Full Length Review Article

INFLUENCE OF SUPERVISOR'S INCIVILITY, PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE AND GENDER ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of supervisors' incivility, perceived organizational justice and gender on organizational commitment among employees in Life Breweries PLC, Onitsha. One hundred and fifty (63 male and 83 female) employees of Life Breweries PLC, Onitsha participated in the study. Three instruments were used in the study namely; Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, Supervisor Incivility Scale and Organizational Justice Scale. Multiple regression was used to analyze the data. Result showed that supervisor's incivility (β=.17, $p<.05$) and organizational justice (β=.18, $p<.05$) significantly influenced organizational commitment. Implications of the findings were discussed and suggestions were made on how to enhance organizational commitment of employees.

INTRODUCTION

Organizational commitment is a key construct for examining the match between individuals and organizations. Employees who are highly committed to their organizational work are willing to devote effort to the organization, identify with the values of the employer, and seek to maintain their affiliation with the organization. Managers want committed employees due to their higher levels of effort and performance, because of their lower rates of turnover and absenteeism, with attendant reductions in costs of replacement and training (Mowday, Porter and Steers, 1982). From a societal point of view, committed workers are essential for economic growth and high levels of productivity. From an individual standpoint, it is clearly useful to know about determinants of commitment levels to the extent that committed workers are better compensated or have better career prospects. There may also be negative side-effects of high organizational commitment; these may include such things as stress, career stagnation, and family strains (Mowday *et al*., 1982; Mathieu and Zajac, 1990). Organizational commitment has varieties of definitions depending on the angle the author sees it. For example, according to Mathis and Jackson (2000) organizational commitment can be defined as the degree to which employees believe in and accept organizational goals and desire to remain with the organization.

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Steer (1977) defined organizational commitment as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. Porter, Steers, Mowday and Boulian (1974) asserts that organizational commitment entails employees' belief in and acceptance of organizational goals and values, their willingness to work towards accomplishing the organization's goals, and their strong desire to continue as an organizational member. Commitment also reflects in the form of employees' intention to stay or leave the organization, though it may be moderated with factors like opportunities available outside and normative pressure to stay on the job. As a result, many scholars suggest that the construct requires further research. The concept definition may be restricted to include employees' attachment to the organization as a result of (a) compliance caused by reward and punishment; (b) affiliation with the referent organization; and (c) internalization of the organization's goals and values as one's own (Roberts, Coulson and Chonko, 1999).

Meyer and Allen (1991) argued that the psychological states reflected in these different definitions of organizational commitment are not mutually exclusive. They referred to these states as components of organizational commitment. These include affective commitment (emotional attachment), continuance commitment (cost-based), and normative commitment (obligation). Affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organization. Continuance commitment

refs to an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization. Employees whose primary link to the organization is based on continuance commitment remain because they need to do so. While normative commitment refers to a feeling of obligation to continue employment. Employees with a high level of normative commitment feel that they ought to remain with the organization. Meyer and Allen (1997) concluded that a committed employee is one who will stay with the organization through thick and thin, attends work regularly, puts in a full day (and may be more) and protects company assets and who shares company goals.

The study of organizational commitment has attracted the attention of researchers, managers, organizational analysts and many others over the years. This is because studies have shown that it is considered useful in predicting employees' behaviour and for manpower planning in organizations. In addition, studies have shown that employees commitment to their organization has been recognized as one of the major determinants of desirable organizational outcomes such as organizational effectiveness, (Steers, 1975) higher level of job performance (Ferris, 1981) lower absenteeism (Mowday, Steers and Porter, 1979) lower turnover (Stumpf and Hartman, 1984) and lower turnover intentions (Popoola, 2005).

