



## **Analysis of Organizational Justice, Supervisor Support, and Organizational Commitment: A Case Study of Energy Sector in Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined the relationships between organizational justice, supervisor support, and organizational commitment. A survey study was conducted at the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), using a sample of 201 employees. Three propositions which explained the relationships among the variables were postulated. The findings demonstrate that, university graduates indicated less justice. Moreover, experienced respondents have higher commitment. In addition, low level managers indicated less supervisor support. Finally, married respondents indicated less justice. This study, thus, suggests a new paradigm in which the study of the trio can be based in order to create effective and viable organizations.*

**Keywords:** *Organizational Justice, Supervisor Support, Organizational Commitment, Energy Sector, and Nigeria.*

**JEL Classification:** *M12, M51, M54*

### **1- Introduction**

The interdependence of organizational justice, supervisor's support and organizational commitment are typically expressed in the mutual benefits derivable when the concepts are properly aligned in any given organization.

Organization is a group of people who come together in order to achieve a particular aim (Wehrich, & Koontz, 2005). In order to achieve the aim, certain concepts come to play. The ability to link the concepts together usually enhances organizational profitability. However, such concepts like, organizational justice, supervisor support, and organizational commitment have non-zero relationships. Specifically, these concepts are interwoven. The relationships between organizational justice, supervisor support, and organizational commitment concepts are treated with "kid's gloves" and the outcome of the neglect typically results to organizational conflict. Therefore, all aforesaid concepts should be aligned within the organizations to achieve its desired objectives.

Due to mismanagement of the trio, many organizations compete unfavorably with their counterparts. On the basis of the problems faced by managers are typically caused by the lack of harmony between the three concepts. Organizational justice, supervisor support, and organizational commitment have a significant relationship. In order to maintain mutual benefits

and to enhance the organizational profitability, managers should be acquainted with activities to merge. As a result of aforementioned challenges, the research was performed to drastically demonstrate how the three concepts are correlated. Consequently, this paper aims to assess the relationship between the trios, thereby bringing to fore the interdependence between them. The major objective of the study is to demonstrate the relationships between organizational justice, supervisor support, and organizational commitment.

The specific objectives are:

1. To determine the type of relationships between organizational justice, supervisor support, and organizational commitment.
2. To ascertain whether organizational justice, supervisor support, and organizational commitment have mutual benefits in the Nigerian energy sector.

In line with the relevant objectives, certain research questions that need to be addressed by this work.

- In what manner do the mutual benefits of organizational justice, supervisor support, and organizational commitment? Are they properly brought to bare on the management principles in the Nigerian Energy Sector?

## **2- Literature Review**

### ***Organizational Justice***

Many writers like Stephen P. Robbins, Timothy, Judge and Seems (2008) see organizational justice as an overall perception of what is found in the workplace. Greenberg (1983) sees organizational justice as how an employee judges the behavior of the organization and the resulting attitude and behavior that comes from them. Organizational justice brings about employee antecedent of organizational just perception, in terms of employee participation, communication and justice climate. When employees see themselves as partners in the organization, they perceive higher level of justice. This is because employees feel that they are part of decision making in the organization. Therefore employees feel that they are part of the organization, most times it enhances organizational profitability and employee performance. Another critical antecedent is in the area of communication. When there is free flow of communication in an organization the employee feel higher level of justice. Organizational climate and culture can influence organizational justice.

The outcome of organizational justice is trust (DeConick, 2010). Organizational justice impacts employee performance, when an employee perceived fairness in organization, he/she will be motivated (Cohlier, Charash & Spector, 2001). Organizational commitment will be increased in the organization where there is organizational justice (DeConick, 2010). Organizational justice helps in organizational citizenship behavior, there are actions employees take outside their job specification.

Organizational Justice is a critical concept in any organization. In NNPC, the employees are enjoying organizational justice that is why the organization has been standing tall among its counterpart all over the world.

Coetzee (2005) did a research on organizational justice, and he recommended Affirmative Action (AA) domain in order to advance the understanding of AA fairness. The approach is quiet commendable in Nigeria energy sector where you have AA domain to AA fairness.

