Effects of Distributive Justice on Organizational Commitment of Public Secondary School Teachers in Kenya

George W. Karanja[1], Hazel Gachunga[2], Aquilars M. Kalio[3]

[1, 2]School of Human Resource Development, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya

[3]Egerton University Kenya

Abstract*: The study sought to assess the influence of distributive justice on organizational commitment of teachers among public secondary schools in Kenya. The objective of the study was to establish whether perceptions of distributive justice had an effect on organizational commitment. The study adopted a co relational research design. The study population included 62533 teachers in the 47 Counties in Kenya. A random sample of 334 teachers was drawn from three purposively selected Counties. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire administered to teachers. The questionnaire was pilot-tested to validate and determine its reliability. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics which included frequency counts, means, percentages, correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis, with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 for Windows. The study findings indicate a Low positive significant relationship between distributive justice and organizational commitment. Interestingly distributive justice was found to be a poor predictor of organizational commitment. The study recommends that teachers pay should be revised and that there is a need to practice fairness while distributing rewards to teachers.*

Keywords: Distributive Justice, Organizational commitment, Public secondary school, Teacher, Teachers' organizational commitment

1. Introduction

The term organizational justice, originally coined by Greenberg in the 1980s was believed to generally encompass three different components, namely: distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice [1]. Organizational justice theory relates to employees' points of view about justice in job-related matters [14]. In this sense, organizational justice is concerned with the rules developed to distribute or to take decisions on distribution of acquisitions such as tasks, goods, services, rewards, punishments, organizational positions, opportunities and roles among employees and societal norms that constitute the basis for these rules [12]. Recent research in organizational justice theory suggests that justice can be broken down into four empirically distinct dimensions: distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational justice [7] &, [15].

Many important organizational attitudes and behaviour can be directly linked to employee's perceptions of justice [34]. Organizational justice theory aids in understanding employee attitudes such as perceived organizational support [33] and organizational commitment [11]; [20] & [37].

Organisational commitment (OC) has been defined as the combined power of identification which an individual has with an organization and their commitment to it [18]. Commitment is a partisan, affective attachment to the goals and values of an organisation, to one's role in relation to goals and values of an organisation, and to the organisation for its own sake, apart from its purely instrumental worth [32]. Organizational commitment is the degree to which people identify with the organization that employs them. It implies a willingness on the employee's part to put forth a substantial effort on the organization's behalf and his or her intention to stay with the organization for a long time [37]. Organizational commitment is a multidimensional construct consisting of three components: affective, continuance and normative. Affective commitment is an employee's emotional attachment, identification with and involvement in the organization [22]. Employees with a strong affective commitment will remain in the organization because they want to. Continuance commitment on the other hand has to do with one's awareness of the costs associated with leaving the present organization. Employees whose commitment is in the nature of continuance will remain in the organization because they have to. The third component, normative commitment has to do with feeling of obligations to the organization based on one's personal norms and values. Employees whose commitment to the organization is said to be of the normative type remains in the organization because they believe they ought to. The factor structure of organizational commitment scale has been examined in several studies [1]. Some of these studies include measures from all the three components (affective, continuance, and normative) whilst others focus only on affective commitment measure and/or continuance commitment measure. Studies have provided empirical support to demonstrate that the components are indeed distinguishable from one another [9]; [22] & [31].

In recent years, there has been an increase in publications relevant to organisational commitment in various occupational groups. This is evidenced by the immense literature available related to antecedents and consequences of organisational commitment [16]. The teaching profession ranks high on the success list of a society. A journal reviewed teachers commitment to the profession and concluded that teachers characterised as motivation seekers were more committed to the teaching profession than were

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non-motivation seekers [17]. Snyder and Spreitzer analysed the identity and commitment to the teaching role. Further research found out that the elements of commitment included intrinsic and extrinsic satisfactions, as well as self-identity, invested in the teaching role [35].

Accordingly, justice should be made a main agenda in schools because teachers want justice in work place [29]. Wide range of human behaviours in the context of organizations can be explained by how the workforce perceives distributive, procedural and interactional fairness. That is why numerous researchers have investigated the role of justice perceptions on job satisfaction, withdrawal behaviours, organizational citizenship behaviour, organizational commitment and productivity [6] & [39].

In Kenya the recent effort by the government to introduce free primary education and subsidized secondary education programmes has led to an influx in enrolments, this has brought concerns about student – teacher ratio and teachers commitment to their work in secondary schools. In the recent years, effective school research has been directed at exploring into broad areas of education structure, management, policy framework and curriculum. However, limited empirical research attention has been directed towards understanding the relationship between organizational justice and organizational commitment among teachers in the fast – changing education system in developing countries. Despite the premium placed on justice on educational institutions, there is lack of knowledge and awareness on key elements of service in secondary schools in kenya.

