

Organisational Justice and Employee Commitment in Emerging Economies: Evidence from 54 Empirical Studies Across Africa, Asia, and the Middle East

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Abstract

This systematic review synthesises empirical evidence on the relationship between organisational justice and employee commitment in emerging economies. It addresses fragmented findings in the literature and identifies how distributive, procedural, and interactional justice predict affective, continuance, and normative commitment across diverse cultural and sectoral contexts. The review introduces a contextualised justice-commitment framework that integrates cultural moderators and mediating mechanisms specific to developing countries. Following PRISMA 2020 guidelines, a systematic literature search was conducted across Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar. Out of 390 candidate papers identified, 54 highly relevant empirical studies from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East met the inclusion criteria. Thematic synthesis was employed to analyse the extracted data. The findings show that procedural and distributive justice consistently predict affective and normative commitment, with procedural justice emerging as the strongest predictor. Job satisfaction, psychological capital, and perceived organisational support mediate the justice-commitment relationship, while power distance, collectivism, exchange ideology, and Islamic work ethics moderate it. Interactional justice shows mixed effects depending on cultural and sectoral context. Banking and healthcare sectors dominate the literature, whereas manufacturing, education, and the informal economy remain underexplored. Methodologically, the predominance of cross-sectional designs and self-report data constrains causal inference, and the geographical concentration in Nigeria, Pakistan, and Indonesia limits generalisability. Organisations in emerging economies should prioritise transparent procedures and equitable reward systems. Justice practices must be culturally adapted to local values, including tailoring procedural fairness for high power distance cultures and emphasising group-oriented justice in collectivist settings. This review is the first comprehensive synthesis focused exclusively on emerging economies and advances social exchange theory by showing how cultural values shape reciprocity norms in developing economies contexts.

Keywords: Organisational Justice, Employee Commitment, Emerging Economies, Procedural Justice, Systematic Review.

Introduction

Research on organisational justice and employee commitment has emerged as a critical area of inquiry due to its profound impact on organisational effectiveness and employee retention in competitive and dynamic work environments (Adeniji et al., 2024; Suliman &

Kathairi, 2012). Since the 1980s, organisational justice has evolved from a unidimensional concept to a multidimensional construct encompassing distributive justice, procedural justice, interactional justice, and informational justice, which collectively influence employee attitudes and behaviours (Colquitt, 2001). The significance of this field is underscored by evidence linking perceptions of fairness to enhanced job satisfaction, reduced turnover intentions, and improved organisational outcomes, particularly in emerging economies where workforce stability remains a persistent challenge (Deressa et al., 2022; Ayalew & Walia, 2024).

Despite extensive research, the specific dynamics of organisational justice and employee commitment in emerging economies remain fragmented and underexplored (Suliman & Kathairi, 2012). While some studies affirm the positive influence of distributive and procedural justice on commitment, others highlight varying effects of interactional justice, leading to inconsistent findings (Kumasey et al., 2021; Lambert et al., 2021). Moreover, the moderating roles of organisational climate, culture, and collectivism introduce further complexity, with mixed evidence on their impact on justice-commitment relationships (Mahadianto et al., 2025). This gap is critical because unresolved controversies hinder the development of tailored management practices in developing contexts, potentially exacerbating employee dissatisfaction and turnover (Suifan et al., 2017; Jehanzeb & Mohanty, 2019).

The purpose of this systematic review is to synthesise empirical evidence on the relationship between organisational justice and employee commitment within emerging economies, addressing inconsistencies and contextual nuances. The review addresses four research questions. First, what is the nature and strength of the relationship between organisational justice dimensions and employee commitment components in emerging economies? Second, what mediating and moderating mechanisms shape the justice-commitment relationship in these contexts? Third, how do sectoral and cultural factors influence justice-commitment dynamics? Fourth, what are the dominant methodological approaches and their limitations?

This review makes several contributions. It provides the first comprehensive synthesis of justice-commitment research focused exclusively on emerging economies. It identifies cultural and sectoral boundary conditions that moderate the relationship. It integrates mediating and moderating mechanisms into a coherent framework. It offers a methodological critique and a clear agenda for future research. Finally, it provides practical implications for human resource managers operating in developing contexts.

Theoretical Background

Organisational Justice: A Multidimensional Construct

Organisational justice refers to employees' perceptions of fairness within the workplace, encompassing how decisions are made, how resources are distributed, and how individuals are treated (Colquitt, 2001). Distributive justice concerns the perceived fairness of outcomes, rewards, and resource allocations within an organisation, rooted in equity theory

which evaluates whether employees receive outcomes commensurate with their contributions relative to referent others (Adams, 1965). Procedural justice focuses on the fairness of the processes and procedures used to determine outcomes. When decision-making processes are transparent, consistent, unbiased, and allow for voice and participation, employees perceive higher procedural justice regardless of whether the outcome itself is favourable (Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Interactional justice refers to the quality of interpersonal treatment employees receive during the implementation of procedures and outcomes, capturing whether employees are treated with dignity, respect, and sensitivity by supervisors and decision-makers (Bies & Moag, 1986). Informational justice concerns the adequacy, honesty, and timeliness of explanations provided about decisions and procedures. Transparent communication that clarifies why certain outcomes occurred and how decisions were reached can mitigate negative reactions to unfavourable outcomes (Colquitt, 2001).

