

**THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE ON EMPLOYEE  
COMMITMENT; A CASE STUDY OF THE DIRECTORATE OF PUBLIC  
PROSECUTIONS IN NAIROBI COUNTY**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The main purpose of the study was to establish the influence of organizational justice on employee commitment in the Directorate of Public Prosecutions in Nairobi County. Employee commitment is crucial in organizations and one of its predictors is organizational justice. Organizational justice has the potential to create powerful benefits for organizations and employees alike. Organizational commitment is an individual's identification with and involvement in the organization, characterized by a strong belief and acceptance of the organizational goals and values and willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization. The specific objectives of the study were to establish the influence of procedural, distributive, informational and interpersonal justice on employee commitment. The study was conducted using descriptive design. The total population of the Directorate in Nairobi County is 300 employees. Through stratified random sampling, a total of 100 employees was sampled. Data was collected using questionnaires and was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences V.21 (SPSS). Inferential statistics such as correlation and regression was used.*

*Correlation was used to show the relationship between the dependent and independent variables whereas regression analysis was used to measure the effect of the independent variable on dependent variable. The study established that distributive, procedural, informational and interpersonal justice is significant and positively related to employee commitment. It concluded that staff felt that compensation was not fair and commensurate to their job, information sharing not trusted and weak structures put in place, however, resources were equitably allocated. The study recommended fair compensation in ODPP and structures to be reviewed to enhance employee commitment and also improvement of ways in which information is administered to built a sense of belonging among the staff.*

**Key words:** *Organizational Justice on Employee Commitment.*

## **1.0 Introduction**

Organizational justice refers to employee perceptions of fairness in the workplace. These perceptions can be classified into three categories; distributive, procedural and interactional which is divided into interpersonal and informational justice (Kisire, 2010). Armstrong, (2012) continues to say that organizational justice refers to the extent to which employees perceive workplace procedures, interactions and outcomes to be fair in nature. These perceptions can influence attitudes and behavior for good or ill, in turn having a positive or negative impact on employee performance and the organization's success.

According to Hill and Huq (2004), organizational commitment is an individual's identification with and involvement in the organization, characterized by a strong belief and acceptance of the organizational goals and values and willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization. Meyer and Allen (1991) described three components of organizational commitment: affective, continuance and normative. Affective commitment development involves identification with the organization and adoption of organizational values. Continuance commitment is the profit associated with continued participation and a cost associated with leaving the organization and normative commitment is viewed as the commitment employees consider morally right to stay in the organization, regardless of how much status enhancement or satisfaction the firm gives to the employee.

## **1.1 Statement of the problem**

The role of employee commitment in organization success cannot be overemphasized. Cropanzano (2007) argue that employee commitment has crucial benefits such as if employees

perceive that they are being treated fairly by their supervisor, they will be more likely to reciprocate by holding positive attitudes about their work, their work outcomes and their supervisor. Studies indicate that employee commitment is wanting in public sector due to considerable confusion and disagreement about what commitment is, where it is directed, how it develops and how it affects behavior (Meyer and Herscovitch 2001).

According to Kisire, (2010), organizational justice refers to employee perceptions of fairness in the workplace. It is important for the sustainability of value creation. The effectiveness of justice should evaluate the linkages to output measures – not only financial performance, but also lead indicators such as customer, employee, or other stakeholder commitment. A study carried out by Wachira (2003) researched on the relationship between employee commitment and engagement in Barclays Bank and similar studies recommends that the relative contribution of different psychological climate dimensions in determining employee commitment should be investigated because this may provide more specific information about employee perceptions of the organizational environment and how that perceptions increase their commitment.

