



## **Effect of Employees Commitment and Distributive Justice to the Reward of Management Practices in Some Selected Organizations in South East Nigeria**

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### **Author's contribution**

*The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.*

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study focused on understanding the influence of employee commitment and distributive justice to the reward of Management practices and its performance in some selected organizations in south East Nigeria. The data was collected using research questionnaires. Research design was adopted for this study. The sample sizes of 365 persons were used for the analyses. The application of correlation tools and mean likert was employed to evaluate the significant relationship and coefficient of determination of the variables. However, the tools show that there is a strong positive relationship association between the employee commitment and distributive justice in public university. The analysis also shows that there is a strong positive significant relationship in the system. The results also shows that the hypothesis will be accepted which says that there's a strong and positive relationship with employee commitment and distribution of justice to reward of management in South East Nigeria.

*Keywords: Management; organization; employees; distributive analysis; justice; reward.*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Organizations exist to either produce goods or provide services or both in some instances. Achieving this is contingent on the employees and their level of engagement and commitment to the organization. That is to say that the employees are the bedrock of the very existence of any organization. There has been a lot of literature to back this assertion of employees being the most valuable asset at the disposal of any organization; the performance of employees in an organization is one of the most discussed issues in organizational research. Armstrong and Murlis [1] posit that employee performance has been of concern to organizations in the current competitive environment since it is now commonly accepted that employees create an important source of competitive advantage for firms. The readiness of employees to use their imagination, abilities, and knowledge influences the success of an organization [2]. Corroborating this position, Roshna and Rohan [3] state that workers are assets of a firm and they are the brains through which all the process in an organization comes to life.

There appears to be a consensus as to the importance of employee performance in an organization. The important question to be asked at this juncture is what influences the performance of employees. What would make them want to put in their very best to ensure that the existence of their organization in this very volatile and competitive business environment is secured. Answering this very pertinent question would lead to the reasons why employees work in an organization. Many reasons could be attributed to why employees would choose to work for one organization instead of the other or chose to give up their personal life for an organization or chose to be an employee instead of being self-employed. On the very top of these reasons is salary, wages or compensation as the case may be. At this stage of the Nigeria economic development, remuneration, salaries, incentive and other forms of compensation and reward appear to be the most important motivational factor for employees. This is possibly because of the precarious nature of the employment statistics in the country where the unemployment rate is at its peak (41%) and the poverty level is at its zenith. Hence, people want to make ends meet by gaining employment and earning salaries to attend to basic needs. Harrison and Liska [4] in their study posit that the most important reason for gaining employment is

reward; after all, it is the core reason individuals work. The whole gamut of compensation, salaries, wages, fringe benefits, and remuneration are what reward and its management is all about in organizations.

Reward and its management are meant to complement the effort put forth by employees to propagate the wellbeing of the organization. Nnaji-Ihedimma, and Egbunike [5] emphasize that reward management systems are meant to complement and reinforce business strategies. Armstrong, Brown and Reilly [6] cited in Korir and Kipkebut [7] state that reward management in competitive firms are designed in ways that make them to have accurate predictions on their current and future expected results. Mollahosseini, Kahnouji, Shamsiyeh and Kahnouji [8] opine that reward management systems should be designed in a way that ensures maximum benefits for an organization. A well-designed reward system creates a sense of belonging among employees in an organization [9]. In the same way that reward management can necessitate positive performance like increase in employee commitment, improvement in job satisfaction and increase in the desire to be good organization ambassador, so also can reward if not properly management can lead to dampening of moral, reduced engagement in the organization and increase in the intention to leave the organization which seem to be the case in the selected institution which is Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra. It was observed that the performance of the non-teaching staff is not as it is supposed and this seems to be as a result of reward management issues. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to ascertain the relationship that existing between distributive justice and employee commitment in the selected public universities in the South East Nigeria.