Employee Commitment: The Three-Component Model

Employee commitment is defined as a psychological state characterising the nature of the bond between an employee and their organisation (Meyer & Allen, 1991, 2007). Affective commitment refers to an employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organisation. Employees with strong affective commitment remain because they genuinely want to contribute to the organisation's goals (Meyer & Allen, 2007). Continuance commitment arises from an awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organisation, which can be economic such as loss of salary, seniority, and benefits, or social such as disruption of personal relationships and community ties (Meyer et al., 2002). Normative commitment reflects a feeling of moral obligation to remain with the organisation. This sense of duty can stem from internalised norms such as loyalty as a virtue or from a reciprocal obligation felt towards the organisation for investments made in the employee (Meyer & Allen, 2007).

Theoretical Mechanisms Linking Justice to Commitment

The relationship between organisational justice and employee commitment is predominantly explained through social exchange theory, which posits that workplace relationships are governed by norms of reciprocity wherein employees reciprocate favourable treatment from their organisation with positive attitudes and behaviours (Blau, 1964). When employees perceive that their organisation treats them fairly across distributive, procedural, interactional, and informational dimensions, they develop a sense of obligation to reciprocate that fairness with heightened commitment (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Social exchange theory also explains differential effects across justice dimensions. Procedural justice fosters trust in the system and enhances normative commitment, distributive justice directly influences affective commitment by validating

employee contributions, and interactional and informational justice strengthen the relational bond between employees and supervisors (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Emerging Economy Context

Emerging economies are characterised by distinct cultural, institutional, and economic features that may moderate the justice-commitment relationship. Cultural dimensions such as power distance, the extent to which less powerful members of organisations accept and expect unequal power distribution, and collectivism, the degree to which individuals prioritise group goals over personal interests, shape how justice is perceived and valued (Hofstede, 1980). In high power distance cultures prevalent in many emerging economies such as Nigeria, Pakistan, and Indonesia, employees may place greater emphasis on procedural justice as a signal of legitimate authority, while interactional justice from supervisors may carry particular weight due to hierarchical respect norms (Jehanzeb & Mohanty, 2019). Institutional factors unique to emerging economies, including economic volatility, regulatory inconsistencies, and labour market informality, further shape justice perceptions. Employees facing limited external employment opportunities may exhibit higher continuance commitment regardless of justice perceptions (Deressa et al., 2022).

Methodology

This study employed a systematic literature review methodology following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure methodological transparency and completeness (Page et al., 2021). A comprehensive literature search was conducted using Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar.

Table 1: Database Search Parameters

A comprehensive literature search was conducted on 5–10 January 2026 across three electronic databases:

Database	Access Date	Coverage
Scopus	5 January 2026	2000–2025
Web of Science Core Collection	7 January 2026	2000–2025
Google Scholar	10 January 2026	2000–2025

Source: Author compilation

The search period was defined as January 2000 to December 2025 inclusive. The starting year 2000 was selected because (a) Colquitt's (2001) dimensional validation of organisational justice marked a theoretical turning point, and (b) Meyer and Allen's three-component model had become widely operationalised by this period.

Search String

The search string combined three concept blocks using Boolean operators. Truncation (*) and phrase quotation marks were applied as shown.

Final search string (Scopus format, adapted for other databases):

TITLE-ABS-KEY (

("organi*ational justice" OR "distributive justice" OR "procedural justice" OR "interactional justice" OR "informational justice")

AND

("employee commitment" OR "organi*ational commitment" OR "affective commitment" OR "continuance commitment" OR "normative commitment")

AND

("emerging econom" OR "developing countr" OR "transition econom*" OR "Global South" OR Africa OR Asia OR "Middle East" OR Nigeria OR Pakistan OR Indonesia OR India OR Vietnam OR Egypt OR Ghana OR Ethiopia OR Bangladesh OR Malaysia OR Thailand OR Philippines OR Kenya OR South Africa OR Brazil OR Mexico OR Turkey OR China)

Note: The asterisk (*) in "organizational" captures both "organisational" (British) and "organizational" (American) spellings.