The discussion at the international level on the legal responsibility of business corporations to guarantee human rights offers a wealth of ideas concerning, inter alia, standards to protect workers from abuses or the environment from unnecessary damage and destruction. However, the development of the law in these important areas is still very much in its infancy especially in the third world countries. The relevance of organizational justice cannot be over emphasized since it constitutes the organizational climate for the internal activities of an organization (Armstrong 2010). Since 1980s, there have been a series of reforms taking shape in the public sector, resulting from increased awareness on the importance of quality in the public sector. According to Cole (2004), organizational justice appeared to be part of a package of management innovations design to reinvent/modernize the public sector.

A number of empirical studies have been conducted to investigate the predictive roles of distributive justice and procedural justice on organizational outcomes. Overall, the results of these studies suggest that distributive justice and procedural justice may be predictive of different attitudes (Greenberg, 1990). In general, distributive justice may be a more important

predictor of personal outcomes such as pay satisfaction, whereas procedural justice may have strong effects on attitudes about institutions or authorities such as organizational commitment and trust in management.

Despite all the efforts to access justice to improve on the service quality offered to customers, evidence shows that there are continued customer complaints (Kisire, 2010). A report by the PWC 2010 indicated that 70% of employees in the public sector are faced with injustices such as unfair promotion and remuneration which hinder their production. The inability to provide quality service that is low responsiveness, low reliability, assurance and lack of empathy to customers may attribute to failure to institute organizational justice and adopt practices that enhance organizational commitment which could improve the service quality of DPP. The Office developed a strategic plan 2011-2015 which outlined the strategic focus of the Office and identified organizational justice as one of the objectives to achieve excellence in delivery of prosecution service.

The Office needs the best people with the right skills who are motivated to deliver on the objectives taking note of core values that will enhance organization justice. To build on this foundation and grow even further, DPP has to attract and retain committed and hardworking professionals in all sectors to ensure the success and service delivery. While there are many studies that have been carried out on employee commitment (Chen & Francesco, 2003) the manifestation of employee commitment as a function of organizational justice has not been done. This study therefore intends to find out the influence of organizational justice on employee commitment.

### 1.3 General Objective

To examine the influence of organization justice on employee commitment in DPP Nairobi County.

#### 1.3.1 Specific objectives

- i. To examine how procedural justice influences commitment in DPP Nairobi County.
- ii. To establish how distributive justice influences commitment in DPP Nairobi County.
- iii. To find out the extent to which informational justice influence commitment in DPP Nairobi

County.

iv. To examine how interpersonal justice influences commitment in DPP Nairobi County?

### 2.1 Social exchange theory

The social exchange framework was formally advanced in the late 1950`s and early 1960`s in the work of sociologists George Homans (1961) and Peter Blau (1964) and the work of social psychologists John Thibaut and Harold Kelley (1959). Over the years, several exchange perspectives, rather than one distinct exchange theory, have evolved. The exchange framework is built upon the combination of the central tenets of behaviorism and elementary economics where human behavior is envisaged as a function of its pay off.

According to Elanain (2009), all relationships have give and take, although the balance of this exchange is not always equal. The theory explains how a relationship is felt with another person as depending on perception of; the balance between what is put into the relationship and what is gotten out of it, the kind of relationship deserved and the chances of having a better relationship with someone else. In deciding what is fair, one develops a comparison level against which we compare the give/take ratio. This level will vary between relationships, with some being more giving and others where we get more from the relationship. They will also vary greatly in what is given and received.

### 2.2 Equity theory

Equity theory focuses on two sides: the input and the outcome. An employee compares his job`s inputs with an outcomes ratio. If the employee perceives inequality, they will act to correct the inequality. The employee may lower productivity or reduce the quality of their job. Many times inequities can lead to an increase in absenteeism and even resignation of an organization (Greenberg, 1999).

Equity or more precisely, inequity is a major concern of industry, labor and government. The fairness of exchange between employees and employer is not usually perceived by the employees as simply as an economic matter, an element of relative justice is involved. Equity theory could be applied to any social situation in which an exchange takes place. When two people exchange something, there is a possibility that one or both will feel that the exchange was

inequitable. This is the case frequently when an individual exchanges his services for pay (Adams, 1963).