## **2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **2.1 Distributive Justice**

Most employees as has been observed by researchers do not just care about what they receive but the fairness in what they receive when compared to their contribution to the organization. This is what distributive justice is all about. It talks about the fairness of the reward being given to employees in exchange for their contribution to the organization's wellbeing. Turinawe [10] states that it is not solely about the amount of money employees receive, but the

fairness of what is received. He went further to state that employees are satisfied when they feel that they have been fairly treated and when the rewards they receive are equal to the ones their colleagues who have the same skills, expertise, and effort, receive. The study of fairness has taken centre stage in the organization's studies and other related fields. Dalvi & Ebrahimi, [9] states that the study of fairness has received major research attention from variety of disciplines which includes economics, psychology, law, and organizational science. This is possibly because fairness determines to a great extent the behavior and attitudes of employees in organizations. Parker and Wright [11] opine that justice and fairness is a key issue for understanding organizational behavior.

Fairness in what the employees receive is what is referred to as distributive justice. Jiang et al, [12] posit that distributive justice is related to the perceived fairness of outcomes or rewards in establishments. It refers to the fairness of the distributed outcomes such as rewards [13]. People have to believe that the pay they earn is fair in relation to the work they do. They also must feel that their compensation, including salary, incentives, and benefits, compares favorably with the realities of the market, especially in comparison to people doing the same work in similar circumstances [11]. To Cropanzano et al., (2007), distributive justice is the fairness in awarding outcome among employees on the basis of equity, equality, and need. Distributive justice has its root in Equity Theory as opined by Elanain (2010) who states that distributive justice stems from equity theory. According to equity theorists, individuals compare a ratio of their perceived inputs to outcomes derived from a relationship with that of a referent other. If the ratios are equal, the individual perceives distributive justice. If the ratios are unequal, the individual will perceive inequity. Distributive justice looks at the extent to which rewards and punishments are linked to job performance. As Equity Theory suggests, perceived equity appears to lead to greater job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Cropanzano et al., (2007).

Perceptions about distributive justice are primarily shaped by comparisons. In reality, employees evaluate their reward and position by making a comparison with the persons staying in the same stratum [14] within the organization or with persons having a similar position outside the organization. If the outcome of the comparison is

negative, it will lead to a high rate of absenteeism, intention to leave the organization and discord [15]. But when it is positive, it leads to a favorable organizational outcome. If fairness is perceived in the distribution of reward, it plays an effective role between work outcomes and employee satisfaction which in turn lead to organizational effectiveness and commitment [14].

Management of reward practices in organizations has a lot to do with fairness. If rewards are not perceived to be fair by the employees, then the reward practices and processes might end in a fiasco. Mahender [16] corroborates this claim when he states that reward management can be achieved by developing and implementing strategies, policies, processes, and practices with the help of principles such as reward philosophy, justice in a distributive manner, fairness, equity, consistency, and transparency. Reward is seen as effective on when they are fair. This implies building in transparency with respect to information about how the reward system operates and how employees are rewarded [17].

## **2.2 Employee Commitment**

Employee commitment over the years is one of the most studied constructs used in determining the performance of employees in an organization. This is because, for organizations to perform at their best, they need highly committed workers who are willing to give their all to ensure that the goals and objectives of the organizations are achieved. Nnaji-Ihedinmah and Egbunike [5] observe that organizations need effectively and efficiently committed employees in order to enable them to achieve their objectives. Employee commitment has to do with the level of engagement, loyalty and sacrifice employees are willing to make for the good of the organization where they work. Armstrong [18] states that employee commitment is the loyalty and attachment that employee has in an organization and it is associated with their feelings about the institution. It involves an employee's devotion and the willingness to exert effort on behalf of an organization [19].