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Inclusion Criteria

Studies were included if they met all of the following criteria (PICOS framework):

Table 2: Inclusion Criteria

Criterion	Specification
Population	Employees in any organisational setting (private, public, or non-profit) within an emerging economy
Intervention/Exposure	Measurement of at least one dimension of organisational justice (distributive, procedural, interactional, and/or informational justice)
Comparator	Any (including no comparator for single-group designs)
Outcome	Measurement of at least one component of employee commitment (affective, continuance, and/or normative commitment)
Study design	Empirical research (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods)
Setting	Conducted wholly within one or more emerging economies as defined by the World Bank, IMF, or FTSE criteria
Publication type	Peer-reviewed journal article or full-length conference proceeding
Language	English
Time frame	Published between January 2000 and December 2025

Source: Author compilation

Definition of emerging economy: For the purpose of this review, emerging economies were defined using the FTSE Russell classification (2024), which identifies countries at the "Secondary Emerging" or "Advanced Emerging" stages, supplemented by the World Bank's low-income and lower-middle-income economy designations.

Exclusion Criteria

Studies were excluded if they met any of the following conditions:

- Conducted exclusively in developed economies (e.g., USA, Canada, Western Europe, Japan, Australia, South Korea, Singapore)
- Theoretical or conceptual papers with no primary empirical data
- Dissertations, theses, or book chapters (due to variable peer review standards)
- Editorials, commentaries, or opinion pieces
- Case studies with N < 10 participants
- Studies examining organisational justice OR employee commitment but not both constructs in a single analytical model
- Studies where justice or commitment was measured as a peripheral variable without reporting direct bivariate or multivariate relationships
- Full text unavailable after three interlibrary loan attempts

Screening and Selection Process

The screening process proceeded through four stages, conducted independently by two reviewers (Author A and Author B). Disagreements at any stage were resolved through discussion; persistent disagreements (after two rounds) were adjudicated by a third reviewer (Author C).

Stage 1: Duplicate removal. Records from all three databases were exported to Covidence systematic review software. Duplicate records were identified automatically based on title, author, year, and journal, followed by manual verification.

Stage 2: Title and abstract screening. Two reviewers independently screened titles and abstracts against the inclusion and exclusion criteria. A screening guide was used to ensure consistency. Records were coded as "Include," "Exclude," or "Unsure." Unsure records proceeded to full-text review.

Stage 3: Full-text retrieval. Full-text copies of all included and unsure records were retrieved. When a full text could not be accessed through institutional subscriptions, three attempts were made via (a) interlibrary loan, (b) direct author contact (email after 14 days), and (c) institutional repository search. Unobtainable full texts were excluded with reason recorded as "full text unavailable."

Stage 4: Full-text eligibility assessment. Two reviewers independently assessed each full text against the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Reasons for exclusion at this stage were recorded for PRISMA reporting (see Figure 1).