In Nigeria energy sector, organizational justice is paramount, as such; it has been helping in the coordination of the industry over the years.

Organizational justice, supervisor support and organizational commitment have a mediating role. Organizational justice therefore, entails equity, fairness. He, that must come to equity, must come with clean hands. When and where an organization is operating high organizational justice, the employee performance is high and this leads to high organizational profitability. There is no doubt that Nigeria energy sector, like NNPC, is standing tall among its counterpart all over the world.

### **Organizational Commitment**

Organizational commitment has been defined by many authors such as Armstrong, Meyer, and Allen. Armstrong (1999) defines it as an attachment and loyalty of an employee as the relative strength of the individual justification with the involvement in a particular organization.

Armstrong (1999) also suggested that organizational commitment is a state of being in which an individual becomes bound by his actions and beliefs that sustain his activities and involvement in an organization. Meyer and Allen's (1991) identified three "mind sets" which can characterize an employee's organizational commitment to the organization.

Organizational commitment is a crucial concept in the enhancement of organizational profitability. When the organizational commitment is high, the tendency for organizational profitability also will be high. High organizational commitment will lead to higher performance (Ryan, 2012). Meyer and Allen (1991) suggest three components of commitments; affective, normative and continuance. He is of the view that job satisfaction is not related to normative organizational commitment in non-profit organizations.

In Nigerian energy sector, such as Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, the three components of commitment, the desire, need and obligation are higher than in non-profit organizations (Emhan, 2012). Additionally, many organizations with high organizational commitment level yield results that the level of organizational justice and supervisor support tends to be higher.

### **Supervisor Support**

Supervisor support is a very crucial concept in any organization. Supervisor support is usually more effective and efficient in decentralized organization than in the centralized one. Where the organizational climate is friendly, the supervisor's support is higher because the supervisor is given free hand to exercise the authority vested upon him.

Powell (2011) opines that supervisor support is the extent to which leaders value their employee's contribution and care about their well being. In an organization where the supervisor is a "9.9" supervisor, that is team supervisor, the subordinates are heard, valued and cared for. A leader with high supervisor support will definitely bring about higher employee performance and a higher yield in organization.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The equity theory of Adam J. Stacy will be used to relate the mutual benefits of organizational justice, supervisor support and organizational commitment. The theory is in support of the relationship among the three concepts. Equity theory of Adam J. Stacy is of the view that motivation is influenced by an individual's subjective judgment about the fairness of the reward he or she gets, relative to the inputs, compared with the reward of others. There should be a balance between the inputs and outputs of an employee input in terms of effort, loyalty, hard work, commitment, ability, trust in supervisor and so on. The output should be in

terms of financial rewards and other intangible rewards like, recognition, sense of achievement, praise, jobs security and so on.

Organizational commitment through the effect of trust in the top management and perceived supervisor support can enhance organizational profitability (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Jeony (2009) suggests that employees need organizational support, and organizational justice, in order to be fully committed to the organization. He concluded that organizational justice positively impacted organizational commitment. This is a true assertion because When there is equity in an organization, the supervisor will be given free hand to exercise his authority, he in turn will support his subordinates. This in general will bring out organizational commitment.

In Nigerian energy sector, the three concepts; organizational justice, supervisor support, and organizational commitment are usually high, and as a result, the industry has been striving in the face of obstacles. The crux of the matter is that the mediatory role of the three concepts cannot be over-emphasized in Nigerian energy sector.

### **Study Hypothesis**

H<sub>1</sub>. Organizational justice positively correlates with supervisor support.

H<sub>2</sub>. Supervisor support positively y correlates with organizational commitment.

