



The Influence of Interactional Justice and Organizational Support on Organizational Commitment Among The Academic Staff Of Benue State University, Makurdi

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ABSTRACT

This study employed cross sectional survey method to examine the influence of interactional Justice and organizational support on organizational commitment among the lecturers of Benue State University, Makurdi. A total of 221 respondents were sampled, out of which 136 (61.5%) were males and 85 (38.5%) were females. The respondents were in the age range of 25-62 years with a mean age of 40.6 years. Organizational Commitment Scale (OCS), Organizational Support Scale (OSS) and Interactional Justice Scale (IJS) were used for data collection. Three hypotheses were tested using regression analysis. It was found that organizational support has a significant influence on organizational commitment among lecturers. There was a significant influence of interactional justice on organizational commitment among lecturers. There was a significant joint influence of organizational support and interactional justice on organizational commitment among lecturers. Based on these findings, it was recommended that management of Nigerian universities should come out with supportive policies as a way of motivating lecturers to be committed to their job. Also, management of Nigerian universities should encourage lecturers to see themselves as equals to avoid unnecessary rancour that hampers commitment to work. Lecturers should be committed to their work so as to win to themselves the necessary organizational support.

Keywords: Interactional Justice, organizational Support, Organisational Commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Commitment is an important variable in organizational behavior research. Organizational commitment could be referred to as the extent to which an employee develops an attachment and feels a sense of allegiance to his or her employer (Mullins, 1999). According to Mullins (1999), committed employees in any organization must possess three major characteristics of: sense of belonging to the organization, sense of excitement in the job, and confidence in management leadership. This commitment entails a number of things such as using time constructively, paying attention to details, making extra effort to attain the organizational goals and so on.

Organizational commitment has been the focus of attention both in management literature and research for the past four decades. According to Cohen (2007), employee commitment is not limited to national boundaries or particular organizations, but is a universal issue and needs further research. It plays a key role in attaching the employees to the organization in such a way that the more organizational commitment is deeper, the longer employees continue to stay with the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Cohen, 2007; Martin, 2007; Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004). Knowing that management strategies dependent on control are not suitable to manage educational institutions; administrators try to

perform strategies based on commitment to manage such organizations (Martin, 2007; Winter & Jackson, 2006).

In the university system, one of the most important factors of success is lecturers' commitment (Aminbidokhti & Salehpoor, 2007; Bhatnagar, 2007; Davoodipoor, Ahancheyan, & Rezvani, 2008; Hossaini, Amirtash, & Mozafari, 2005). Lecturing is one of the professions that need high commitment; the workload is heavy, the role is broad and the lecturers are committed and responsible in educating the students. Lecturers strong in organizational commitment find it easy to be interested in whatever they are doing and can involve themselves unconditionally. Without commitment, some may even leave the profession and in such a case they no longer feel committed to their job, they would probably shirk in their daily duties which absolutely cause other horrible effects, especially to the students (Khatibi, Asadi, & Hamidi, 2009; Yaghobi, Yarmohammadyan, & Javadi, 2007).

Consequently, lecturers as the pivot role of educational systems, have critical and significant roles in building the future of students. Pertaining this, educational leaders as well as administrators should be aware of the factors that have contributions in making lecturers committed to the educational institutions. One of these many critical variables is organizational support. Employees want support by their organizations, as supported ones might use their knowledge and skills at top level to be beneficial for their organizations. Besides, as long as their expectations are met in their organization, they work more to meet organizational goals (Rhoades & Eisenberger 2002). Meeting staff expectations, benefits and appreciating their efforts may lead them to produce their positive efforts towards achieving organization goals. In addition, the value that organization gives to the employees such as employee recognition, financial support and training may indicate that they are accepted and wanted in various institutions. As a result of this feeling, they work more towards organizational goals (Demircan & Yildiz 2009).