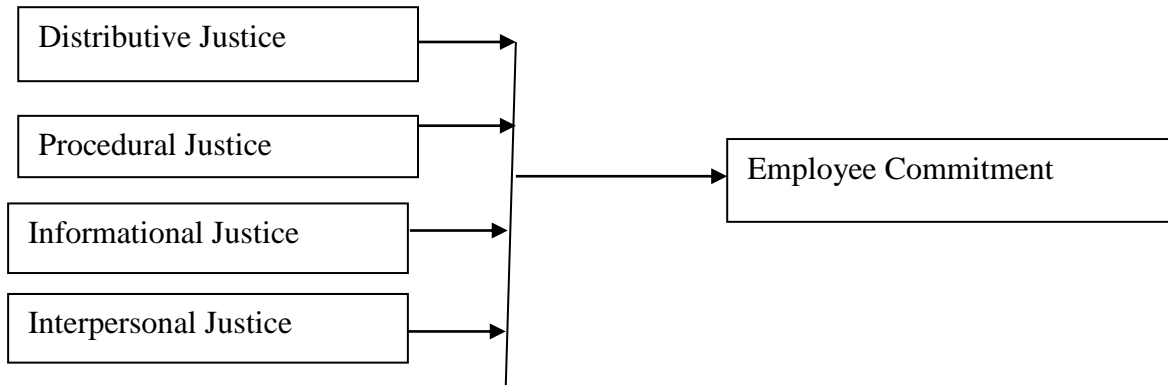
### 2.3 Leader Member Exchange Theory (LMX)

LMX theory states that, because of limited resources and lack of time to devote to each employee, the leader has an opportunity to develop a close social interaction or exchange with only a few essential subordinates (the in-group). This interpersonal social exchange matures and stabilizes into a dyadic relationship (Graen, 1976; Graen and Cashman, 1975; Graen and Scandura, 1987; Liden and Graen, 1980). Employees not in these special relationships are classified as the out-group. For example, when high levels of LMX exist, subordinates see themselves as having good work relationships with their supervisors and as knowing how satisfied their supervisors are with their performance (Graen, Novak, and Sommerkamp, 1982).

The quality of these relationships determines the amount of physical or mental effort, material resources, information, and/or social support exchange between the supervisor and subordinate (Liden, Sparrowe, and Wayne, 1997). Hence, it can be said that a high-quality LMX relationship involves a greater exchange of effort, resources, and support between the two parties, whereas a low-quality LMX relationship is characterized by a minimal exchange of effort, resources, and support between the two parties. A consistent finding of LMX research is that LMX is positively related to employee commitment.

### 2.4 Conceptual Framework

According to Kombo and Tromp (2009), conceptual framework is a set of broad ideas and principles taken from relevant fields of inquiry and used to structure a subsequent presentation. It is a pictorial representation of the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable. The framework developed here is based on three independent variables – distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice- and one dependent variable- employee commitment.

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework****Independent Variables****Dependent Variable**

### 2.5 Empirical Review

A number of empirical studies have been conducted to investigate the predictive roles of distributive justice and procedural justice on organizational outcomes. Overall, the results of these studies suggest that distributive justice and procedural justice may be predictive of different attitudes (Greenberg, 1990). In general, distributive justice may be a more important predictor of personal outcomes such as pay satisfaction (McFarlin and Sweeney, 1992), whereas procedural justice may have strong effects on attitudes about institutions or authorities such as employee commitment and trust in management (Folger and Konovsky, 1989; Lind and Tyler, 1988; McFarlin and Sweeney, 1992). Although individuals reactions may differ depending on the extent to which they focus on outcomes or procedures, both procedural justice and distributive justice contribute to individuals` perceptions of organizational fairness (Schminke, Ambrose, and Noel, 1997).