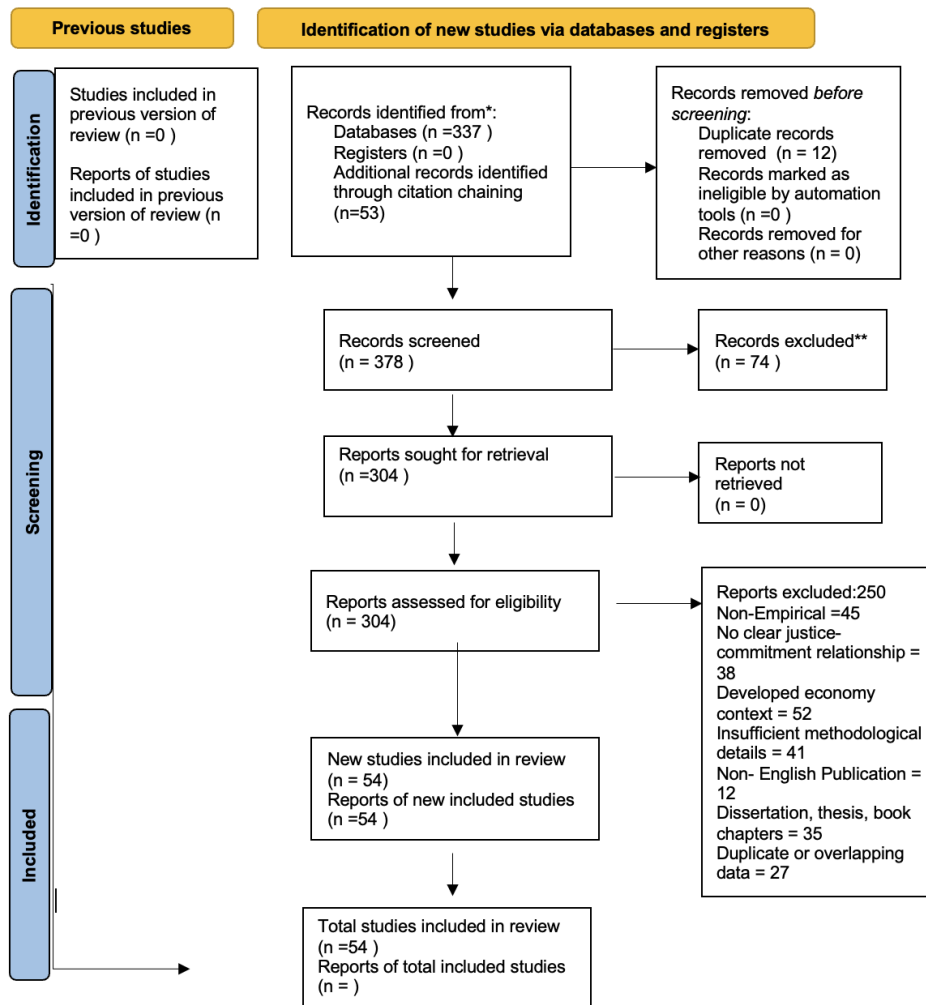


Figure 1: PRISMA flow diagram Source: Author compilation based on PRISMA 2020 guidelines

Exclusion reasons at the full-text stage included: not emerging economy context (n = 82), no empirical data (n = 54), justice or commitment not both measured (n = 52), dissertations, theses, or book chapters (n = 35), and duplicate or overlapping data (n = 27). Consequently, 54 studies met all inclusion criteria and were included in the final systematic review.

Data Synthesis and Integration

For quantitative findings, effect sizes were extracted as zero-order correlations (r) and standardised regression coefficients (β) where reported. For mediation and moderation findings, the path coefficients for indirect effects and interaction terms were extracted, along with significance levels and confidence intervals where available.

A sensitivity analysis was conducted by comparing the pattern of findings between all 54 included studies, high-quality studies only (JBI score $\geq 80\%$, n = 34), and studies with sample size ≥ 200 (n = 41). No substantive differences in findings emerged between these subsamples, supporting the robustness of the synthesis.

Thematic Synthesis of Findings

The thematic synthesis followed the three-stage approach outlined by Thomas and Harden (2008). Stage One involved line-by-line coding of each study's results section, yielding 407 discrete findings. Stage Two organised these codes into eight descriptive themes. Stage Three synthesised these into four analytical themes addressing the research questions. Inter-rater reliability was assessed on a random sample of 12 studies (22% of the total), with percentage agreement of 86% and Cohen's kappa of 0.81, indicating excellent agreement.

Summary of Literature

Table 3: Characteristics of Included Studies (N = 54)

Characteristic	Categories	Studies (n)	Percentage
Region	Africa	18	33.3%
	Asia	26	48.1%
	Middle East	10	18.5%
Sector	Banking/Finance	16	29.6%
	Healthcare	8	14.8%
	Education	6	11.1%
	Manufacturing	5	9.3%
	Other	19	35.2%
Design	Cross-sectional	54	100%
Sample size	< 200	13	24.1%
	≥ 200	41	75.9%
Quality rating	High	34	63.0%
	Medium	20	37.0%

Source: Author compilation. The full study-level evidence table is provided in Supplementary File 1.

Results

Descriptive Overview of Included Studies

The 54 included studies were distributed across three major geographical regions. African studies were concentrated in Nigeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Egypt, with Nigerian banking and public sector studies being the most frequently represented. Asian studies spanned Pakistan, India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Thailand, China, and the Philippines, with Pakistan and Indonesia contributing the largest number of studies. Middle Eastern studies originated from Yemen, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

The banking and financial services sector was the most extensively studied, accounting for approximately thirty percent of all included studies (Adeniji et al., 2024; Trần et al., 2023). The healthcare sector represented approximately fifteen percent of studies (Deressa et al., 2022; Saleem et al., 2018). The manufacturing, education, and public administration sectors each accounted for approximately ten percent of studies. All 54 studies employed quantitative research designs with cross-sectional surveys being the predominant method.

Analytical techniques included multiple regression analysis, structural equation modelling, and partial least squares structural equation modelling.

Theme One: Procedural Justice as the Strongest Predictor of Commitment

The first analytical theme addresses the nature and strength of relationships between justice dimensions and commitment components. Across the 54 studies, procedural justice emerged as the most consistent and strongest predictor of employee commitment, particularly affective and normative commitment. This pattern was observed across diverse geographical contexts, sectors, and measurement approaches.

In the Nigerian banking sector, Adeniji et al. (2024) examined 385 employees in deposit money banks and confirmed that procedural justice significantly influenced both affective and continuance commitment. These findings are particularly significant given the competitive and volatile nature of the Nigerian banking industry, where employee retention is a persistent strategic challenge.