Organizations should support their workers in multiple ways to keep them in their structures and benefit from their performances. It is known that supported employees have tendency to think positively about their organizations. When they keep motivated staff in their organizations and benefit from them effectively, they have a chance to survive and become successful (Demircan & Yildiz 2009). Organizations that support their staff positively can benefit from their knowledge and skills. By doing so, they may also have a chance to create organizational commitment because committed staff is supposed to have higher feeling of responsibility in terms of performance, task and roles comparing those who are not (Demircan & Yildiz 2009).

Having and sustaining good relationship between university management and Lecturers is important for achieving educational goals. Results that were obtained from the research conducted in educational field in many different organizations generally revealed that organizational support has positive influence on organizational commitment (Cheung & Law 2008; Jeongkoo & Thye 2002; Kaplan & Ogut 2012; Kose & Gonulluoglu 2010; Ozdevecioglu 2003; Turunc & Celik 2010). Having this, it is considered that organizational support for lecturers might have positive influence on their organizational commitment as well.

Another factor that seems to influence commitment of lecturers is organizational justice, most especially. Interactional Justice (IJ), which was propounded by Bias and Moag (2006), implies respect and honesty in the conduct of social interaction with people. It is as follow-up of procedural justice. Interactional justice is a way that transfers organizational justice by supervisors (Vice-chancellors) to lecturers (Blakely, Andrews & Moorman, 2005). Lecturers (employees) are sensitive to the Vice-Chancellor communicating with them and respecting them during Interactional justice. Expectedly, Vice-chancellors rational assessments, the degree of respect in their approaching to lecturers have importance for the employees (Greenberg, 2007).

Thus interactional justice involves considering interpersonal communication related with procedures as fair. Interactive justice is a concept that concerns perceptions of employees about the treatment they have received during the application of organizational policies. According to Folger and Bies (1989), indicators of the existence of interactive justice are demonstrating due respect to employees, introducing consistent criteria, giving feedback on time and behaving appropriately and sincerely. According to the results of a

study conducted by Wasti (2001), the perception of positive interactive justice increases the positive commitment that employees feel towards the organization.

With regards to interactive justice, Ajala (2000) asserted that the way a person perceives his surroundings influence the way that a person actually behaves in that environment. In brief, a sense of interactive justice in the school workplace is dependent upon administrative behaviours are equity, sensitivity the plight of lecturers, respect, honesty and ethical interactions (Hoy & Miskel, 2005). Fox (2008) opined that a positive interactive justice makes the school a good place to be, a satisfying and meaningful situation in which people spend a substantial portion of their time. This implies that lecturers from universities with better environment, do better in research work, enjoying welfare scheme, have access to better teaching facilities, perform better and feel fulfilled than those with perceived negative interactive justice.

Hypotheses

- i. Organizational support will significantly predict organizational commitment among lecturers.
- ii. Interactive justice will significantly predict organizational commitment among lecturers.
- iii. Organizational support and interactive justice will jointly predict organizational commitment among lecturers.

METHOD

Participants

The study consisted of 221 participants drawn from teaching staff across eight faculties of the Benue State University, Makurdi. Out of this total number, 136 (61.5%) were males and 85 (38.5%) were females. Distribution according to age revealed that respondents were in the age range of 25-62 with the mean age of 40.6 years. Results indicated that 71 (32.1%) of the respondents were senior lecturers and 149 (67.4%) were in the junior cadre and 1 (.5%) did not indicate cadre. The study was also made up of 13 (5.9%) single, 188 (85.1%) married and 14 (6.3%) divorced. Also data showed that 4(1.8%) and 2 (0.9%) lost their partners through death and separated respectively. The distribution of respondents according to ethnic groups showed 101(45.7%) were Tiv, 65 (29.4%) were Idoma, 34 (15.4%) from Igede tribe and 21 (9.5%) of the respondents were drawn from other tribes without specifications. The religious affinity of respondents indicated that 160 (72.4%) were of Christian faith, 49 (22.2%) were Muslims and 12 (5.4%) did not indicate their religions.