2. Statement of the Problem

Low levels of organizational commitment among teachers in Kenya have taken a worrying trend. This is evidenced by absenteeism from work by teachers in many schools, frequent incidences of industrial actions by teachers, teacher demotivation, and poor student performance in national examination and a decrease in popularity and status of the teaching profession as a whole [21]. Changes in education policies, the children's rights movement and legislation changes have not only seen teachers increasingly becoming the targets of criticism, but have also led to high incidences of burnout and general dissatisfaction among teachers world-wide and particularly in kenya. Little consideration has been given to developing service delivery which would increase teacher commitment, and make teachers feel secure and confident in their schools. Organizational commitment is an indicator of the extent to which employees identify themselves with organizational goals, value organizational membership, and intent to work smart to achieve the organizational goals. The fact that commitment is important for the realization of organizational goals, particularly in schools, has remained untapped by researchers. As a result, it is important to identify committed teachers as well as to understand whether components of organizational justice stimulates and sustains teacher's commitment to their schools in Kenya.

Previous research to address this situation has demonstrated that teachers' working conditions impacts on their

commitment [10] and behaviour [41]. In a study on the effects of teachers' perception of organizational justice and culture on organizational commitment in Turkey Yavuz [42], suggested that the concepts of justice and commitment should be evaluated within different cultural environments and in different countries. To fill this gap, this study investigated the role of distributive justice dimension on organizational commitment of teachers, as important human resources in public secondary schools in Kenya.

3. Research Objective

The broad objective of the study was to explore the influence of distributive justice on organizational commitment of teachers. Specifically the study was guided by the following objective:

i. To find out whether distributive justice influence organizational commitment of teachers.

4. Research Hypothesis

The research hypothesis for the study was:
H_{01}: There is no significance influence of distributive justice on organizational commitment.

5. Conceptual Framework

The researcher conceptualized a framework consisting of the dependent and independent variables. This was aimed at guiding the researcher in achievement of the research objective (establishing the effect of distributive justice on organizational commitment).
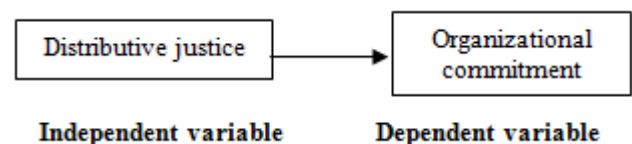

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

The framework conceptualized that distributive justice influences organizational commitment.

6. Literature Review

The review will involve studies previously done on distributive justice and organizational commitment, globally; regional and finally in Kenya.

6.1 Theoretical Literature

6.1.1 Rawls Theory of Justice
According to this theory every human being should enjoy fundamental rights and freedoms as much as other human beings and that social and economic inequality should be handled so that they will benefit everybody. Rawls proposes the following two principals of justice: (1) each person has an equal claim to a fully adequate scheme of equal basic

rights and liberties. (2) Social and economic inequalities are to satisfy two conditions: (a) They are to be attached to positions and offices open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity; and (b), they are to be to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged members of society [30].

In this theory, Rawls suggests that an ideal justice can be established only if it is divorced from the circumstances within which it is considered. This formulation of justice, being blind to particularities, provides the conceptual and theoretical basis for much of the literature on justice or fairness in organizational life. Rawls theory was relevant in this study in seeking a justice of policies and procedures devoid of competing interests, positions, or power dynamics among the teaching stuff in schools.

6.2 Empirical Literature Review

Organizational justice principles have important consequences for work organizations. This becomes relevant to human resource practitioners. Employees compare the treatment they receive in their place of work with the treatments that others receive, and make judgments about the level of justice in the organization in accordance with their own perceptions. It is believed that these evaluations play a key role in the way members perform their organizational duties and responsibilities. Many studies have been conducted in regard to organizational commitment.. This section will review empirical studies on distributive justice and organizational commitment.

6.2.1 Distributive Justice
Distributive justice is a perception of justice that encompasses the perceptions of the members of the organization regarding fair distribution of resources among the members of the organization [42]. Distributive justice means the form of organizational justice that focuses on people's beliefs that they have received fair amounts of valued work-related outcomes like recognition among others [13].

6.2.2 Organizational Commitment
The most thoroughly investigated approach to organizational commitment is the perspective advanced by Mowday and his colleagues, which emphasizes the employee's affective bond with the organization [25]. This viewpoint asserts that organizational commitment is characterized by (a) "a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and (c) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization" [25]. This triad has come to be widely accepted in both the general organizational and educational administration literatures and is acknowledged in many contemporary investigations of teachers and their workplace commitments [10], [33] & [36].