Studies have shown that the development of organizational commitment among employees could be influenced by a number of variables. These variables have equally been described as causes or determinants or antecedents of organizational commitment in the literature. For instance, Mowday, Porters and Steers (1982) identified four categories of antecedents of organizational commitment. These are personal factors or characteristics, job characteristics, work experiences, and role- related characteristics. (1) Personal characteristics or factors consist of those variables which define the individual such as age, tenure, and personality traits. (2) Job characteristics such as task autonomy, task variety. (3) Work experiences such as perceived pay equity, perceived personal importance to the organization. (4) Role-related characteristics such as role conflict, role ambiguity. In the present study, three antecedents of organizational commitment such as supervisor's incivility, perceived organizational justice and gender will be examined.
Workplace incivility is a deviant behaviour with ambiguous intent to harm the target, in violation of workplace norms for mutual respect. Uncivil behaviours are characteristically rude and discourteous, displaying a lack of regard of others (Andersson and Pearson, 1999). There are various forms of deviant behaviours in the workplace, such as workplace violence (LeBlanc and Kelloway, 2002), workplace aggression (Neuman and Baron, 1998), workplace bullying (Liefooghe and Davey, 2001), tyranny (Ashforth, 1994), supervisors incivility (Tepper, 2000), and workplace harassment (Rospenda, 2002).

Cortina, Magley, Williams and Langhout, (2001) submitted that workplace incivility deserves a serious research attention due to it's the theoretically identified adverse effects on organizations and individuals. Incivility though mild has the potential of snow-balling into negative organizational events (Andersson and Pearson, 1999). This implies that aggregation of a series of relatively mild forms of escalating interpersonal mistreatment experienced at work can accumulate beyond the employees' point of objective control and coping strategies (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). At this point, the last minor injustice may trigger violent behaviour from the victim. Therefore, if the workplace incivility is not effectively managed it could provide an enabling environment for employees to ruminate about and devote more cognitive resources to negative emotions, which fire violent revenge thoughts that culminate in workplace violence (Barber, Maltby, and Macaskill, 2005; McCullough, Bellah, Kilpatrick, and Johnson, 2001; Spector, Fox, and Domagalski, 2006) and damage individual psychosomatic functioning (Cortina, 2008; Cortina *et al.*, 2001; Pearson and Porath, 2005).

Supervisor's incivility refers to subordinates' perceptions of the extent to which their supervisors or managers engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviours against them (Tepper, 2000). Supervisor's incivility may include behaviours such as use of derogatory names, engaging in explosive outbursts including information, aggressive eye contact, the silent treatment, and humiliating or ridiculing someone in front of others (Keashly, 1998; Zellars, Tepper and Duffy, 2002). With regard to the fact that all people expect suitable environment in their workplace, hostile and unethical behaviours will have negative influence on employees' outcomes. These outcomes, includes job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intentions, etc. Studies have shown that employees respond negatively to supervisor's mistreatment by engaging in behaviours that are harmful to the organization (Ambrose, Seabright, and Schminke, 2002; Thau, Bennett, Mitchell and Marrs, 2009). In the same manner employees will tend to engage less in behaviours that benefit the organization if they perceive mistreatment by their supervisors (Onyishi, 2012).

In one of the studies that examined the relationship between supervisor's incivility and positive job behaviour, Duffy and Ferrier (2003) found supervisor's incivility is negatively related to organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour (Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler and Ensley, 2004). On the other hand when employees perceives supportive behaviours from their supervisors, they felt obligated to care about the organization's welfare (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch and Rhoades, 2001) and show affective commitment to the organization (Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli, 2001).

Another construct that is important to this study is perceived organizational justice. Organizational justice has been emerged as the hottest topic on the discussion boards for many years in Human resource management, organizational behaviour and organizational psychology (Cropanzano and Greenberg, 1997). Over the last 30 years, organizational justice has been researched extensively in social psychology, specifically in organizational contexts by psychologists and management researchers, among others interested in the construct (Blakely, Andrews and Moorman, 2005; Moorman, 1991; Trevino and Weaver, 2001). Organizational justice is a basic requirement for the effective functioning of organizations. It refers to people's perceptions of the fairness of treatment received from organizations (Greenberg, 1990). When employees react to the way they are treated at work, their motivation to respond cannot be understood adequately without taking into account perceived fairness of the outcomes and the procedure used to reach that outcomes (Folger and Konovsky, 1989; Greenberg, 1986). The organizational justice construct has been partitioned into at least three factors: distributive justice, procedural justice, and