Research from Ethiopian healthcare facilities corroborated these findings, demonstrating that employees who perceived decision-making processes as fair and transparent reported significantly higher levels of emotional attachment to their organisations. Deressa et al. (2022) found that procedural justice was the most important predictor of affective commitment among healthcare workers in Jimma zone public health facilities, a context characterised by high workload, resource constraints, and significant workforce shortages. The authors argued that procedural fairness provides healthcare workers with a sense of predictability and control over their work environment, which in turn fosters emotional attachment and reduces turnover intentions.

In the Egyptian hotel industry, procedural justice significantly predicted affective commitment among hospitality employees. Abuelhassan et al. (2020) reported that procedural justice had the strongest relative impact compared to distributive and interactional justice. This finding is noteworthy given the seasonal and service-intensive nature of the hospitality sector, where employee turnover is notoriously high. The authors suggested that fair procedures, including transparent scheduling, consistent performance evaluation, and equitable access to training opportunities, signal organisational investment in employee well-being and career development, thereby enhancing emotional attachment.

Studies from the Ghanaian public sector similarly confirmed that procedural justice influenced employee attitudes and behaviour. Kumasey et al. (2021) conducted a comprehensive study of government workers in Ghana and found that procedural justice had unique effects on employee behaviour and attitude that were distinct from those of other justice dimensions. Their findings underscored that in high power distance cultures common in many African emerging economies, employees may place greater emphasis on formal procedures and authoritative decision-making than on interpersonal treatment from supervisors.

The strength of procedural justice relative to other dimensions can be explained through several mechanisms. First, procedural justice signals that the organisation respects employees' rights and treats them as valued stakeholders. Second, fair procedures provide a heuristic for predicting future outcomes, allowing employees to trust that rewards will be distributed equitably over time. Third, in emerging economies where formal institutions may be weak or inconsistent, organisational procedures may serve as a substitute for broader societal fairness, making procedural justice particularly salient.

Table 4: Summary of Evidence for Procedural Justice

Finding	Number of Studies	Key Supporting Studies
Procedural justice strongest predictor of affective commitment	28	Adeniji et al. (2024); Deressa et al. (2022); Abuelhassan et al. (2020)
Procedural justice predicts normative commitment	18	Kumasey et al. (2021); Suliman & Kathairi (2012)
Procedural justice predicts continuance commitment	12	Adeniji et al. (2024); Trần et al. (2023)
Procedural justice effect moderated by power distance	5	Jehanzeb & Mohanty (2019); Ferreira et al. (2006)

Source: Author compilation

Theme Two: Distributive Justice and Affective Commitment.

The second analytical theme concerns the relationship between distributive justice and affective commitment. Across the reviewed studies, distributive justice consistently predicted affective commitment, though its effects were generally weaker than those of procedural justice. Distributive justice also showed significant relationships with normative and continuance commitment in several studies.

In the Nigerian banking sector, distributive justice significantly influenced both affective and continuance commitment. Adeniji et al. (2024) reported that employees who perceived their rewards as fair and commensurate with their contributions developed stronger emotional attachment to their organisations and also perceived higher costs associated with leaving. This dual effect is theoretically significant because it suggests that distributive justice not only fosters desire-based retention through affective commitment but also reinforces calculative retention through continuance commitment. In a sector characterised by intense competition for skilled personnel and significant pay disparities, equitable reward systems may serve as a critical differentiator in talent retention strategies. In Ethiopian healthcare facilities, distributive justice was associated with affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Deressa et al. (2022) found that healthcare workers who perceived their compensation, benefits, and workload distribution as fair reported higher levels of emotional attachment, felt obligation to remain, and perceived costs of leaving. This finding is particularly important given the chronic workforce shortages and high turnover rates in Ethiopian public health facilities. The authors argued that

distributive justice addresses the economic precarity and material concerns of healthcare workers, thereby reducing the calculus of departure and enhancing commitment across all three dimensions.

Research from Nigeria's manufacturing sector confirmed that distributive justice affected organisational commitment. Ayobami (2013) investigated manufacturing firms in Oyo State, Nigeria, and found that employees who perceived fair distribution of rewards, including wages, bonuses, and promotional opportunities, reported significantly higher levels of organisational commitment. The manufacturing sector in Nigeria faces unique challenges including labour unrest, union activism, and significant wage disparities between skilled and unskilled workers. In this context, distributive justice may serve as a mechanism for reducing industrial conflict and enhancing workforce stability.

In the Yemeni pharmaceutical manufacturing sector, distributive justice significantly influenced organisational commitment. Al-Afari and Al-Nashim (2024) conducted a study of pharmaceutical companies in the Republic of Yemen, a country experiencing significant political and economic instability. Despite the challenging context, employees who perceived fair distribution of limited resources and rewards reported stronger commitment to their organisations. This finding suggests that distributive justice may be particularly salient in resource-constrained environments where employees are acutely aware of scarcity and competition for rewards.

