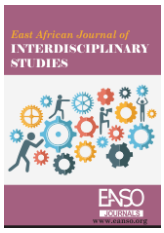
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Original Article

Organisational Commitment as a Mediator in the Relationship between Perceived Organisational Justice and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour among Teachers in Government-Aided Secondary Schools of Greater Bushenyi, Uganda

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Justice, Commitment, Behaviour, Organisational, Teachers.

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the mediating role of organisational commitment in the relationship between perceived organisational justice and organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) among 314 teachers in 51 government-aided secondary schools in Greater Bushenyi. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design grounded in the positivist paradigm and utilised a quantitative approach. Teachers were selected using simple random sampling, while a census strategy was adopted for the schools. Data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire, coded, entered into SPSS version 30 and analysed using hierarchical regression analysis. The study findings revealed that organisational commitment significantly mediates the relationship between perceived organisational justice and OCB ($\beta = 0.37$, $p < 0.001$). The study concludes that organisational commitment is a critical psychological pathway through which perceived organisational justice translates into improved citizenship behaviour among teachers. Therefore, schools that foster fairness while simultaneously strengthening teacher commitment are more likely to achieve higher levels of OCB. School governing bodies, administrators, the Ministry of Education and other policymakers should promote fair decision-making processes, inclusive and transparent communication, and equitable treatment, while also implementing strategies that enhance teacher commitment, such as recognition, involvement in decision-making, and supportive leadership. This integrated approach will strengthen positive teacher behaviours and improve overall school effectiveness.

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INTRODUCTION

Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) is widely recognised as a critical factor in enhancing organisational effectiveness, particularly in educational institutions where teacher initiative and voluntary engagement significantly influence student outcomes and school performance. OCB refers to discretionary behaviours that are not formally rewarded but contribute to organisational functioning (Organ, 1988). Evidence from educational contexts suggests a decline in organisational citizenship behaviours among teachers in public schools (Nguni, Sleegers, & Denessen, 2006)

Scholarly literature has consistently demonstrated that perceived organisational justice, defined as employees' perceptions of fairness in decision-making processes, resource distribution, and interpersonal treatment, positively influences employee attitudes and behaviours (Colquitt, 2001). However, the mechanisms underlying this relationship remain insufficiently explored, particularly in developing country contexts such as Uganda.

One plausible explanatory mechanism is organisational commitment, which reflects the psychological attachment employees have toward their organisation (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Prior studies suggest that when employees perceive fairness, they are more likely to develop stronger commitment, which in turn fosters positive discretionary behaviours such as OCB (Donglong, Taejun, Julie, & Sanghun, 2020).

Although some studies have examined this mediating relationship, findings remain inconsistent, with some reporting full mediation and others partial mediation. Moreover, limited empirical work has been conducted within the education sector in sub-Saharan Africa. This study, therefore, addresses this gap by examining the mediating role of organisational commitment in the relationship between perceived organisational justice and OCB among teachers in Greater Bushenyi.

Objective

To ascertain the mediating role of organisational commitment in the relationship between perceived organisational justice and organisational citizenship behaviour among teachers in government-aided secondary schools.

Research Hypothesis

H_1: Organisational commitment significantly mediates the relationship between perceived

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organisational justice and organisational citizenship Behaviour.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

A well-planned research design helps the researcher to ensure that the methods used match the objectives, to ensure the collection of high-quality data, and to determine the right form of data analysis that answers the research questions while referring to credible sources (Jongbo, 2014). This study employed a quantitative correlational research design, which is appropriate for examining relationships among variables and testing mediation effects. The design enabled the researcher to assess both direct and indirect relationships among perceived organisational justice, organisational commitment, and OCB.

Study Population

The study population constituted teachers in Government Grant Aided Secondary Schools of Greater Bushenyi Sub-Region, according to head teachers and District Education Officers' reports. The Greater Bushenyi sub-region has a total number of 1467 teachers from 51 government-aided schools (Association of Secondary Schools Headteachers of Uganda ASSHU, 2021–2023; District Education Offices DEO, 2023). Therefore, the study population comprised 1467 teachers of greater Bushenyi.