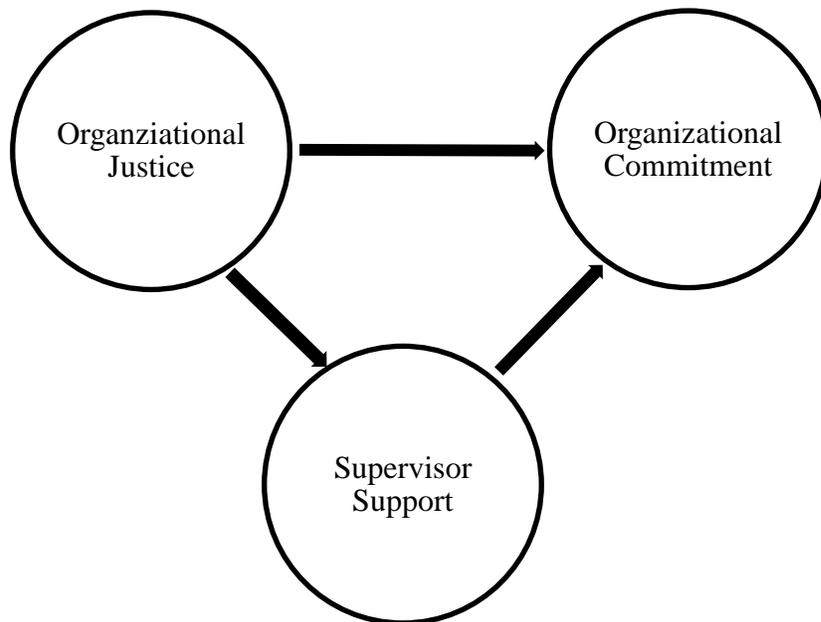
H<sub>3</sub>. Organizational justice positively correlates with organizational commitment.

### **Theoretical Model**

This study has three variables. The conceptual model of this study is presented in Figure

1.

**Figure 1:** Hypothesized Model



### 3- Methodology

**Study Design and Sample:** The research was conducted at the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) in Abuja. Approximately, 300 questionnaires were delivered randomly. Management of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation allowed different divisions to distribute the questionnaires randomly. Subsequently, all the participants were revisited to accumulate the completed questionnaires. A total of 236 survey forms were collected and 35 surveys were excluded from the analysis due to missing data. Thus, exactly 201 (85%) completed questionnaire forms were evaluated for further analysis. All data was collected in 2013.

**The survey instrument:** The survey instrument consisted of questions derived from the literature. There were 5 questions in justice, 7 questions in the supervisor support, and 6 questions in organizational commitment. There was also a demographic information part in the instrument.

a) *Demographic Information:* Information about the demographic characteristics of the participants was collected, covering their age, gender, marital status, education level, occupational rank and total working year.

b) *Organizational Justice Scale:* The scale, developed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993), has been used in numerous studies and these have confirmed its validity and reliability as a measure of organizational justice. organizational justice was measured using 5 questions. A five-point Likert scale was used for each of the 5 questions, scored from 1 to 5 where the number (1) means Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Undecided, (4) Agree, and (5) Strongly Agree. The Cronbach's alpha score for Justice is 0.85.

c) *Supervisor Support Scale:* The scale was adapted by Bakiev (2011) from Nyhan (2000) and Sahin (2010). A five-point Likert scale was used for each of the 7 questions, scored from 1 to 5 where the number (1) means Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Undecided, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly Agree. The Cronbach's alpha score is 0.78. Skewness and Kurtosis scores are between -1 and +2 which indicate that the distribution is normal.

d) *Organizational Commitment Scale:* The scale was adapted by Bakiev (2011) from Nyhan (2000) and Porter-Smith (1970). A five-point Likert scale was used for each of the 5 questions, scored from 1 to 5 where the number (1) means Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Undecided, (4) Agree, (5) Strongly agree. The Cronbach's alpha score is 0.83, Skewness and Kurtosis scores are between -1 and +2 which indicate that the distribution is normal.

SPSS 18.0 software was used to analyze the data using nonparametric test (Mann Whitney U, Kruskal Wallis), correlation and regression tests. The significance level for acceptance was set as  $p < 0.05$ .