Research within this perspective has tended to focus on individual differences as antecedents of commitment, revealing that factors such as age and organizational tenure are positively correlated with commitment, whereas level of education is negatively related [2], [20] & [37]. Research utilizing this affective approach to commitment has also frequently revealed an inverse relationship between

commitment and turnover intention [28] as well as a positive relationship between commitment and regular employee attendance [37]. Unfortunately, commitment has historically been found to exert little direct influence on actual work performance, although lessened turnover intention and consistent attendance are themselves critically important pro-organizational attitudes and actions [20].

7. Research Methodology

The research methodology provides a detailed discussion of the research design, location of the study, population, and data collection procedure and data analysis. The study employed a descriptive co-relational research design. The purpose of research design is to achieve greater control of the study and to improve the validity of the study by examining the research problem [4]. The target population for this study consisted of all the teachers from all the public secondary schools in Kenya. Currently there are 62533 teacher employed by teachers service commission in Kenya. (Teachers Service Commission, 2013). To arrive at a sample size, the study adopted a formula by Cochran [5] for estimating a sample size, n_o, from an infinite population.

The formular yielded a sample size of 384. Cochran's correction formula was used to calculate the finite sample size of 334 [5]. To arrive at the above sample size, the study adopted a multistage sampling design in three stages. The study used structured questionnaire for teachers in both the pilot study and the actual study. Primary data was collected from the teachers using self-report structured questionnaires with mainly closed ended and some open ended questions. The instruments were taken for piloting on a population that is similar to the target population. Five secondary schools from Laikipia County were used for the pilot study. The piloting included 10 teachers from the selected schools.

7.1 Data processing and analysis

Data collected was coded, keyed in the computer and analysed with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were used to describe the findings while inferential statistics (correlation analysis and Regression analysis) was used to test the hypothesis.

7.2 Research Findings

The response rate for this study was 73% which can be characterized as very good and thus a good indicator that the results are externally valid and therefore can be generalized. The response rate that every researcher should pursue is 100%. In reality however it may not be possible to achieve this due to sampling measurement and coverage errors. A response rate below 51 % is considered inadequate in social sciences [27]. Other studies suggested that a response rate of 60% is good; 70% is very good [3].

7.2.1 Teachers Perceptions towards Distributive Justice
Regarding how teachers perceive distributive justice in the school the findings of the study are as shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Teachers Perceptions towards Distributive Justice

	N	Mean	Std. Dev
I think that my level of pay is fair	243	2.6	1.165
Overall the rewards I receive are quite fair	243	2.65	1.134
I consider my workload to be quite fair	243	3.23	1.267
I feel that my responsibilities are fair	243	3.43	1.028
Valid N (listwise)	243		

Table 1 above shows the mean scores and standard deviations of all variables that construct the distributive justice factor. The results indicate that teachers think that their level of pay and the rewards they receive are not fair. M = 2.60 and M = 2.65 respectively. However, the respondents had generally positive perceptions about their workload and they felt that their responsibilities are fair by rating these indicators above the mean score.

7.2.2 Teachers Perceptions towards Affective Commitment Teachers perceptions in regard to informational justice are as shown in the table below.

Table 2: Teachers Perception towards Affective Commitment

	N	Mean	Std. Dev
I am very happy being a member of this school	243	3.53	1.151
I enjoy discussing about my school with people outside it	243	3.23	1.125
I really feel as if this school problems are my own	243	3.56	.975
I think that I could easily become as attached to another school as I am to this one	243	3.20	1.026
(Recoded) I feel like part of the family at my school	243	3.84	1.042
(Recoded) I feel emotionally attached to this School	243	3.66	1.193
This school has a great deal of meaning for me	243	3.55	.992
(Recoded) I feel A strong sense of belonging to my school	243	3.42	1.252
Valid N (listwise)	243		

Table 2 indicates that the respondents rated all the indicators of affective commitment above average with mean scores ranging from M = 3.20 and M = 3.84. This means that teachers are happy being members of their respective schools, they fell emotionally attached to their schools and they feel a sense of belonging to their schools.

7.2.3 Teachers Perceptions towards Normative Commitment

This is shown in the table below

Table 3: Teachers Perceptions towards Normative Commitment

	N	Mean	Std. Dev
I feel that I owe this school quite a bit because of what it has done for me	243	3.14	1.172
My school deserves my loyalty because of its treatment towards me	243	3.29	.962
I feel I would be letting my coworkers down if I wasn't a member of this school	243	3.39	.949
I am Loyal to this school because my values are largely it's values	243	3.53	1.136
This school has a mission that I believe in and am committed	243	3.60	1.037
I feel it is morally Correct to dedicate myself to this school	243	3.87	1.004
Valid N (listwise)	243		

Table 3 shows that the respondents rated all the indicators of normative commitment above average with mean scores ranging from M = 3.14 and M = 3.87. This means that teachers appreciate what their schools have done for them; they feel that their schools deserve their loyalty and they also feel that it is morally correct to dedicate themselves to their schools.