Organizational commitment refers to the degree to which a person identifies with, and feels part of an organization or company [20]. An individual who has high organizational commitment is considered very loyal, which brings about a number of organizational benefits such as higher

productivity, better work quality, higher employee morale, reduced turn over and more employee willingness to exert extra effort. Employee commitment in employees through reward systems is crucial to attracting, motivating and retaining the human capital necessary for corporate success [10]. Allen and Meyer [21] developed a measure of organizational commitment with three major components:

1. The affective component of commitment which refers to employees' emotional attachment, identification, and involvement in the organization;
2. Continuance component which refers to commitment based on the costs that employees associate with leaving the organization;
3. Normative commitment reflects an employee's feeling of obligation to remain with the organization (cited in Sarmad, 2007; Ayeni & Phopoola Omar [22], Olfen, & Roe, 2007).

Karami et al. (2013) noted that appropriate timely and effective reward enhances employees' motivation which in turn leads to improved commitment as well as achievement of organizational goals. Ihionkhan and Aigbomian (2014) argue that reward management strategies can be used to increase employee commitment by creating a sense of belonging in the organization. Jiang et al. [12] argue that rewards management systems influence the efficiency of an organization and it also helps it to achieve its goals by increasing motivation and commitment. Danish [23] emphasizes that effective reward management leads to increased employee motivation and this may, in turn, enhance employee commitment. However, for a reward to be able to be used in eliciting commitment from employees, it has to be properly managed. This was aptly captured by [18] who opines that when rewards are well managed, the desired commitment is achieved efficiently and effectively since the employees get a sense of mutual gain.

### **2.3 Theoretical Exposition for Distributive Justice and Employee Commitment**

There is evidence in extant literature as to the relationship between distributive justice and performance of employee in general and the commitment of workers in particular. Fatt, Khin and Heng [24] states that current studies have shown that managers were able to cut unwarranted employee attrition via fair

distribution of reward as the most critical factor driving employee satisfaction and commitment. Their study revealed that distributive and procedural justice has momentous relationship with employee's job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention. Asim, Naveed, Kiran, Muhammad and Faizan [25] showed that distributive and procedural justice both has remarkable and positive effects on organizational commitment of the employees. Similarly, Gim and Desa [26] showed that distributive and procedural justice was significantly and positively related to affective commitment, which in turn was significantly and negatively related to turnover intention. Ndungu [27] revealed a significantly positive relationship between reward and recognition, with employee performance of distributive justice and interactional justice on job satisfaction. Kanwal, Nosheen, Mehwish and Adnan [28] indicated that both distributive and procedural justice has positive and significant relationship with three dimensions of organizational commitment. Korir and Kipkebut [7] showed that there was a modest significant positive relationship between financial rewards and affective commitment and Ndungu also found that financial reward management practices jointly have significant effect on organizational commitment. Fatt, Khin and Heng [24] opine that employees were more satisfied and committed when they felt they were rewarded fairly for the work they have done by making sure rewards were for genuine contributions to the firm and consistent with the reward policies.

## **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

This study adopted a survey research design. This is because this study seeks to elicit data for analysis through the use of a questionnaire. A survey research design is such that collects data from people about variables through a questionnaire, observation or interview. Data were collected on distributive justice and employee commitment and its decomposed components.

### **3.2 Population of the Study**

The population of the study consists of all the academic and non-academic staff in the selected university. The distribution of the population is given in the Table 1.

**Table 1. Population distribution**

S/N	State	Organizations	Population
1	Anambra	Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka (UNIZIK)	7411
	Total		7411

Source: Field Survey, 2020, Statistics Unit of the Personnel Department of the Studied Institution

Table 1 shows the distribution of the population among the three studied organization. From the table, it shows that UNIZIK used a total of 7411 staff for the population.

### 3.3 Sample Size Determination and Sampling Technique

The sample size of the study was determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula. The formula is given thus:

$$s = \frac{X^2 NP(1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + X^2 P(1-P)} \quad (1)$$

Where: S = Sample size;  $X^2$  = Table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at 0.05% confidence level; N = population size (7411); P = population proportion (assumed to be 0.5 since this would provide the maximum sample size).

d = Degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (0.05)

$$S = \frac{3.84 (7411)(0.5)(1-0.5)}{(0.05)^2(7411-1) + (3.84) (0.5)(1-0.5)}$$

$$S = \frac{7115}{18.525 + 0.96}$$

$$S = \frac{7115}{19.485} = 365 \quad S \cong 365$$

Bowley's proportionate allocation formula was used in distributing the copies of the questionnaire in proportion to the population of the organizations studied. The formula is as follows:

$$nh = \frac{nNh}{N} \quad (2)$$

Where: n = total sample size; Nh = Number of items in each stratum in the population

N = population size.

