

The Impact of Employee Voice on Organizational Commitment: Insights from the Telecommunication Sector in Ghana.

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ABSTRACT

Employing the social exchange theory, this study analyzes the impact of employee voice on organizational commitment. The study utilized questionnaires to collect data from 254 respondents from the selected firms within the telecommunication industry of Ghana. Various tests were carried out to purify and tests for the data for a robust analysis. Linear regression model was employed to assess the relationship between the variables under study. Results of the study revealed a significant positive relationship between employee voice and organizational commitment, supporting the hypothesis developed for the study. In conclusion, this study discusses the implications, limitations, and directions for future studies.

Keywords: Employee Voice, Organizational Commitment, Regression Model

INTRODUCTION

Businesses across the globe are operating in a turbulent environment. To adapt to the volatile and changing environment, businesses are required to make constant shifts. Surviving and succeeding in such a turbulent business environment is one of the key objectives of any organization (Jha et al., 2019). In line with this argument, most studies in Human Resource Management (HRM) have centered on how to enhance organizational commitment (Drouin-Rousseau et al., 2024; Sharif et al., 2024; Pinho et al., 2024). An organization with a willing workforce who are committed to the success of the organization can be able to achieve its long-term goals. In such a scenario, the role of management in creating an atmosphere of reciprocity where the workers are encouraged to voice their opinions and participate in decision-making towards the progress of the firm cannot be downplayed (Jena et al., 2017).

The telecommunication sector plays a vital role in facilitating communication, providing connectivity, enhancing access to information, fostering innovation, and supporting economic growth in advanced and emerging economies (Lam & Shiu, 2010). For some decades, the telecommunication sector has recognized the impact of employees' contributions in shaping the outcomes of organizations (Hajar et al., 2022). Employee voice is one of the most essential tools impacting on organizational outcomes. Following Machokota & Dzvimbo (2022), employee voice, which encompasses employee views, suggestions, and concerns, significantly impacts on organizational commitment. As companies aim to improve their performance and long-term goals, understanding the ways by which the inputs from workers enhance organizational outcomes is imperative (Idrisu & Mohammed, 2024).

Studies have investigated the essence of having a voice at the workplace (Holland et al. 2019; Jha et al. 2019). According to Wilkinson et al. (2018), employees having a voice at work not only enhance their loyalty and commitment, but also, reduce their turnover intention as well as absenteeism, and further enhance the performance of the organization. Also, Dundon et al. (2004) revealed that employees having a voice at the workplace enhance problem-solving, increase transparency and trust, improve employee retention, better conflict resolution, enhance competitive advantage, and increase employee engagement. Contrary, the

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD, 2024) revealed that when employees perceive they lack a 'voice' at the workplace, it negatively impacts on wellbeing, commitment, and innovation.

Numerous studies investigating the nexus between employee voice and organizational commitment have reported mixed findings. Among others, Khan et al. (2021), and Prasadik & Nishanthi (2018) revealed a significant impact of employee voice on organizational commitment. Other research on employee voice and organizational commitment nexus however, revealed no significant impact (Farndale et al., 2011). The findings from these studies clearly communicate that research on employee voice and organizational commitment nexus remains inconclusive. While prior studies on employee voice have been carried out in the advanced economies such as the UK (Ruck et al., 2017), Canada (Gomez, 2016), France and Germany (Zimmermann, 2020), limited studies have been carried out in emerging economies like Ghana (Gyensare et al., 2019). Notably, the impact of employee voice on organizational commitment have been largely overlooked in the Ghanaian context. This study addresses this gap in research and enriches the HRM literature on employee voice and organizational commitment nexus.