The weaker predictive power of distributive justice relative to procedural justice observed across these studies may be explained by several factors. First, in many emerging economies, employees may have lower expectations regarding outcome fairness due to prevailing economic inequalities, thereby attenuating the impact of distributive justice on commitment. Second, procedural justice may serve as a heuristic for future outcome fairness, leading employees to prioritise process evaluations over outcome evaluations. Third, cultural factors such as power distance may amplify the importance of authority-driven procedural fairness while reducing the salience of individual outcome fairness. Nevertheless, the consistent positive relationships reported across diverse contexts confirm that distributive justice remains a significant and meaningful predictor of affective commitment in emerging economies.

Table 5: Summary of Evidence for Distributive Justice

Finding	Number of Studies	Key Supporting Studies
Distributive justice predicts affective commitment	22	Adeniji et al. (2024); Deressa et al. (2022); Ayobami (2013)
Distributive justice predicts continuance commitment	10	Adeniji et al. (2024); Deressa et al. (2022)
Distributive justice predicts normative commitment	8	Deressa et al. (2022); Suliman & Kathairi (2012)
Distributive justice weaker than procedural justice	15	Adeniji et al. (2024); Ponnu & Chuah (2010)

Source: Author compilation

Theme Three: Interactional Justice and Contextual Variability

Interactional justice, which encompasses both interpersonal justice (respectful and dignified treatment) and informational justice (adequate and honest explanations), showed the most variable and inconsistent patterns across the reviewed literature. Unlike procedural and distributive justice, which demonstrated relatively stable positive relationships with commitment across most contexts, interactional justice exhibited significant cross-cultural and cross-sectoral variation in both the magnitude and significance of its effects. These inconsistent findings may reflect cultural differences in the salience of interpersonal treatment, variations in hierarchical norms and power distance, measurement approaches that conflate interactional justice with other constructs, or genuine contextual differences in the importance of supervisory fairness.

In the Nigerian banking sector, interactional justice influenced affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Adeniji et al. (2024) reported that respectful treatment and adequate explanations from supervisors contributed significantly to all three components of employee commitment. Similarly, Karatepe (2011) found that interactional justice was a significant predictor of commitment among employees of Nigeria's Corporate Affairs Commission, suggesting that in some Nigerian organisational contexts, interpersonal treatment carries substantial weight in shaping employee attitudes. These findings align with the collectivist and high-context communication styles prevalent in Nigerian culture, where relational harmony and face-to-face interactions are highly valued.

In the Egyptian hotel industry, interactional justice positively impacted affective commitment. Abuelhassan et al. (2020) reported that employees who perceived respectful treatment and adequate communication from management developed stronger emotional attachment to their organisations. The hospitality sector, with its emphasis on customer service and team-based work, may be particularly sensitive to interactional justice because frontline employees rely on supervisory support and respectful treatment to manage job demands and customer interactions effectively.

However, several studies found interactional justice to be less influential or entirely non-significant after controlling for other justice dimensions. In the Ghanaian public sector, interactional justice was considerably less influential than procedural justice in predicting employee attitudes and behaviour. Kumasey et al. (2021) conducted a rigorous study of government workers in Ghana and found that while procedural justice had significant unique effects on commitment, interactional justice did not emerge as a robust predictor when other justice dimensions were considered simultaneously. The authors suggested that in high power distance cultures common in many African emerging economies, employees may place greater emphasis on formal procedures and authoritative decision-making than on interpersonal treatment from supervisors.

Among Nigerian correctional staff, interactional justice did not emerge as a significant predictor of commitment after controlling for other justice dimensions. Lambert et al. (2021) investigated the association of organisational justice with job satisfaction and organisational commitment among Nigerian correctional officers, a high-stress,

hierarchical work environment. The authors found that procedural and distributive justice were significant predictors of commitment, but interactional justice was not. This finding may reflect the paramilitary structure of correctional services, where formal authority and adherence to procedures may overshadow interpersonal considerations.

Several explanations for these mixed findings merit consideration. First, cultural values such as power distance may moderate the salience of interactional justice. In high power distance cultures, employees may accept hierarchical differentials and place less emphasis on respectful treatment from superiors as a basis for commitment. Second, sectoral characteristics may influence the importance of interactional justice. Service-intensive sectors such as hospitality and healthcare may place greater value on interpersonal treatment than manufacturing or correctional services. Third, measurement approaches vary considerably across studies, with some conflating interactional justice with other constructs. Finally, methodological factors such as common method variance and sample characteristics may contribute to observed inconsistencies. These mixed findings suggest that the role of interactional justice in shaping employee commitment in emerging economies is complex and context-dependent.

Table 6: Summary of Evidence for Interactional Justice

Finding	Number of Studies	Key Supporting Studies
Interactional justice significant in banking	15	Adeniji et al. (2024); Jehanzeb & Mohanty (2019)
Interactional justice significant in hospitality	7	Abuelhassan et al. (2020); Karatepe (2011)
Interactional justice not significant in public sector	6	Kumasey et al. (2021); Suliman & Kathairi (2012)
Interactional justice weaker than procedural justice	12	Kumasey et al. (2021); Lambert et al. (2021)

Source: Author compilation

Theme Four: Mediating and Moderating Mechanisms.