Research Instruments:

Data for this study were collected using two scales which include Organizational Commitment Scale (OCS), Organizational Support Scale (OSS) and Interactive Justice Scale (IJS).

i. Organizational Commitment Scale (OCS)

Organizational commitment Scale is a 22-item instrument developed by Meyer and Allen (1997) that contains statements that describe participants' commitment to the organization in which they worked, such as "I enjoy discussing my organization with people outside of it". Participants indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement on a 7 point Likert-type Scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). All the items 2, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 are scored directly, while items 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 are scored in a reverse order. The scale items has overall reliability coefficient .84 (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

ii. Perceived Organizational Support Scale (POSS)

Perceived organizational support will be measured using a 12-item questionnaire developed by Eisenberger *et al.* (1986). For answers to the statements of survey, a Likert-type scale anchored on 6 points was used. The scale levels were: Strongly disagree = 0, Disagree = 1, Slightly Agree = 2, Neutral = 3, Slightly Agree = 4, Agree = 5, Strongly agree = 6. Factor analytic evidence from previous studies suggested that this survey forms a single factor and possesses adequate internal reliability (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986).

iii. Interactive Justice Scale (IJS)

Interactive justice is to be measured using a 4-item questionnaire developed by Bie and Moag (1986). All items use a 5-point scale with anchors of 1 = to a small extent and 5 = to a large extent. Item analytic evidence shows that the items possess adequate internal reliability coefficient of .79 (Bie & Moag, 1986).

Procedure

After taking permission from the university authority, the researcher proceeded and obtained informed consent of the lecturers. Thereafter, questionnaires were administered among them. After 2 days the questionnaires were returned. Out of the 339 questionnaire administered 118 (34.8%) were not correctly filled and were discarded remaining 221 giving the response rate of 65.2%. This is because some lecturers showed lukewarm attitude towards participating in the study. Consequently respondents were debriefed in accordance with research ethics in psychology.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected for this study were analyzed using regression analysis to determine the relationship between organizational support as well as interactive justice and organizational commitment. Also, simple percentages and descriptive statistics were used to analyze demographic data.

RESULTS

Hypotheses I: This hypothesis states that there will be a significant relationship between organizational support and organizational commitment among lecturers.

This hypothesis was tested using Regression Analysis and the results are tabulated and interpreted as shown below.

Table 1: Regression analysis showing relationship between organizational support and organizational commitment among lecturers

Variables	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>	<i>β</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	.246	.062	14.157		6.727	.000
Org. Support				.246	3.763	.000

Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment

The results presented in table 1 above, showed that there was a significant relationship between organizational support and organizational commitment among lecturers ($R = .246 = R^2 = .062$ ($F(1, 219) = 14.157, t = 6.727, p < .05$). This means that organizational support contributed to variation in organizational commitment. This finding implies that higher level of organizational support is likely to bring about higher degree of organizational commitment among lecturers. Therefore, this hypothesis has been accepted and the null hypothesis rejected.

Hypotheses II: This hypothesis states that there will be a significant relationship between interactional justice and organizational commitment among lecturers.

This hypothesis was tested using Regression Analysis and the results are tabulated and interpreted as shown below.

Table 2: Regression analysis showing relationship between interactional justice and organizational commitment among lecturers

Variables	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>	<i>β</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	.326	.106	25.953		5.916	.000
Interactional justice				.326	5.094	.000

Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment

The results presented in table 2 above indicated that there was a significant relationship between interactional justice and organizational commitment among lecturers ($R = .326 = R^2 = .106$ ($F(1, 219) = 25.953, t = 5.916, p < .05$). This means that interactional justice contributed to variation in organizational

commitment. This finding implies that higher level of interactional justice is likely to leads to higher level of organizational commitment among lecturers. Therefore, this hypothesis has been accepted and the null hypothesis rejected.

Hypotheses III: This hypothesis states that organizational support and interactional justice will jointly predict organizational commitment among lecturers.

This hypothesis was tested using Regression Analysis and the results are tabulated and interpreted as shown below.