Interactional justice which incorporates interpersonal and informational justice is related to the quality of relationships between individuals within organizations (Folger and Cropanzano, 1998). In interactional justice, decision makers` treatment of those affected by decisions is crucial because persons identify attitudes as indicators of justice within the organization. It refers to perceptions concerning the way authorities treat their subordinates, and how these subordinates

respond to these perceptions (Masterson et al, 2000; Cohen-Charash and Spector, 2001). Employees are sensitive to the communications they receive regarding the implementation of procedures and the explanations of decisions (Aydin and Karaman-Kapenekci, 2007).

Committed employees can experience a sense of belonging to an organization which results when a person's social identity and employment begins to become embedded with one another. The attachment to the organization may be due to other individuals in the organization (affiliation), to the organization as an entity (identification) or to its mission and values (internalization) or it may derive from an individual's deeply held beliefs. This kind of commitment reflects a desire to be involved in the organization that goes beyond simply the lack of better alternatives hence affective commitment (Steers et al., 1977).

### 3.0 Research Design

According to Glass and Hopkins, (1984) descriptive research which was adopted in this study utilizes elements of both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies within the same study. A blend of the two techniques enriched the data and gave a strong base to the research methodology. Descriptive design is appropriate in gathering information about practical problems, clarifying concepts, in formulating a problem for more precise investigation. When in-depth, narrative descriptions of small numbers of cases are involved, the research uses description as a tool to organize data into patterns that emerge during analysis. Those patterns aid the mind in comprehending a qualitative study and its implications.

### 3.1 Data Collection Instrument

Data was collected using a questionnaire which contained both open-ended and close-ended questions. A questionnaire in general terms include all techniques of data collection in which each person is asked to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order (de Vaus,2002). According to Oppenheim (2001) this method of data collection ensures a high response rate and accurate sampling. The instrument is considered appropriate for the study because all the respondents are literate. It is also less costly in terms of time, and it is more flexible for busy respondents.



### 3.2 Inferential Statistics

Pearson's product moment correlation analysis was used to assess the relationship between the variables while multiple regressions was used to determine the predictive power of the determinants of organization justice on employee commitment in ODPP Nairobi County.

#### (a) Correlation Analysis

**Table 1: Correlation Matrix**

	Procedural justice	Distributive justice	Informatio nal justice	Interpersonal justice	Employee Commitment
Procedural justice	1				
Distributive justice	0.953	1			
Informational justice	0.554	0.853	1		
Interpersonal justice	0.853	0.452	0.418	1	
Employee Commitment	0.965	0.917	0.965	0.871	1

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

The table above indicates the correlation matrix between the factors (Procedural justice, Distributive justice, Informational justice and Interpersonal justice) and Employee commitment. According to the table, there is a positive relationship between Employee commitment and Procedural justice, Distributive justice, Informational justice and Interpersonal justice. The positive relationship indicates that there is a correlation between the factors and the Employee

commitment with Procedural justice having the highest value and Interpersonal justice having the lowest correlation value.

This implies that Procedural justice was the most significant factor, followed by Distributive justice then Informational justice while Interpersonal justice was the least significant among the factors.

### (b) Regression analysis

The researcher conducted a multiple regression analysis so as investigate the influence of organization justice on employee commitment in DPP Nairobi County. In a regression analysis, one of the output is the model which indicates the R, R<sup>2</sup>, adjusted R<sup>2</sup> and standard error of the estimate. R<sup>2</sup> is a statistical measure of how close the data are to the fitted regression line. The researcher applied the statistical package SPSS, to enter and compute the measurements of the multiple regressions for the study.

**Table 2: Multiple Regression Analysis**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	7.978	.984		8.110	.000
Procedural justice,	.770	.117	.721	2.302	.005
Distributive justice	.832	.165	.725	.195	.004
informational justice	.905	.148	.666	2.065	.003
interpersonal justice	.910	.180	.751	2.175	.001

The regression equation ( $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4$ ) was interpreted to mean

$$Y = 7.978 + .770X_1 + .832X_2 + .905X_3 + .910X_4$$

Y = Employee commitment

X<sub>1</sub> is Procedural justice

X<sub>2</sub> Distributive justice,  
X<sub>3</sub> is Informational justice and  
X<sub>4</sub> is the Interpersonal justice.