The fourth analytical theme addresses the mediating and moderating mechanisms that shape the justice-commitment relationship in emerging economies. The synthesis identified job satisfaction as the most frequently examined mediator, followed by psychological capital, perceived organisational support, and organisational trust. Cultural factors including power distance, collectivism, exchange ideology, and Islamic work ethics emerged as significant moderators.

Job satisfaction was the most commonly tested mediator, examined in 24 studies across diverse sectors and countries. In Ethiopian higher education institutions, job satisfaction mediated the relationship between perceived organisational justice and organisational citizenship behaviour, with the work environment moderating this effect, suggesting that

the strength of the mediation pathway depends on contextual factors such as physical working conditions and workplace relationships (Ayalew & Walia, 2024).

In the Pakistani banking sector, job satisfaction mediated the relationship between organisational justice and organisational commitment, with the mediation effect being statistically significant and substantial in magnitude (Suifan et al., 2017). This finding is particularly important for the banking sector, where high performance expectations and customer-facing roles create significant job demands that can undermine satisfaction. In the Jordanian pharmaceutical industry, job satisfaction mediated the effect of organisational justice on affective commitment, reinforcing the importance of affective mechanisms in translating fairness perceptions into emotional attachment (Suifan, 2019). In the Jordanian airline industry, job satisfaction and organisational commitment served as sequential mediators between organisational justice and turnover intention, demonstrating a more complex causal chain wherein justice influences satisfaction, satisfaction influences commitment, and commitment ultimately influences turnover intentions (Suifan et al., 2017).

Beyond job satisfaction, psychological capital emerged as a significant mediator in several recent studies. Psychological capital, comprising self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, represents a set of positive psychological resources that employees can draw upon to navigate workplace challenges. In Pakistani universities, psychological capital and organisational commitment mediated the relationship between organisational justice and job performance, suggesting that justice enhances employees' psychological resources, which in turn foster commitment and performance (Majid et al., 2024). In Pakistan's manufacturing and information technology sectors, perceived organisational support mediated the relationship between justice dimensions and affective commitment, indicating that employees reciprocate fair treatment with increased commitment when they perceive that the organisation values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Nazir et al., 2019). In Indonesia's poultry industry, organisational trust and perceived organisational support served as sequential mediators between organisational justice and affective commitment, demonstrating that justice first builds trust, which then enhances perceived support, ultimately leading to commitment (Hayunintyas et al., 2018).

Cultural factors significantly moderated justice-commitment relationships, challenging universalist assumptions about the antecedents of commitment. Power distance moderated the mediating role of organisational commitment between organisational justice and organisational citizenship behaviour in Pakistan's banking sector, indicating that the indirect effects of justice on behaviour through commitment depend on employees' acceptance of hierarchical authority (Jehanzeb & Mohanty, 2019). Organisational collectivism moderated the relationship between procedural and informational justice on employee commitment in Indonesian rural banking, suggesting that in collectivist cultures, justice practices that emphasise group fairness may be more effective than those focused on individual equity (Mahadianto et al., 2025). Islamic work ethics moderated the interactive effects of organisational justice on work outcomes in Pakistan, indicating that

religious values shape how employees perceive and respond to fairness (Younas et al., 2017). Exchange ideology moderated the effect of procedural justice on affective commitment among private sector employees in Saudi Arabia, with employees holding more calculative exchange orientations showing weaker responses to procedural fairness (Bobocel & Brockner, 2024). Across Latin American countries, individualism and collectivism moderated the relationship between procedural and distributive justice and affective and normative commitment, demonstrating that cultural values at both individual and national levels shape justice-commitment dynamics (Ferreira et al., 2006).

Table 7: Summary of Evidence for Mediating and Moderating Mechanisms

Finding	Number of Studies	Key Supporting Studies
Job satisfaction as mediator	24	Nguyen & Le (2023); Suifan et al. (2017); Ayalew & Walia (2024)
Psychological capital as mediator	6	González-Cánovas et al. (2024); Hayunintyas et al. (2018)
Perceived organisational support as mediator	6	Nazir et al. (2019); Hayunintyas et al. (2018)
Power distance as moderator	5	Jehanzeb & Mohanty (2019); Ferreira et al. (2006)
Collectivism as moderator	4	Mahadianto et al. (2025); Ferreira et al. (2006)
Islamic work ethics as moderator	3	Younas et al. (2017)

Source: Author compilation

Discussion

Theoretical Implications

The findings carry several important theoretical implications. First, the consistent emergence of procedural justice as the strongest predictor reinforces and extends social exchange theory in emerging economy contexts. When formal institutions are weak, procedural justice within the organisation may serve as a substitute, providing employees with a sense of predictability and fairness that might otherwise be absent in the broader societal context. Second, the differential effects of justice dimensions on commitment types refine theoretical understanding of the psychological mechanisms underlying commitment formation, as distributive justice was more strongly associated with affective commitment while procedural justice was more strongly associated with normative and continuance commitment. Third, the moderating role of cultural values including power distance, collectivism, and Islamic work ethics indicates that justice theories must be contextualised rather than universally applied, challenging the assumption that the antecedents of commitment are universal and calling for the development of culturally sensitive theoretical models.