### 3.4 Sources of Data

The sources of data for this study were both primary and secondary sources. Questionnaire instrument constitutes the primary source while

journal articles and materials, textbooks and the internet constitute secondary sources.

### 3.5 Research Question

What is the relationship existing between Distributive Justice and Employee Commitment in the selected Public Universities in the South East?

Table 2 shows the distribution of responses and descriptive statistics for Distributive Justice and Employee Commitment in the selected Public University in the South East. The mean of the individual questionnaire items was used to ascertain whether cumulatively, they agree to or reject a question. The threshold for acceptance of a questionnaire item as being true is  $3 (5 + 4 + 3 + 2 + 1 = 15 \div 5 = 3)$

For the independent variable (Distributive Justice) when the respondents were asked whether what they receive in form of pay is comparable to what they put into the organization, a mean of 2.32 which is lesser than the threshold of 3 shows that they do not agree that what they receive is commensurate with their effort. However, when they were asked to respond to whether they were not being cheated when it comes to rewarding them in my organization, they agreed with a mean of 3.51 which is higher than the benchmark of 3. They rejected that they are being fairly treated in the organization using reward system as a measurement instrument with a mean of 2.21. Similarly, they also rejected that their organizations are fair when it comes to rewarding them according to their contributions with a mean of 2.47. The respondents through their responses to the questionnaire do not believe that people that do the same kind of jobs in their organization are rewarded equally with a mean 2.98 rejecting it.

For the dependent variable (Employee Commitment), using the same threshold of 3 to determine whether to reject or accept a questionnaire item, the respondents agreed that they will be more loyal to their organization if they are rewarded justly with a mean 3.65. Similarly, they agreed that how fair their reward is in the

organization determines how committed they are to their organization with a mean of 4.10. A mean of 3.19 shows that the respondents only marginally agreed that they are motivated to perform better in their organization because they are not cheated when it comes to rewarding performance. With a mean of 3.87, the respondents also agreed that the reward system in their organization does not encourage them to put in extra effort. Finally, in this section, they overwhelmingly agreed that they are discouraged to perform well because what they receive in return for their performance is not fair with a mean of 4.06.

### 3.6 Test of Hypotheses

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship existing between Distributive Justice and Employee

Commitment in the selected Public University in the South East.

Table 3 shows the correlation analysis carried out between Distributive Justice and Employee Commitment in the selected Public University in the South East. The correlation coefficient obtained was .894 which shows that the relationship is very strong and positive the correlation is seen to be 0.000 significant.

Table 4 indicates the test of significance for hypothesis one. It revealed that at 0.05 level of significant and at 314 degrees of freedom, the critical r is 0.098. The calculated r (.894) is greater than the critical r (cal. r .893 > crit. r 0.098), therefore, the research hypothesis is accepted.