Sample Size

A statistically adequate sample of 314 teachers was determined using the Yamane formula to ensure representativeness and sufficient power for regression and mediation analysis (Creswell, 2014). Yamane stated the following formula, which would be used to establish the sample size.

$n = N/ (1+N (e^2))$,

$n = 1467 / (1+1467 (.05^2))$

n = 314 teachers

Where n = Sample size. e = Margin of error 5% with a 95% confidence level, N = Study population.

The number of teachers from each school to be involved in the sample was determined using the probability proportion allocation method. This method ensured that schools with a bigger population get a bigger corresponding representative sample (Kothari, 2004).

Research Instruments

Data were collected using structured questionnaires (primary instrument), comprising standardised scales; that is, Organisational Justice Scale (Colquitt, 2001), Organisational Commitment Scale (Meyer & Allen, 1991) and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour Scale (Organ, 1988). This questionnaire had five (5) sections as follows: The first section collected demographic data, that is: gender, age, highest level of education, type of subject taught, years of service, marital status and position held. The second section presented a 15-item Colquitt's Perceived Organisational Justice Scale (English Version) developed by Spagnoli et al. (2017) with a validity of 0.77 and reliability of 0.79. The POJ-scale consisted of 5 items that measured procedural justice, 5 items that measured distributive justice and 5 items that measured transactional justice. Perceived organisational justice scale was measured on a five- point Likert scale, with response format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A reliability and content validity analysis of the scores obtained indicated acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha) of 0.97 and content validity index of 0.83. Perceived organisational support level. The scale was measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The fourth section included the eighteen (18) items of Meyer and Allen's Organisational Commitment scale developed by Allen & Meyer (2000). The scale involves 6 items about affective commitment, 6 items about continuance commitment and 6 items about normative commitment. This adopted Likert scale

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ranges from Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), and Not sure (3), Disagree (2) to Strongly Disagree (1). The tool had a validity of 0.775 and Reliability .748. The last section presented 19 items for measuring organisational citizenship Behaviour as developed by Habeeb (2019). The scale consisted of five parts of altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, conscientiousness and civic virtue. The altruism part consisted of three questions (1-4), the courtesy part consisted of three questions (5-7), the sportsmanship part consisted of five questions (8-12), the conscientiousness part also consisted of three questions (13-15), and the civic virtue part consisted of four questions (16-19). Both the validity and reliability of the scale were above 0.87. The Organisational Citizenship Behaviour questionnaire was also measured on a five-point Likert scale, that is Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). A questionnaire is more flexible, easier to quantify, and facilitates standardised data collection from large samples, making it more objective than interviews (Creswell, 2014; Kothari, 2004).

The respondents were able to give frank answers to sensitive questions since they were not required to give their names. All respondents were briefed before administering the questionnaires to them. This gave the researcher a chance to provide clarification to the respondents and to collect the questionnaire immediately after completion. This facilitated a high response rate.

Data Management

Data were entered into SPSS version 30 and processed through coding and data entry, cleaning to address missing values, outlier detection using z-scores, testing for normality and multicollinearity. These procedures ensured the reliability and validity of the dataset prior to analysis. The POJ-Scale had scores ranging from 20-100. Scores were treated as continuous variables during analysis. However, for descriptive purposes, scores were interpreted relative to the mean and standard deviation, where values below the mean indicated low levels, values around the mean indicated moderate levels, and values above the mean indicated high levels. To handle missing data, the researcher deleted the missing rows or columns if they lacked more than 50% of the entries. For the rows and columns which lacked less than 50% of the data entries, the researcher used imputation to fill missing values with reasonable estimates, such as replacing with the mean, median, mode, using forward or backward filling for time-series data, or K-Nearest Neighbors (KNN) methods.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using the Hierarchical regression analysis to test mediation. The mediation analysis followed the Baron and Kenny (1986) approach by determining the effect of organisational justice on organisational commitment, then organisational commitment on OCB and organisational justice on OCB. This was followed by a reduction in effect after introducing the mediator.