### 3.3 Discussion of findings

Distributive justice: - both correlation analysis and regression analysis showed that the variables influence employee commitment. This is similar to (Meyer, 2006) who established that distributive justice play a salient role in employee commitment. In addition, the findings brought out the critical role of the fair compensation and recognition in employee commitment. The findings tally with equity theory (1965) that emphasizes the importance of fair compensation.

Procedural justice: - The findings were positive and significant. The study further established that there are no clear processes and structures are not well stipulated. These findings are in line with Tyler & Blunder (2000) who stated that when personnel decisions are made, individuals are likely to receive certain outcomes and therefore procedural justice seems to be essential to maintaining institutional legitimacy structures. Employees are closely interested in not only the fairness of their own outcomes but also the fairness of decision making and enactment processes in outcome distribution. Procedural justice has been interpreted to be most appropriate for reflecting the way employees make judgments concerning the fairness of practices at organizational level.

Informational justice: - The findings established that informational justice was positive and significant. This study tallies with Karaman-Kepenekci (2007) who researched on perceptions concerning the way authorities treat their subordinates, and how these subordinates respond to these perceptions. In his study employees are sensitive to the communications they receive regarding the implementation of procedures, explanations and decisions. The study also established that trust in information in DPP is not adequate and also explanations are not well verified and articulated. Tzafirir et al., (2004) suggests that informational justice is considered an essential intangible resource in modern organizations, without which a passion for excellence may not prevail.

Interpersonal justice: - The findings established that there was deficiency in courtesy and dignity of staff. Armstrong (2010) suggests that courtesy and dignity are the drivers to employee

commitment and should be addressed in organization. This relates to an individual's belief in the honesty, veracity, justice and strength of another individual or an organization (Zeffane & Al Zarooni, 2008).

Commitment: - the study findings indicated that there was lack of personal meaning and also there was lack of feeling of being part of DPP family. Kipkebut (2010) emphasizes the need of belonging as a way of enhancing commitment. Organizational commitment is so important that more recent research works refer to it as 'the human side of quality' (Hill and Huq, 2004). Meyer & Smith (2000) looked at commitment as an individual's identification with and involvement in the organization, characterized by a strong belief and acceptance of the organizational goals and values and a willingness to exert more efforts.

#### 4.0 Conclusion

The study concluded that distributive, procedural, informational and interpersonal justice influences commitment in DPP. On distributive justice, fair compensation was an essential component that has an impact on commitment. Procedural justice influences commitment and processes and structures are essential. Further, informational justice, the study brought out the salient role of information and explanations in enhancing commitment. Lastly, interpersonal justice depicts loyalty, dignity and courtesy as essential on employee commitment. Generally on commitment, the researcher concluded that there is need for a sense of belonging and ways of information sharing to be reviewed to satisfy the employees.

#### 4.1 Recommendations

1. There is need for establishing fair competition in DPP. Employees make judgments on justice distribution by comparing their outcome to their previous outcomes or to the outcomes of others.
2. DPP should develop fair, reliable and equitable human resource systems, practices and procedures that would enable them to ensure that DPP staff are committed. According to the results obtained from the study, it is believed that taking measures that will increase employee commitment, especially reinforcing procedural justice in DPP, will be useful. Therefore, it may be useful to revise processes, procedures and practices..
3. Communication in DPP should be enhanced in order to ensure trust, courtesy and dignity.

The organization needs to ensure a sense of belonging is achieved by investing in staff and nurture employment relations based on trust in order to yield commitment. The DPP needs to understand how to increase employee commitment, by making better decisions and conveying to the parties concerned in good time about the outcomes and procedures. This is because in a work context, without some foundation of trust, social relations cannot develop.

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