7.2.4 Teachers Perceptions towards Continuance Commitment
The results for this aspect were as shown in the table below

Table 4: Teachers Perceptions towards Continuance Commitment

	N	Mean	Std. Dev
I worry about the loss of investments I have made in this school	243	3.06	1.288
If I wasn't a member of this school I would be sad because my life would be disrupted	243	2.38	1.255
I am loyal to this school because I have a lot in it emotionally, socially and economically	243	3.32	1.137
I often feel anxious about what I have to lose with this school	243	3.04	1.100
Sometimes I worry about what might happen if something was to happen to this and I was no longer a member	243	2.92	1.132
I am dedicated to this school because I fear what I have to lose in it	243	2.82	1.152
Valid N (listwise)	243		

Table 4 indicates that teachers worry about the loss of investments they have made in their schools by rating this factor slightly above average M = 3.06. The teachers are loyal to their school because they have a lot in the school emotionally, socially and economically M = 3.32. Teachers rated other continuance indicators slightly below average M = 2.38 and M = 2.92.

7.2.5 Effect of Distributive Justice on Organizational Commitment
In respect to this variable, all the responses were on a Likert scale. This implied that the responses could viably be consolidated into a composite score of their means in order to infer to the relationship between distributive justice and organizational commitment. The analysis was carried by use of Pearson's correlation coefficient. The findings of the analysis are presented in the Table below.

Table 5: Effect of Distributive Justice on Organizational Commitment

		Organizational commitment
Distributive justice	r	.209**
	sig. (2 tailed)	.001
	N	243

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

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The table shows that there was a Low positive significant relationship between distributive justice and organizational commitment (r = 0.209, p<0.01), this suggests that teachers perceptions of fairness in the distribution of resources is correlated with their commitment.

7.2.6 Hypothesis Testing

Table 6: significance of distributive justice on organizational commitment

Model	Unstdized Coeff		Stdized Coeff	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics
	B	SE	Beta			Tolerance VIF
Distributive Justice	.076	.040	.109	1.884	.061	.862 1.160

The hypothesis predicted that there is no significant influence of distributive justice on organizational commitment. The result, Table 5, indicates that distributive justice is not a predictor of organizational commitment. Since p-value (0.061) > 0.05 level of significance, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and affirm that there is enough evidence to conclude that distributive justice is not useful as a predictor of Organizational commitment of teachers in secondary schools in Kenya. The findings on the influence of distributive justice on organizational commitment are in contrast with some earlier findings that distributive justice result into improved organizational commitment for instance [43] & [26]. This may be attributed to interferences with personal variables. Organizational commitment may be influenced by personal factors such as organizational tenure, age, educational level, race, marital status which may contribute to spurious relationships based on unmeasured variables [25].

The results never the less were consistent with the findings of folger and konovsky who posit that perception of distributive justice is significantly associated with pay satisfaction, which was considered by majority of teachers (M==2.68) as the least predictor of Distributive justice [11]. Organizational commitment is not determined by distributive justice, the findings of this study are also clarified by the studies conducted by other scholars [20]. Scholars contend that distributive justice may have a low impact to organizational commitment since it is a strong predictor to personal level evaluations such as pay satisfaction [22].

8. Summary

A low positive significant relationship between distributive justice and organizational commitment exists; suggesting that teacher's perceptions of fairness in the distribution of resources are correlated with their commitment. Never the less, the results indicate that distributive justice is not a good predictor of organizational commitment.

9. Conclusions

Based on the summary findings, the study concludes that the role of the school management in directing and managing teachers and students cannot be over emphasized. The need for fairness in distributing rewards, improving teachers pay and fairness in assigning responsibilities to teachers are important in promoting higher commitment and performance.

10. Recommendations

In view of the above conclusions, this study recommends that school management should ensure fairness in provision of rewards and responsibilities to teachers. It is important for the government to review teachers pay in order for schools to reap the benefits associated with teacher commitment to their schools. Future research should explore how the other dimensions of organizational justice affect attitudinal and behavioral variables such as job satisfaction, job performance and turnover.

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Author Profile

George W. Karanja has a bachelor of Education (Science) degree from Kenyatta University (K.U) Kenya, Master of Business Administration (human resource management) from Kenya Methodist University (KEMU), Kenya and a PhD (HRM) candidate of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Kenya. He currently works as a secondary school teacher and a part time lecturer in JKUAT Kenya.