The purpose of this research is to analyze the impact of employee voice on organizational commitment. Following CIPD (2024), creating an atmosphere of reciprocity where employees have a voice at the workplace enhance innovation, employee wellbeing, and build solid relationships between superiors and their subordinates. The anticipated contribution to existing literature on employee voice and organizational commitment emphasizes the relevance and justification of this paper. The study further provides valuable insight to management on the need to put in place policies and practices that will encourage employees to express their opinions on issues that are deemed relevant in their organization. This paper is categorized into five sections. The first and second sections present the introduction and literature review respectively. The third and fourth sections also present the research methodology as well as the results and discussion respectively. The conclusion, limitations and direction for future research are presented in section five of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Definition of Employee Voice

Employee voice, as defined by Satterstrom et al., (2021) refers to "a set of individual discretionary behaviors to communicate their ideas, opinions, and suggestions at the workplace." A comprehensive definition of employee voice given by Morrison (2011 p.375) refers to the articulation of ideas, suggestions, opinions, and concerns on issues relating to work, with the sole purpose of enhancing the outcome of the organization. Researchers studying employee voice have provided a framework to assess a voice system in three forms, which are: the degree, level, and range (Guarin et al., 2024; Wilkinson et al., 2013). To start with, degree refers to the extent to which workers within the organization are able to regulate decisions concerning multiple facets of management. The second aspect relates to the level at which voice is expressed. Specifically, the level can relate to a task, departmental or corporate. The third dimension, which is the range, includes minor difficulties (e.g. parking) as well as operational considerations like improving the production line (Wilkinson et al., 2018; Viveros et al., 2018).

Organizational Commitment

In the words of Mowday et al. (1982) as cited in Chang et al. (2022), organizational commitment is defined as the level with which a person identifies and gets involved in his or her organization. This study follows the three dimensions of organizational commitment given by Meyer & Allen (1991). These three dimensions of organizational commitment includes affective, normative and continuance commitment. Affective commitment refers to the means whereby an employee wants to affiliate with an organization; normative commitment describes how an employee feels obligated to part of an organization; and how employees feel the need to belong to the organization relates to continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). According

to Zhu et al. (2015), higher levels of commitment among employees enhance their likelihood of contributing to organizational goals.

The Ghanaian Telecommunication Sector

Ghana is one of the countries in Africa to go from a telecommunication sector which was government-controlled to a highly competitive market which included the participation of the private sector (Osei-Owusu, 2015). The sector is governed by the Electronic Communication Act, 2008 (Act 775). In order to promote the active development of the Ghanaian telecommunication sector, the previous and current government has continuously played active roles. In 2025, the size of the Ghana telecommunication market is estimated at \$1.10 billion. By 2023, the telecommunication market of Ghana is expected to reach \$1.17 (Ghana Telecom Market Analysis Report). Currently, Ghana is experiencing an increase in demand for 5G connections and services, driven by the technology's promise of higher speeds and lower latency than its predecessors. With 5G, telecom companies are better positioned to meet rising mobile data usage, paving the path for new revenue opportunities. The major players within the telecommunication industry of Ghana include MTN, Telecel, Airtel/Tigo, and Glo. Specifically, MTN has emerged as the leader in the Ghanaian telecommunication industry. Being the main economic sector of Ghana with vast opportunity for growth, employment creation, and GDP contribution (World Bank, 2013), the sector has strong potential with high expected growth rate in the years ahead. Amidst the potential benefits accruing from the telecommunication sector, the industry is saddled with a lot of challenges which include regulatory challenges, high tariff rate, increase in operating costs, infrastructure challenges, and security challenges, among others. The telecommunication industry of Ghana was chosen for this study because it occupies a pivotal position in the economy of Ghana, with numerous employment opportunities, and data availability for the study.

The Impact of Employee Voice on Organizational Commitment

Positive opinions regarding companies stem from a person's psychological commitment to the company and its ideals, indicating an active relationship between the company and its personnel. This general ideal is represented by organizational commitment (Ferndale et al., 2011). Following the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), this relationship existing between the company and its employees is highlighted in the social exchange theory. The social exchange theory preaches that an exchange relationship occurs when one party benefits the other and is obligated to reciprocate (Blau, 1964). In this context, the other party, such as a director, might represent a real person, however, it can also represent the organization as a whole, which employees may associate with human traits (Ferndale et al., 2011).

The social exchange theory suggests that employees see an organization's activities as an indication of its commitment to them. Barron (2022) revealed that employees' commitment to their company is highly influenced by their perception of the company's commitment to them. Hence, employees at the workplace feel obligated to respond to organizational actions, leading to increased commitment. According to Prasadika et al. (2018), having a voice at work and engaging employees in decision making is one powerful tool management can employ to enhance the organization-employee relationship. Having a voice at work can take the form of individual channels or collective representation in the form of trade unions.