interactional justice. Adams (1965) conceptualized fairness by stating that employees determine whether they have been treated fairly at work by comparing their own payoff ratio of outcomes (such as pay or status) to inputs (such as effort or time) to the ratio of their co-workers. This is called distributive justice, and it presents employees' perceptions about the fairness of managerial decisions relative to the distribution of outcomes such as pay, promotions, etc (Folger and Konovsky, 1989). In contrast, procedural justice focuses on the fairness of the manner in which the decision-making process is conducted (Folger and Konovsky, 1989). Procedural justice is about the perceived fairness of the means that leads to determine the outcomes, as it shows the concerns about consistency, impartiality rationality and employee participation (Cropanzano, 1997). In other words, the focus shifts from what was decided to how the decision was made (Cropanzano and Folger, 1991). As a third concept, interactional justice reflects the quality of interpersonal treatment during the implementation of formal procedures of decisions (Bies and Moag 1986).

Perceptions of organizational justice constitute an important heuristic in organizational decision-making. Numerous studies have been conducted to explain the relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment. Kim (2009) found that employees who perceived that they were treated fairly by their company tended to develop and maintain communal relationships with the company. Also, when employees felt that they were treated fairly by their company, they were likely to hold more commitment, trust, satisfaction, and control mutuality than when they perceived that they were treated unfairly. Colquitt (2001) observed that in organizational justice, fair treatments have great considerations on employee attitudes at workplace including employee commitment and job satisfaction. Similarly, Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter and Ng (2001) found that organizational justice perceptions strongly affect the attitude of the workers such as organization commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour. Gbadamosi and Nwosu (2011) found that organizational justice is a potent predictor of organizational commitment. Schwarzwald, Koslowsky and Shalit, (1992) also found that individuals who failed to earn new positions had increases in absenteeism, and experienced lower feelings of commitment and higher feelings of inequity. They concluded that promoted co-workers acted as referents. That is, individuals who were not initially disadvantaged felt inequitably underpaid relative to those who had earned a promotion. Such inequities can negatively affect job performance.

Gender refers to the cultural, social, and psychological meanings that are associated with maleness and femaleness (Wood and Eagly, 2002). Literature has shown that there is a degree of correlation between organizational commitment and gender. For instance, studies carried out by Angle and Perry (1981), Hrebiniak and Alutto (1972), Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982), Opayemi (2004) indicated that women were consistently more committed to organization than men. In contrast, Khan, Ziauddin, Jam and Ramay (2010) reported that men were more committed than women in their study. However, studies by Bruning and Snyder (1983) indicated that gender has no correlation with commitment. There have been mixed findings on the influence of gender on organizational commitment, thus the present study seeks to investigate the role of gender on organizational commitment among brewery

employees in Onitsha. Organizational commitment is one of the factors that could lead to healthy organizational climate, increased morale, motivation and productivity (Meyer and Allen, 1997), the need for factors that influence organizational commitment has become more critical. Several factors have been earlier linked to be the determinant factors that predict an employee's commitment to his/her organization. The present study examines the influence of three factors; supervisor's incivility, perceived organizational justice and gender on organizational commitment among employees in Life Breweries PLC, Onitsha. Thus, the following hypothesis will be tested in this study;

- Supervisor's incivility will not statistically and significantly influence organizational commitment among brewery employees.
- Perceived organizational justice will not statistically and significantly influence organizational commitment among brewery employees.
- Gender will not statistically and significantly influence organizational commitment among brewery employees.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants: One hundred and fifty (150) workers participated in the study. They consisted of males (67) and females (83) drawn from Life Breweries PLC Onitsha Branch. The participants' age ranged from 23 to 56 years with a mean age of 35.1 years. The educational qualifications of the participants were as follows: OND/NCE (40), HND/B.Sc. (94) and M.Sc. (16). The average tenure of participants in their job positions was 7.7 years ranging from 1 to 35 years. With regard to marital status, ninety (82) were married and sixty (68) were single.