RESULTS

Socio-Demographic Characteristics

The following demographic characteristics of the sample (teachers) were considered important for the study: gender, highest level of education, type of subject, time spent working/experience in teaching, marital status, age of respondents and position held. The results for all the background characteristics were presented in Table 1.

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Table 1: Showing the Demographic Characteristics N=310

Demographic characteristics	Details	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	201	64.8
	Female	109	35.2
Highest level of education	Diploma	48	15.5
	Degree	184	59.4
	Post Graduate	78	25.1
Type of subject	Science	110	35.5
	Arts	200	64.5
Experience/Time spent	< 5 years	47	15.2
	5-10 years	170	54.8
	11-15 years	47	15.2
	>15 years	46	14.8
Age Group	20-30 years	68	21.9
	31-40 years	155	50.0
	41-50 years	53	17.1
	51-60 years	34	11.0
Marital status	Single	48	15.5
	Married	168	54.2
	Separated	50	16.1
	Divorced	44	14.2
Position held	Teacher	274	88.4
	DOS	23	7.4
	Deputy	13	4.2

Source: *Primary Data, 2026*

Note: Percentages are rounded to one decimal place, and all percentages were computed based on valid responses.

Table 1 shows that the majority (64.8%) of the respondents were males, while (35.2%) were females. This indicates that both males and females provided their views, and the study was well-representative of all gender groups since both males and females were included in the study sample.

Table 1 also indicated that (59.4%) of the study participants had a bachelor's degree, 15.5% had a diploma, and 25.2% of the respondents had a postgraduate qualification. These results indicate that the majority of the respondents had a bachelor's degree, which implies that the study respondents had reasonably good education qualifications, the desired skills and knowledge to provide appropriate, reliable/credible responses. Therefore, the majority of the study participants had good educational qualifications, to cause good commitment and citizenship.

Furthermore, Table 1 shows that the majority (64.5%) of the respondents were Arts, while (35.5%) were science. This indicates that both arts and science teachers provided their views, the study was well-representative of all subjects taught since both arts and science teachers were included in the study sample.

Table 1 further indicates that the majority (54.8%) of the respondents had been working for a period of 5 to 10 years, 15.2% for below 5 years, 15.2 % for 11 to 15 years and the rest 14.8% for 16 years and above. This implies that government-aided secondary schools in Bushenyi have employees who are both experienced and inexperienced. However, the majority of the study participants had worked for a period of 5-10 years and above. This experience would be enough to cause good commitment and citizenship Behaviour of teachers.

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Based on findings from Table 1, all the respondents were adults since they were all above the majority age of 18 years. In addition, the majority (50.0%) were aged between 31 to 40 years of age, a few (17.1%) were aged between 41 and 50 years, 21.9% were aged from 20 to 30 years, and another 11.0 were above 51 to 69 years. This implies that Government Aided Secondary Schools of Greater Bushenyi Sub-Region are being run by a physically strong and highly productive age, and hence a positive implication on commitment and citizenship Behaviour of teachers in government.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING RESULTS

The objective of the study was achieved using hierarchical regression analysis to determine the mediating role of organisational commitment in the relationship between perceived organisational justice and organisational citizenship behaviour. The analysis followed the (Baron & Kenny, 1986) model, which specifies four conditions for establishing mediation. According to the model, four conditions must be met to confirm the presence of a mediation role; firstly, the predictor variable (Perceived Organisational Justice) must have a significant effect on the mediator variable (Organisational commitment). Secondly, the mediator variable must have a significant effect on the dependent variable (Organisational Citizenship Behaviour). Thirdly, the predictor variable must have a significant direct effect on the dependent variable. Finally, the effect of the predictor should not be significant (in case of full mediation) or should be reduced in strength (in case of partial mediation) after being controlled for the mediator variable. The results are indicated in Table 2.