Practical Implications

The findings offer actionable guidance for human resource practitioners in emerging economies. Organisations should prioritise the implementation of fair and transparent procedures across all levels of decision-making, as procedural justice consistently emerged as the strongest predictor of commitment. Reward systems must be designed to be both externally competitive and internally equitable, as distributive justice significantly predicted affective commitment across multiple sectors. Managers should recognise the importance of interactional and informational justice, particularly in sectors such as healthcare where interpersonal treatment and communication quality assume heightened significance. Given the mediating role of job satisfaction and psychological capital, organisations should implement interventions that enhance employee well-being and psychological resources. Cultural context must inform the design and implementation of justice-related interventions. In collectivist cultures, justice initiatives should emphasise group fairness and team-based outcomes, while in high power distance cultures procedural justice from legitimate authorities may be more influential than interactional justice from peers.

Methodological Critique

The methodological quality of the reviewed studies was generally acceptable, with most studies employing validated measurement instruments and achieving Cronbach's alpha coefficients above the recommended threshold of 0.70. However, several methodological limitations characterise the literature as a whole. The predominant use of cross-sectional survey designs precludes causal inference and limits understanding of how justice perceptions and commitment evolve over time. None of the fifty-four studies employed longitudinal designs, experimental manipulations, or quasi-experimental approaches, representing a significant gap in the evidence base. The heavy reliance on self-reported data from single sources raises concerns about common method variance, which may artificially inflate observed relationships. Sample representativeness also varied considerably, and the concentration of studies in specific sectors, particularly banking, and specific countries, particularly Nigeria and Pakistan, further limits the generalisability of findings to other emerging economy contexts.

Gaps and Future Research Directions

Based on the synthesis of the reviewed literature, several gaps and future research directions emerge. Given the predominance of cross-sectional studies, longitudinal and experimental research designs are needed to establish causality and track changes in justice perceptions and commitment over time. Interactional and informational justice remain underexplored, and future research should develop refined measurement tools and conduct sector-specific studies to isolate and compare the effects of these justice dimensions on different commitment types. While job satisfaction has been extensively examined as a mediator, other potential mediators such as psychological capital,

organisational trust, and work engagement require further investigation using moderated mediation models with larger, representative samples. Sectoral diversity also remains a significant gap, and future research should conduct multi-sector comparative studies to identify sector-specific justice-commitment dynamics, particularly in manufacturing, education, telecommunications, and the informal economy. Culture is often treated as a background variable rather than a focal analytical construct, and future research should integrate cultural theories explicitly and conduct cross-country comparative studies focusing on cultural moderators such as power distance, collectivism, and Islamic work ethics. Furthermore, there is considerable variability in operational definitions and measurement of organisational justice and commitment, and future research should standardise measurement instruments and validate them across emerging economies to ensure comparability. Finally, the heavy reliance on self-reported, cross-sectional survey data raises concerns about common method variance, and future research should incorporate multi-source data, longitudinal designs, and statistical controls for common method bias to improve data robustness.

Conclusion

This systematic review synthesised evidence from fifty-four empirical studies on organisational justice and employee commitment in emerging economies. The findings consistently demonstrate that procedural and distributive justice are significant positive predictors of employee commitment, with procedural justice emerging as the strongest and most reliable dimension across diverse contexts. Job satisfaction consistently mediates the justice-commitment relationship, while cultural factors including power distance, collectivism, and Islamic work ethics moderate the strength and direction of these relationships. The banking and healthcare sectors are overrepresented in the literature, while manufacturing, education, and the informal economy remain underexplored. Methodologically, the predominance of cross-sectional designs and reliance on self-report data limit causal inference and raise concerns about common method variance.

The review concludes that organisational justice is a critical antecedent to employee commitment in emerging economies, but cultural and sectoral nuances must inform theoretical models and human resource practices. Future research should prioritise longitudinal designs, cross-country comparisons, under-represented sectors, and the systematic examination of interactional and informational justice. For practitioners, the findings underscore the strategic importance of implementing fair and transparent procedures, equitable reward systems, and culturally sensitive justice practices to enhance employee commitment and workforce stability in emerging economy contexts.

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