Instruments: Three instruments were used in this research: Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, Supervisor Incivility Scale and Organizational Justice Scale. Organizational commitment was measured by means of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Mowday, Steers and Porter (1979). OCQ contains 15 items that measure employees' level of commitment to their organizations. The respondents indicate the extent to which each item reflect their commitment to their organization on a 5-point likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The authors reported a Cronbach's alpha of .91 and .89 for the professional and clerical samples respectively. The Organizational Commitment Questionnaire has been used in several studies in Nigeria and has proven to be psychometrically sound (E.g., Tella, Ayeni and Popoola, 2007). Sample items include: I feel very little loyalty to this organization; I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organization; I really care about the fate of this organization; deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake on my part.

Supervisor's incivility was measured with a 15-item scale developed by Tepper (2000). The scale is arranged on a 5-point likert format ranging from (1) strongly agree, (2) disagree, (3) undecided, (4) agree (5) strongly agree. Sample items from the scale includes: "my boss ridicules me", "my boss reminds me of my past mistakes and failures", "my boss gives me the silent treatment", etc. The developer reported a Cronbach's alpha of .95. Ugwu (2012) reported a Cronbach's alpha reliability co-efficient of .79 for Nigerian samples. Organizational Justice was

measured with 15-item scale developed by Colquitt (2001) to measure three dimensions of organizational justice: distributive justice (4 items), procedural justice (7 items), and interpersonal justice (4 items). It is a 5-point scale with anchors of 1 (to a small extent) to 5 (to a large extent). It asks respondents the extent to which distributive, procedural, and interpersonal justice has been applied in their work setting. The procedural justice items ask respondents to rate the procedures used to arrive at their outcome e.g. "To what extent have you been able to express your views and feelings during those procedures"? Distributive items ask respondents to rate their outcome itself e.g. "To what extent does your outcome reflect the effort you have put into your work"? Interpersonal items ask respondents to rate the authority figure who enacts the procedures e.g. "To what extent has he/she treated you in a polite manner"? The validation study by Onyishi and Odili (In-Press) for the organizational justice (15-item) scale reveals that the composite scale has a cronbach-alpha of .88, .93, .92; a principal component analysis and a varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization were used to explore the scale of organizational justice developed by Colquitt (2001). The validation study was conducted by Onyishi and Odili (In-Press) reported a cronbach's alpha of .88, .93, .92 for the distributive, procedural, and interactional sub-scales, respectively on sample of Nigerian workers (one hundred bank staff) revealed a three factor construct validity with eigenvalues above 1.0 which accounted for a total variance of 70.15%. Factor one accounted for 20.05% of the variance; factor two accounted for 18.37% of the variance; factor three accounted for 17.20% of the variance. Items with a varimax rotated loading greater than 0.5 were incorporated for the construct index. The validation study confirmed Colquitt (2001) factor index. In order of correlation weight size, seven items came under factor one which is procedural justice; four items came under factor three which is interactional justice; four items also came under factor four which is distributive justice. The cronbach alphas for the subscales are as follows, procedural justice .93; interactional justice .92; distributive justice .88.

Procedure: After obtaining permission from the manager of the company, the instruments were administered by the researcher to the participants. The questionnaires were administered individually based on the accessibility and availability of the employees in their respective departments and offices. The instruments were collected after one week by the researcher.

Out of an initial two hundred and one (201) copies of questionnaires administered, only one hundred and fifty (150) copies were properly completed and included in the analysis. Fifty one (51) were not properly completed and therefore were dropped.

Design/Statistics

The study adopted the cross sectional survey design. Multiple regression was used to analyse the data and test the hypotheses.