### 4- Findings

#### *Demographic Variables*

The distribution of the respondents over the demographic variables is presented in Table 1. A total of 236 employees participated to the survey. As displayed in Table 1. 20% of the respondents are less than 20 years, between 21-40 years is 64.7%, and above 41 is 33.4%. It is notable that there are higher proportions of men (64.7%) than women (35.3%) in the energy sector. Of the 201 respondents, 61.7% is married while 38.3% is single. The majority of the respondents (88.1%) have bachelor degree while only 12% does not have bachelor degree. In addition, 10% of the respondents are top level managers, 27.9% middle level manager, 22.4% low level manager, and 39.8% is in non-managerial positions. According to total working year of

the respondents, 23.9% is less than 5 years, 35.8% is between 6-10 years, 15.9% is between 11-15 years, 3.5% is 16-20 years, and 20.9% is 20 years and above.

**Table 1: Demographic Variables**

| <b>Variable</b>           | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Age</b>                |                  |                   |
| Less than 20              | 4                | 2.0               |
| 21-30                     | 54               | 26.9              |
| 31-40                     | 76               | 37.8              |
| 41-50                     | 55               | 27.4              |
| 50 and above              | 12               | 6.0               |
| <b>Gender</b>             |                  |                   |
| Female                    | 71               | 35.3              |
| Male                      | 130              | 64.7              |
| <b>Marital Status</b>     |                  |                   |
| Married                   | 124              | 61.7              |
| Single                    | 77               | 38.3              |
| <b>Education</b>          |                  |                   |
| Primary school            | 5                | 2.5               |
| Secondary school          | 19               | 9.5               |
| Bachelor                  | 98               | 48.8              |
| Master                    | 75               | 37.3              |
| PhD                       | 4                | 2.0               |
| <b>Occupational Rank</b>  |                  |                   |
| Top level manager         | 20               | 10.0              |
| Middle level manager      | 56               | 27.9              |
| Low level manager         | 45               | 22.4              |
| Employee                  | 50               | 24.9              |
| Other                     | 30               | 14.9              |
| <b>Total Working Year</b> |                  |                   |
| 0-5                       | 48               | 23.9              |
| 6-10                      | 72               | 35.8              |
| 11-15                     | 32               | 15.9              |
| 16-20                     | 7                | 3.5               |
| 20 and above              | 42               | 20.9              |

**n=201**

As displayed in Table 2, organizational justice, supervisor support, and organizational commitment positively correlates with each other. So, research hypotheses H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>, and H<sub>3</sub> were supported.

**Table 2:** Relationship between Organizational Justice, Supervisor Support, and Organizational Commitment

| Variables                    |             | 1 | 2      | 3      |
|------------------------------|-------------|---|--------|--------|
| 1. Organizational Justice    | Correlation | 1 | ,376** | ,484*  |
| 2. Supervisor Support        |             |   | 1      | ,496** |
| 3. Organizational Commitment | Coefficient |   |        | 1      |

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As shown in Table 3, supervisor support and organizational justice variables explain 46% of total variance (Organizational Commitment).

**Table 3:** Regression Analysis of Organizational Commitment, Supervisor Support, and Organizational Justice

| Depent variable           | R <sup>2</sup> | Independent variables  | B    | β    | t     | p     | VIF  |
|---------------------------|----------------|------------------------|------|------|-------|-------|------|
| Organizational Commitment | 0.46           | Supervisor Support     | .458 | .511 | 8,76  | 0.000 | 1.26 |
|                           |                | Organizational Justice | .304 | .275 | 40,70 | 0.000 | 1.26 |

According to demographic variables, some results are presented below:

University graduates indicated less justice and organizational commitment according to other education levels (Z: 7.93, p<0.05; Z: 4.07, p<0.05). However, 16 years working respondents have higher organizational commitment than those who have less working experience (Z: 10.33; p<0.02). Moreover, Low level managers indicated less supervisor support than employees (Z: 4.11; p<0.05). In addition, response rate of justice for married respondents are less than married respondents (Z: 1.99; p<0.05).

## 5- Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between organizational justice, supervisor support, and organizational commitment in Nigeria. Overall, the findings of this study are consistent with the expectations of organizational justice, supervisor support, and organizational commitment in Nigeria (Emhan, 2012). The findings are also in line with previous findings in justice, support, and commitment studies (Bakiev, 2007; Tongur, 2008).