Under this current dispensation where employee voice is imperative in businesses as a result of its strategic implications, giving employees the opportunity to contribute to decision-making, and to voice their opinions on matters concerning the organization is seen as a driving force of commitment (Ferndale et al., 2011). Individuals with decision-making power can match their personal and organizational goals and values, leading to greater acceptance and identification with company aims (Korsgaard et al., 1995). Eventually, employees who believe they can influence decisions are more likely to commit to their organization.

Empirical literature has revealed that to achieve better organizational and employee outcome, employee voice depicts their involvement in the process of decision-making (Guarin et al., 2024; Pohler et al., 2020). From the employer's perspective, effective voice at the workplace enhances productivity and enhances the building

of trust with employees (CIPD, 2025). For instance, employees who communicate themselves through voice frequently feel respected, have higher job satisfaction, have more influence, and have better possibilities for advancement. To enhance organizational commitment, emphasis is placed on direct employee voice mechanisms, participation in task-based as well as problem solving (Baron et al., 2022).

Having a voice at work is implicated as an antecedent of numerous positive outcomes to the organisation (Kim & Leach, 2020), which includes organizational innovation (Shin et al., 2022), organizational engagement (Ruck et al., 2017), employee commitment (Machokoto & Dzvimbo, 2022), job performance (Jakada et al., 2019), and employee retention (Spencer, 1986). Many studies investigating the impact of employee voice on organizational commitment have reported positive outcomes (Barron, 2022; Machokoto & Dzvimbo, 2022; Prasadika et al., 2018). Echoing this, Kim & Leach (2020) revealed that having a voice at the workplace enables employees to have confidence in themselves that their participation, ideas, and suggestions are always welcome and acted upon. Consequently, this study hypothesized that:

H1: employee voice has a significant positive impact on organizational commitment.

DATA AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To achieve the aim of analyzing the impact of employee voice on organizational commitment, this research adopted a quantitative and explanatory approach in line with the studies of Ferndale et al. (2011) and Barron (2022). Situated in the positivism research paradigm, the quantitative approach enabled the researcher to employ numbers and statistical tools to assess the relationship between employee voice and organizational commitment. It was felt that the quantitative explanatory approach was more appropriate to carry out this research because it provides opportunity for the researcher to collect data from large samples for a robust finding, and generalizability of results. The study organizations involve two selected telecommunication companies in Ghana. Here, pseudonyms based on organizations are used for anonymity. The researcher collaborated with management of the selected telecommunication firms for the purpose of data collection. Data for this study was collected using questionnaires distributed to selected participants of two telecommunication firms in Ghana. From Telecom A and Telecom B, 254 samples were selected using simple random sampling techniques. The completed questionnaire was returned anonymously to the researcher and his team. On average, the response rate across the two firms was 71%. The effects were tested for selection bias since more than a half of the chosen respondents (126 respondents) were from Telecom B. The selection bias was tested with and without the organization with more than half of the sample included in the sample (Ferndale et al., 2011). When comparing both samples, the absolute value of the standard regression coefficient of the variables employed in the analysis differs maximally only with a small margin of 0.051. In addition, to reduce the statistical power of the sample without Telecom B, the level of significance reported a change in only one result. Echoing the small differences here, the total sample from the participants were taken into consideration.

The questionnaire items relating to the primary concept in this research-employee voice and organizational commitment, were based largely on existing scales. With a 5-point Likert scale, the questionnaire items were measured, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, with the exception of employee voice which was measured with a 3-point Likert scale, ranging from “not available to fully available”. In this study, the independent and dependent variables are represented by employee voice and organizational commitment respectively. The seven items of the questionnaire employed to measure employee voice were adopted from a study by Spencer (1986). Also, the items of the questionnaire to measure organizational commitment which involves three dimensions of organizational commitment, which are affective, normative and continuance commitment, were adopted from Meyer & Allen (1991). To achieve an adulteration-free relationship between core variables, researchers such as Rasheed et al. (2017) and Fu et al. (2015) revealed that control variables need to be introduced as some individual and firm characteristics impact on the relationship under study. With respect to control variables, this study used firm age (measured by total years of operation) and firm age (measured as number of employees (Rasheed et al., 2017). The study further controlled for human capital characteristics (measured by level of education and experience level), as they are known to impact on the labor

market power of the employees (Batt et al., 2002). The mean and standard deviation of each scale was computed and reported for further analysis. The demographic characteristics of the respondents and the firms under study are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents and Firms