RESULTS

The results as shown in table one indicated that supervisor incivility has a significant relationship with organizational commitment ($r=.19$, $p<.05$). This implies that the more an employee experiences supervisor incivility, the more committed the employee is to the organization. Organizational Justice also

Table 1. Correlations

1	OrganizationalCommitment	Organizational Commitment
2	Supervisor Incivility	.19*
3	Organizational Justice	.20*
4	Age	-.08#
5	Gender	-.08#
6	Marital status	.27**
7	Educational level	.09#
8	Job status	.00#
9	Years	-.13#

Note: *=p<.05, **=p<.01, #=not significant

has a significant relationship with organizational commitment ($r=.20$, $p<.05$). This implies that employees are likely to be more committed to their organizations if they experience organizational justice. Amongst the demographic variables, only marital status was significantly correlated with organizational commitment ($r=.27$, $p<.01$). This implies that married employees are more committed to their organizations, compared to single employees. The result of the regression analysis as presented in table 2 shows that the association between organizational commitment and all predictor variables is moderately strong [$R=.28$, $F (3, 146)=4.16$, $p<.01$]. The coefficient table also revealed that supervisor incivility ($\beta=.17$, $p<.05$) and organizational justice ($\beta=.18$, $p<.05$) were significantly associated to organizational commitment. However, gender was not significantly associated to organizational commitment ($\beta=-.10$, #)

Table 2. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig .F Change
					Change Statistics				
1	.281[a]	.079	.060	6.51741	.079	4.157	3	146	.007

a. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Supervisor's Incivility, Organizational Justice

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	12.618	7.094		1.779	.077
	SIncivility	.211	.101	.168	2.078	.039
	OrgJustice	.206	.092	.181	2.233	.027
	Gender	-1.369	1.074	-.102	-1.275	.204

a. Dependent Variable: Commitment

DISCUSSION

The result of this study revealed that supervisor incivility had a significant influence on organizational commitment. Specifically, employees who reported receiving in-civil behaviours from their supervisors are more committed. As a result, the first null hypothesis is rejected. This finding is however inconsistent with Rhoades, Eisenberger, and Armeli, (2001), who observed that when employees perceives supportive behaviours from their supervisors, they felt obligated to care about the organization's welfare and show affective commitment to the organization. Similarly, Duffy and Ferrier (2003) found that supervisor's incivility is negatively related to organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour. Thus the positive relationship found between supervisors' incivility and employee commitment to the organization is a demonstration that the participants were not reacting to the perceived maltreatment by their supervisor by being more committed to their organization. Furthermore, another possible explanation for this unique finding could be that the employees (who were mainly recruited from the supervisor's community) used in the study were afraid that their responses will be used against them; therefore they gave responses that would favour their management.

The result also revealed that perceived organizational justice had significant influence on organizational commitment. In other words, employees who perceived justice by the way the organization treats them reported high commitment to the organization. This finding is consistent with Kim (2009) who found that employees who perceived that they were treated fairly by their company tended to develop and maintain communal relationships with the company. Also, when employees felt that they were treated fairly by their company, they were likely to hold more commitment, trust, satisfaction, and control mutuality than when they perceived that they were treated unfairly. The present finding is also in harmony with the findings of Colquitt (2001); Colquitt *et al.* (2001); and Gbadamosi *et al.* (2011) who found that organizational justice is a potent predictor of organizational commitment.

The study also showed that gender did not significantly influence organizational commitment. This finding suggests that both male and female employees have the same level of organizational commitment. This result is in line with the findings of Aven, Parker and McEvoy (1993) who found that gender and commitment were unrelated. Similarly, Savicki, Cooly and GJesvold (2003) have found that men and women did not differ on organizational commitment in their study on correctional officers. In addition, Al-Ajmi (2006) also found that there was no significant relationship between genders and organizational commitment in his study. However this finding is at variance with studies by Angle and Perry (1981), Hrebiniak and Aluto (1972), Mowday et l., (1982) and Opayemi (2004) who found that women were committed to their employing organization than men.

Conclusion

The findings of this study have practical implications for managers and supervisors. The study revealed that perceived organizational justice significantly influenced organizational commitment of the employees; there is need to actively facilitate measures for developing a better sense of justice and thus facilitating the improvement of occupational and organizational attitudes so that employees would achieve a higher level of organizational commitments. It is therefore suggested that brewery management should recruit both genders and make appropriate investments in helping both male and female employees gain organizational commitments. These findings would serve as a reference point and stimulate more research in this direction among organisational attitudes researchers and other researchers that are interested in organizational commitment among employees.

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