The results of this investigation provide support for the concept that organizational justice and supervisor support have impact upon organizational commitment. The first hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>) proposed that organizational justice positively correlates with supervisor support. This was supported by highly significant correlations between organizational justice and supervisor support. The research also indicated that, supervisor support positively correlates with organizational commitment. According to this result, hypothesis two (H<sub>2</sub>) was significantly

supported. In addition, the correlations between organizational justice and organizational commitment were also positive and significant. This finding reveals that hypothesis three (H<sub>3</sub>) was also significantly supported.

According to the findings of this study, the regression analysis results are in consistent with the correlation analysis results. Supervisor support and organizational justice variables have a significant impact on organizational commitment. The study reveals that, organizational commitment, on a large scale, depends on supervisor's support. However, justice of management has a strong impact on organizational commitment. According to the findings of this study, it can be interpreted that, organizational commitment is directly proportional with the managers who represents the organization.

When education levels of the employees are compared, university graduates indicated less justice and organizational commitment according to other education levels. It can be interpreted from this result that, managers might have less justice by sharing experiences and university graduates might be expecting more justice from top level managers.

However, 16 years working respondents have higher organizational commitment than those who have less working experience. The organizational commitment is one of the indication through which top management can increase supervisor support, as it causes a sense of obligation on employees and this sense results in consideration of employees about organizational well-being and organizational goals (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Based on this finding, employees who have more working experience are more committed and delighted to be a part of their organization. Organizational commitment emphasizes the individual perception of employees on how they are willing to give their extra efforts to the organization, and how they are proud to be a member of their organization (Bakiyev, 2007).

Moreover, low level managers indicated less supervisor support than employees. This study demonstrates that, supervisor support has statistically significant effects on organizational commitment. Supervisor support is very essential for employees to be concerned about their well being and valued for their contributions. They form and develop their behaviors according to this fact in the work environment. The reasons of this fact are first; supervisor represents the organization in employees view, and second; supervisors have authority to evaluate employee's condition, behaviors, and contributions. Therefore, support from supervisor means support from the organization in the subordinates' view (Tongur, 2011). However, top level managers may have less willing to expose support for other employee levels.

Finally, response rate of perceived justice for married respondents are less than non-married respondents. Organizational justice, consist with perception of the employees, influences job satisfaction, commitment, and to become identical for the organization (Yavuz, 2010).

## **6- Conclusion**

It can be concluded that, organizational leaders can satisfactorily influence organizational outcomes by encouraging, engaging, and rewarding organizational commitment in their organizations. Based on the conclusions of this study, several implications can be expressed. For instance, management may be able to improve organizational commitment by encouraging perception of justice such as deciding on a fair manner, and fair rewarding, payment and performance evaluation systems, while at the same time actively boost supervisor support such as, paying attention to what employees are saying, succeeding in getting people to work together, concerning about the welfare of subordinates.

Organizational justice and supervisor support has impact on organizational commitment. It can be concluded that they properly brought to bare on the management principles in the Nigerian Energy Sector.

This study reveals that, organizational justice positively correlates with supervisor support and organizational commitment, besides; supervisor support positively correlates with organizational commitment in Nigerian energy sector.

It is recommended that, more research on organizational commitment, organizational justice, and supervisor support be conducted in developing countries. The lack of research creates blankness in the knowledge, and additionally serves to diminish the economic development and growth of these nations.

The survey was not comprehensive to include all possible energy companies in Nigeria. Therefore this research is limited to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation and the results can take a broad view to energy sectors. The paper contributes to the existing pool of knowledge on the relationships between organizational justice, supervisor support, and organizational commitment. Different aspects of these variables were tested, so as to provide a wider and more comprehensive understanding of the factors that affect organizations and employees.

Moreover, Organizational justice, supervisor support and organizational commitment subjects have not been assessed empirically in Nigeria energy sector. Therefore, the present study has a significant value to practitioners and scholars. From academic viewpoint, this study provides insight into the relationship between justice, supervisor support and commitment, which ought to contribute to the future development of this line of research, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria.

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