**Table 2. Distribution of responses for distributive justice and employee commitment**

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA (5)	A (4)	UD (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean	Decision
<b>Distributive Justice</b>								
1	What I receive in form of pay is comparable to what I put into the organization.	32	56	10	102	116	2.32	Reject
2	I am not being cheated when it comes to rewarding me in my organization.	78	121	-	117	-	3.51	Accept
3	I am fairly treated in my organization using reward system as a measurement instrument.	12	79	03	90	132	2.21	Reject
4	My organization is fair when it comes to rewarding me according to my contributions.	32	68	16	101	99	2.47	Reject
5	People that do the same kind of jobs in my organization are rewarded equally.	78	25	79	80	54	2.98	Reject
<b>Employee Commitment</b>								
6	I will be more loyal to my organization if I am rewarded justly.	132	163	-	21	-	3.65	Accept
7	How fair my reward is in the organization determines how committed I am to my organization.	181	70	01	43	21	4.10	Accept
8	I am motivated to perform better in the organization because I am not cheated when it comes to rewarding performance.	79	68	21	130	18	3.19	Accept
9	The reward system in my organization does not encourage me to put in extra effort.	67	191	08	50	-	3.87	Accept
10	I am discouraged to perform well because what I receive in return for my performance is not fair.	130	131	-	55	-	4.06	Accept

Source: Field Survey, 2020

**Table 3. Correlation analysis for distributive justice and employee commitment**

		Correlations	
		DISTJUST	EMPCOM
DISTJUST	Pearson Correlation	1	.894**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	316	316
EMPCOM	Pearson Correlation	.894**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	316	316

Source: Field Survey, 2020; Where: DISTJUST = Distributive Justice; EMPCOM = Employee Commitment

**Table 4. Significance test for hypothesis**

N	Cal. r	DF	Crit. r.	Remark
316	.894	314	0.098	Significant

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

#### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The hypotheses of the study were empirically analyzed through the use of correlation analysis and findings were made. From the first test of hypothesis, it was confirmed that there is a significant positive relationship existing between distributive justice and employee commitment in the selected public university in the South East. Thus, leads to the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis. What this result implies is that the more there is justice and fairness in the distribution or allocation of reward packages in the institutions, the more the employees will be committed to the organization. Staff will exhibit tendencies of commitment when they know that there is no form of skewness or bias in the reward they receive, that the reward system and management is fair to all. This result is consistent with the result of other researchers that have carried out similar studies in other areas, countries or organizations. The study of Kanwal, Nosheen, Mehwish and Adnan [28] examined the relationship of distributive justice and procedural justice and organizational commitment in public sector of Pakistan. From the result, it was revealed that both distributive and procedural justice positively and significantly correlates with three constructs of organizational commitment which are identification, affiliation and exchange commitment. Also, Asim, Naveed, Kiran, Muhammad and Faizan [25] who examined the effects of organizational justice on organizational commitment focusing on distributive and procedural justice found that that distributive and procedural justice both have notable and positive effects organizational

commitment of the employees. Similarly, Gim and Desa [26] that examined the impact of distributive and procedural justice on turnover intention through affective commitment found that distributive and procedural justice were significantly and positively related to affective commitment, which in turn was significantly and negatively related to turnover intention. Also aligning with the findings of the present study is that of Fatt, Khin and Heng [24] who analyzed the impact of organizational justice as encompassed by two components, namely distributive justice and procedural justice on employee's job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. The results supported the hypothesis that distributive and procedural justice has significant relationship with employee's job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intention. Mahmud, Mahbulbul, Farzana and Wafie [29] who investigated the impact of the three facets of organizational justice on employee job satisfaction in Bangladesh also came out with a similar result. The study revealed a significant impact of distributive justice and interactional justice on job satisfaction.

The finding of this study shows that there is a significant relationship which exists between distributive justice and employee commitment in the selected public Universities of South East, Nigeria. cal. r .893 > crit. r 0.098.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

The research has studied the distributive justice and employee commitment. However, the employee commitment is dependent to employee

skills, motivation rate, work efficiency, environmental factors and personal satisfaction in the job. This is owing to the fact that all the decomposed variables of distributive justice and employee commitment had significant positive relationships with each other as paired. The analyses conclude that there is a strong significant relationship between distributive justice and employee commitment in the system. The result is recommended for further wider of the study, for academic purposes and for understanding of distributive justice and employee commitment to management performance and management practices in Nnamdi Azikiwe university Awka, South East, Nigeria.

### **CONSENT**

As per international standard or university standard, respondents' written consent has been collected and preserved by the authors.

### **COMPETING INTERESTS**

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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