Table 2: Hierarchical Regression Results

Model	Predictor	Predicted variable	B	Std. Error	*βeta*	R	R^2	Adj R^2	Sig	F-Change
1	Perceived Organisational Justice	Organisational Citizenship Behaviour	.949	.057	.685	.685	.470	.468	.000	272.859
2	Perceived Organisational Justice	Organisational commitment	.698	.050	.619	.619	.383	.381	.000	191.506
3	Organisational commitment	Organisational Citizenship Behaviour	.876	.034	.871	.871	.759	.758	.000	569.159
4	Perceived Organisational Justice	Organisational Citizenship Behaviour	.328	.046	.237	.891	.793	.792	.000	589.520
	Organisational commitment		.890	.041	.725					

**. Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).
B. Unstandardized Beta coefficient
βeta. Standardized coefficient
Independent variable: Perceived Organisational Justice
Mediator variable: Organisational commitment
Dependent Variable: Organisational Citizenship Behaviour

Source: *Primary data, 2026*

Results from Table 2 indicate that perceived organisational justice had a significant and positive effect on organisational citizenship behaviour ($\beta = .685$, $p < .01$), thus satisfying the first condition of the mediation model.

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Further analysis revealed that perceived organisational justice significantly predicted organisational commitment ($\beta = .619$, $p < .01$), thereby fulfilling the second condition of the model.

In addition, organisational commitment was found to have a significant positive effect on organisational citizenship behaviour ($\beta = .871$, $p < .01$), satisfying the third condition of the mediation model.

Finally, when organisational commitment was introduced into the model, the effect of perceived organisational justice on organisational citizenship behaviour decreased from $\beta = .685$ to $\beta = .237$ but remained statistically significant ($p < .01$). This reduction in effect indicates that organisational commitment partially mediates the relationship between perceived organisational justice and organisational citizenship behaviour.

Therefore, hypothesis H_1 was supported, implying that organisational commitment plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between perceived organisational justice and organisational citizenship behaviour among teachers in government-aided secondary schools.

DISCUSSION

The findings confirm that organisational commitment plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between perceived organisational justice and organisational citizenship Behaviour. This result aligns with previous studies (Donglong et al., 2020; Paksoy, Durmaz, Özbezek, & Çopuroğlu, 2024), which found that employees reciprocate fair treatment through increased commitment and discretionary behaviours.

The results strongly support Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), which posits that individuals respond to favourable organisational treatment with positive attitudes and behaviours. In this study, teachers who perceived fairness in procedures, interactions, and outcomes developed stronger emotional attachment to their schools, which translated into higher levels of OCB.

The observed partial mediation suggests that organisational justice not only builds commitment but also directly motivates OCB. This may be due to the intrinsic value teachers place on fairness, which can independently trigger positive behaviours without necessarily passing through commitment.

However, the findings differ from studies such as (Jehanzeb & Mohanty, 2020), which reported full mediation. These differences may be attributed to contextual differences (education vs. corporate sector), cultural variations in perceptions of fairness and institutional characteristics of Ugandan public schools. These findings further reinforce the applicability of Social Exchange Theory in explaining behavioural outcomes in educational institutions.

Practical Implications of the Study

The findings provide several important implications:

- School administrators should promote fair decision-making processes, ensure equitable resource distribution and enhance respectful interpersonal treatment
- Strengthening organisational commitment through recognition programs, professional development opportunities and supportive leadership.
- Policy interventions should integrate both justice and commitment frameworks to improve teachers' performance.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that organisational commitment significantly mediates the relationship between perceived organisational justice and OCB. The mediation is partial, indicating both direct and indirect effects. Enhancing fairness in school

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management is critical for improving teacher commitment and citizenship Behaviour. However, these findings are context-specific to Greater Bushenyi and may not be generalised to other regions without further empirical validation.

Recommendations

- School leaders should institutionalise transparent and fair policies to boost organisational citizenship Behaviour among the staff.
- The Ministry of Education should design policies that strengthen teacher commitment, which will ultimately enhance organisational citizenship Behaviour among staff.
- Future research should explore longitudinal mediation effects and study other mediators, such as job satisfaction or trust, that could have an implication on the dependent and independent variables.
- Future research should adopt qualitative and longitudinal research designs to provide deeper insights into the dynamics of organisational commitment and behavioural outcomes over time.

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