Variables	Dimensions	Frequency	%
Age	19–29	26	10.2
	30–39	92	36.2
	40–49	104	40.9
	50+	32	12.6
Gender	Male	151	59.4
	Female	103	40.6
Qualification	HND	42	16.5
	1st Degree	157	61.9
	Masters	55	21.7
Work Experience	Less than 2 years	1	0.4
	2–5 years	20	7.9
	6–10 years	166	65.4
	11+	67	26.4
Firm Age	Up to 10 years	148	58.3
	10+	106	41.7
Firm Size	Less than 1000	142	55.9
	1001+	112	44.1

The reliability of the data set was tested using Cronbach’s alpha and the results confirmed all the scores to be above 0.7. With this, the researcher aims to increase the difference in and statistical power. To examine the construct validity of the variables of employee voice, affective, normative and continuance commitment, a CFA was conducted. As depicted in Table 2, the model indicated a good fit for the data, as the χ^2 (df = 55) = 122.73, $p < 0.01$ represents the fit indices for the model. The root square mean error of approximation (RSMEA) and the standard root mean square residual (SRMR) obtained were 0.070 and 0.052 respectively. Table 2 below reports the assessment results of validity and reliability tests analyzed through SPSS v 20.

Table 2: Item measurements, validity and reliability assessment result

Construct/Measurement	Alpha	CR	AVE	Factor Loading
Employee Voice	0.755	0.799	0.576	
Grievance procedure				0.81
Suggestion system				0.85
Employee-management meetings				0.76
Counseling service				0.69
Ombudsman				0.79
Nonmanagement task forces				0.82
Question-and-answer program				0.77
Affective Commitment Scale	0.766	0.830	0.709	
very happy to spend the rest...				0.89
organization's problems...				0.78
feel like 'part of my family'...				0.81

emotionally attached...				0.85
a great deal of personal...				0.67
not feel a strong sense of...				0.62
Continuance Commitment Scale	0.855	0.875	0.639	
very hard for me to leave my job				0.80
my life would be disrupted if...				0.76
staying with my job at this...				0.92
few options to consider leaving...				0.66
few negative consequences of...				0.71
major reasons I continue to...				0.78
Normative Commitment Scale	0.856	0.883	0.791	
I do not feel any obligation...				0.81
Even if it were to my advantage...				0.75
I would feel guilty...				0.63
my loyalty...				0.83
my sense of obligation to...				0.73
I owe a great deal to...				0.67

RESULTS

Among the variables in the study, Table 3 presents the mean standard deviation, and the correlation results. The correlation results revealed that multicollinearity is not an issue in this study.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Firm Age	2.37	0.531	1					
2. Firm Size	2.75	0.433	-0.029	1				
3. Employee voice	2.41	0.195	0.003	-0.077	1			
4. Affective Commitment	2.80	0.391	-0.034	0.137*	0.069	1		
5. Continuous Commitment	4.07	0.486	-0.252**	0.105	-0.127	0.014	1	
6. Normative Commitment	3.56	0.222	-0.222**	0.015	-0.286**	-0.083	0.682**	1
			*p < 0.05				**p < 0.01	

Table 4: Regression Model

	Beta	S. Error	T	Sig
Constant	4.4431	0.352	12.587	0.000
Employee Voice	0.302	0.102	2.963	0.003
Educational level	-0.011	0.033	-0.332	0.740
Work Experience	-0.004	0.035	-0.117	0.907
Firm Age	-0.156	0.037	-4.201	0.000
Firm Size	0.070	0.046	1.542	0.124
R squared =	0.108			

To assess the impact of employee voice on organizational commitment, organizational commitment was regressed on employee voice. The model controlled for educational level work experience, firm age and firm size, as some individual and firm characteristics impact on the relationship under study. The results of the model as shown in Table 4 revealed that employee voice obtained a coefficient value of 0.302 with a significance level of 0.003. Hypothesis 1 suggests a significant positive relationship between employee voice and organizational commitment. As shown in Table 4, employee voice is positively related to organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.302$, $p < .01$). Thus, hypothesis 1 is supported.

DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study are discussed in accordance with the results obtained from the data analysis. The main objective of the study was to analyze the impact of employee voice on organizational commitment within the telecommunication industry of Ghana. Employee voice is one of the most essential tools impacting on organizational outcomes (Machokota & Dzvimbo, 2022). Results of the descriptive statistics revealed the existence of employee voice in the industry under study. This is important for the organizations under study as empirical literature has revealed that having a voice at the workplace enhances employee loyalty and commitment, reduces their turnover intention and the level of absenteeism (Wilkinson et al., 2018). When employee voice is not available at the workplace, it negatively impacts on employee wellbeing, commitment, and innovation (CIPD, 2024).

Results of the study revealed a significant positive relationship between employee voice and organizational commitment. This implies that when employees feel that their voices are heard at the workplace, it enhances their well-being, engagement, trust and loyalty to the organization, which in turn influences organizational commitment. This confirms extant literature that revealed a significant positive impact on employee voice and organizational commitment nexus (Machokoto & Dzvimbo, 2022; Prasadika et al., 2018). This relationship existing between the company and its employees is highlighted in the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), suggesting that employees see an organization's activities as an indication of its commitment to them. Employees who communicate themselves through voice frequently feel respected, have higher job satisfaction, and have better possibilities for advancement, which are driving factors of organizational commitment.

The significant impact of employee voice on organizational commitment reveals that when employees perceived that they have a voice through grievance procedure, suggestion system, employee-management meeting, counseling service, and believe that they can influence decision making of the organization, they tend to show high level of organizational commitment (Ferndale et al., 2011). Again, having a voice at the workplace not only assures the employees that their views are respected and taken into consideration by their superiors, but also communicates a high level of trust, as well as high quality employee-employee relationship at the organization. In summary, this result shows that employee voice plays a crucial role in organizational commitment.

To facilitate organizational commitment in practical terms, employees' voice is imperative. The findings of the study show a strong connection between employee voice and organizational commitment within the firms under study. Five recommendations for telecommunication firms follows from this. First, this study recommends to management of organizations to foster an open-door policy which encourages employees at the workplace to share their ideas, concerns, and suggestions, in addition to involving them in the decision-making process of the firm. Secondly, the organization should address employees' concerns promptly and implement employee feedback mechanisms by soliciting feedback from employees regularly. Thirdly, the organization should recognize and reward employees' contributions, feedback, suggestions, and innovative ideas to boost their morale. In addition, the organization should develop a culture of transparency whereby they share the goals, objectives and challenges of the business with the workers to empower them to share their ideas and solutions with management. Lastly, management of the organization should monitor and evaluate employee voice initiatives with the aim of identifying areas that require improvement and ensure that the voice of the employees continuously have a significant impact on organizational commitment.

CONCLUSION, LIMITATION AND DIRECTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study supports the idea that having a voice at work enhances organizational commitment. In particular, it has highlighted that it is important to consider employee voice at the lower level where most employee voice is not usually taken into consideration in many organizations in Ghana. When employees perceive that they have a voice at the degree, level, and range, it positively enhances their commitment to the organization. From the practical perspective, this study has revealed the essence of having employee voice in the form of suggestions, opinions, innovative ideas, and their involvement in decision-making to enhance their positive attitude towards organizational commitment.

The generalizability of the study's results might be limited since the study was carried out using data generated from only selected samples within the telecommunication industry in Ghana. Though data was collected from two selected telecommunication firms in Ghana, the researcher cannot rule out the possibility of common method bias. During the data collection, some respondents failed to complete the questionnaire, and at the end, were excluded from the collected data for the analysis.

In light of the scarcity of research on employee voice on organizational commitment, future studies should be replicated in other sectors like the banking and manufacturing sectors. Though the scrutiny yielded the requisite results, future studies should include participants from various sectors beyond telecommunications to improve generalizability. Incorporating qualitative methods, such as interviews, could provide deeper insights into employee perceptions. Researchers should explore potential moderating factors like organizational culture or leadership style to better understand the employee voice-commitment relationship.

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