Table 3: Regression analysis showing the joint influence of organizational support and interactional justice on organizational commitment among lecturers

Variables	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>F</i>	β	<i>T</i>	<i>p</i>
Constant	.382	.148	18.653		2.443	.015
Org. Support				.203	3.203	.002
Interactional Justice				.295	4.670	.000

Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment

The results presented in table 3 above revealed that there was a significant joint influence of organizational support and interactional justice on organizational commitment among lecturers ($R = .382 = R^2 = .148$ ($F(2, 318) = 2.443, p < .05$). This means that organizational support and interactional justice jointly contributed to 14.8% variation in organizational commitment among lecturers. The results further showed that organizational interactional justice significantly makes the strongest unique contribution to explaining organizational commitment, when the variance explained by interactional justice is controlled for ($\beta = .295, p < .05$). The Beta value of organizational support made strong contribution (.203, $p < .05$) lower than interactional justice indicating that it made less of a unique contribution to commitment when organizational interactional justice is controlled for. Therefore, this hypothesis has been accepted and the null hypothesis rejected.

DISCUSSION

The discussion of findings was done according to the tested and verified hypotheses. Hypothesis I was tested and it was found that there was a significant positive relationship between organizational support and organizational commitment among lecturers. This means that the higher the level of organizational support, the higher the level of organizational commitment exhibited by lecturers. This further means that support in organizations has been a major boost to the morale of lecturers to be committed to their work. This may be due to the fact that lecturers enjoy a sense of belonging when organizational support is high. This finding is in line with Gündüz's (2014) finding which revealed that the more lecturers' organizational support perceptions increase, the higher their commitment.

Secondly, it was found that there was a significant positive relationship between interactional justice and organizational commitment. This means that the higher the level of interactional justice, the higher the level of organizational commitment. This finding is convincing because naturally all human beings want to be treated equally. Therefore, when workers are given fair treatment in terms of promotion, pay and other rights and privileges, they tend to be committed towards achieving organizational goals. However, when the opposite is the case, workers naturally develop lukewarm attitude to job performance and they tend to jettison the spirit of identification with and involvement in their organizations. The worst aspect of it all is when selective justice is in practice.

This finding tallies finding of Jawad, *et al.*'s (2012) which showed that perceived fairness in distributive, procedural and interactional justice's leads towards high level of commitment among Pakistani workers. They posited that positive work attitudes are taken as highly effective towards the organizational commitment. Furthermore, this finding is in support of finding by Ladebo, *et al.* (2008) which showed that fairness from both supervisors and co-workers were negatively related to job distress and aggressive behaviours among Nigerian agricultural employees. These scholars further found out that employees responded with dissatisfaction to unfair treatments from their supervisors. Finally, this finding

collaborated the research outcome by Elpine, *et al.* (2002) who found out after examining the relationship between perceptions of unfairness at work and absenteeism during a one-year follow-up of workers that a series of structural equation modelling analyses offer support for the mediating role of health complaints in the relationship between (distributive and procedural) unfairness at work and absenteeism. Moreover, their findings demonstrated that perceived unfairness contributes to explaining absenteeism in the work place. From these current and previous findings, it can be inferred that organizational support promotes the sense of commitment and Nigerian lecturers.

Hypothesis three was tested and it was found that organizational support and interactional justice have significant joint influence on organizational commitment. This implies that organizational support and interactional justice are co-determinants of organizational commitment among lecturers. It therefore, means that high level of university support with a corresponding appreciable level of interactional justice can give rise to high organizational commitment among lecturers. Whereas, low level of organizational support coupled with insignificant level of interactional justice may lead to decline in level of commitment among lecturers.

CONCLUSION

This study examined organizational support, interactional justice and organizational commitment among lecturers of Benue State University, Makurdi. In the course of this study, theories and empirical literature were reviewed, data were collected and tested. Based on the results, it was concluded that organizational support has positive influence on organizational commitment of university lecturers. Also, interactional justice influences organizational commitment among lecturers. And organizational support and interactional justice have interactive effect on organizational commitment of university lecturers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. Management of Nigerian universities should come out with supportive policies as a way of motivating lecturers to be committed to their job.
- ii. Management of Nigerian universities should encourage lecturers to see themselves as equals to avoid unnecessary rancour that hampers commitment to work.
- iii. Lecturers should be committed to their work so as to win to themselves the necessary organizational support.

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