed to their organization. Majority of the workers expressed their loyalty to the organization, implying that they would choose the same organization when given another chance to decide. However, there is room for further improvement. The study thus recommends that organization needs to work towards improving this element of its justice system.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No potential conflict of interest was recorded by the Authors.



REFERENCES

- Akanbi, A, Ofoegbu, P. & Eugene, O. (2013). Impact of perceived organizational justice on organizational commitment of a food and beverage firm in Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*.vol.3(14)., 207-218.
- Asadullah M. A., Akram A., Imran H., Arain G. A. (2017). When and which employees feel obliged: a personality perspective of how organizational identification develops. *Rev. Psicol. del Trabajo y de las Organ.* 33, 125–135.
- Ashar, M., & Shahbaz, W. (2013). Impact of organizational justice and supportive management on employee's customer oriented behavior in service sector of Pakistan. *3rd International conference on Business Management*, (pp. 1-18). Lahore.
- Bakhshi A., Kuldeep K. & Ekta R. (2009). "Organizational Justice Perceptions as Predictor of Job Satisfaction And Organization Commitment", *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4 (9): pp.145-154.
- Campbell N. S., Perry S. J., Maertz C. P., Jr., Allen D. G., Griffeth R. W. (2013). All you need is... resources: the effects of justice and support on burnout and turnover. *Hum. Relat.* 66, 759–782.
- Colquitt, J. (2001). On the dimensionality of organizational justice: a construct validation of a measure. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 86 No. 3, pp. 386-400.
- Colquitt, J. A., Conlon, D. E., Wesson, M. J., Porter, C. O. L. H., & Ng, K. Y. (2001). Justice at the millennium: A meta-analytic review of 25 years of organizational justice research. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86, 425–445.
- Cropanzano, R., Prehar, C., & Chen, P. (2002). Using social exchange theory to distinguish procedural from interactional justice. *Group & Organization Management*, 7, 324–351.
- Gay, L. R. (1996). *Educational research: Competencies for analysis and application*. Columbus: Prentice Hall.
- Ghosh D., Sekiguchi T., Gurunathan L. (2017). Organizational embeddedness as a mediator between justice and in-role performance. *J. Bus. Res.* 75, 130–137.
- Greenberg, J., & Baron, R. (2008). *Behaviors in organization*, Dorling Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd.
- Janssen, O., Lam, C., Huang, X. (2010), Emotional exhaustion and job performance: The moderating roles of distributive justice and positive affect. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 31(6), 787-809.

Karanja, G.W. (2016). Effect of Organizational Justice on Organizational Commitment in Public Secondary Schools and



Commercial Banks in Kenya. Unpublished Ph.D Thesis. Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

- Lambert, G., Hogan, L., & Griffin, L. (2007). The Impact of Distributive and Procedural Justice on Correctional Staff Job Stress, Job Satisfaction, and Organizational Commitment. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 35, 644-656.
- Meyer, J. P., & Herscovitch, L. (2001). Commitment in the workplace: Toward a general model. *Human Resource Management Review*, 11(3), 299-326.
- Özbek M. F., Yoldash M. A., Tang T. L. P. (2016). Theory of justice, OCB, and individualism: Kyrgyz citizens. *J. Bus. Ethics* 137, 365–382. 10.1007/s10551-015-2553-0
- Ponnu, H., & Chuah, C. (2010). Organizational Commitment, Organizational Justice and Employee Turnover in Malaysia. *African Journal of Business Management*, 4(13), 2676-2685.
- Roch, S., & Shanock, L. (2006). Organizational justice in an exchange framework: Clarifying organizational justice distinctions. *Journal of Management*, 32, 299–322.
- Sandin, D. & Simolin, T. (2006). Public Relations as Perceived and Practiced By Commercial Banks. Unpublished Master's Thesis. Lulea University of Technology.
- Usmani S., Jamal S. (2013). Impact of distributive justice, procedural justice, interactional justice, temporal justice, spatial justice on job satisfaction of banking employees. *Rev. Integr. Bus. Econ. Res.* 2, 351.
- Zaman, G., Ali, N., & Ali, N. (2010). Impact of Organizational Justice on Employees Outcomes: An Empirical Evidence. *Abasyn Journal of Social Sciences*, 3(1).

