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Integrity as a function of Commitment of employees in Nigeria organisations: *The case of Rivers State in the Repositioning of the Nigerian Economy.*

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ABSTRACT

This paper explains the relationship between integrity as a function of commitment of employees in Nigeria organisations in Rivers State. The study was motivated by the increasing concern over declining organizational values, ethical lapses, and their implications for employee commitment and retention in Nigerian organizations. A cross-sectional survey design was adopted, and primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to ninety-three (93) top, middle, and lower-level managers across selected manufacturing firms. The data were analysed using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the aid of SPSS version 27. Findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between integrity and affective commitment, indicating that employees are more emotionally attached and loyal to organizations perceived as transparent and ethically upright. Similarly, the results showed a positive and significant relationship between integrity and continuance commitment, suggesting that integrity practices influence employees' willingness to remain in the organization due to trust and a sense of security. Furthermore, a significant relationship was also found between integrity and normative commitment, underscoring the fact that when organizations demonstrate high levels of integrity, employees feel a moral obligation to remain committed. The study concludes that integrity is a crucial driver of organizational commitment in Nigerian manufacturing firms. It recommends that organizations institutionalize integrity through ethical leadership, transparent communication, and consistent adherence to professional standards. By doing so, firms will not only foster higher levels of employee commitment but also enhance organizational performance and sustainability.

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Keywords: Integrity, Affective Commitment, Continuance Commitment, Normative Commitment, Manufacturing Companies, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

For an organisation to compete, produce desirable goods and services, expand her economic scope, expand and develop, the commitment of employees will be highly solicited since it's the pivot on which the organisation revolves (Nwiko&Bariere, 2025). Every organisation strive to function into producing the right product, at the quality, at the right quantity, at the right price, at the right time, at the place and delivered to the right source.

Employees commitment is multi-dimensional in construct and has been widely argued and studied in management literature. Meyer and Allen (1997), in their maiden study, argued that, it is as an employee's psychological bond to an organization which determines the continual stay of the employee in the organization. They noted three types of commitment, viz. affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Affective commitment is a person's psychological bond to an organization (Nwiko,2021). Nwiko, 2021 citingRoxenhall and Andrésen (2012), normative commitment is seen as a person's feelings of duty to stay with the organization. In the views of McShane and Von Glinow (2010), continuance commitment is a calculative commitment where an employee weighs the benefits of staying in the organization. The study however adopts these three components to measure employee commitment in organisations.

Integrity in the workplace comes in many forms, but above all having understanding character traits and work ethics including sound judgement, honesty, dependability and loyalty. Palanski and Yammarino (2007) see integrity as the consistency of an acting entity's words and actions. The acting entity refers to an entity at any level of analysis (e.g. individual, group, or organisation). The aforementioned definition is similar to the definition of behavioural integrity describing integrity as the perceived pattern of alignment between an actor's words and deeds (Kannan-Narasimhan & Lawrence, 2012). Integrity can also be referred to as the consistency of leaders' personal beliefs and values, daily working behaviour and organisational aims (Badaracco & Ellsworth, 1989). Palanski and Yammarino (2007)

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classified the various meanings of integrity in the management literature into five main categories: 1) integrity as wholeness; 2) integrity as consistency between words and actions; 3) integrity as consistency in adversity; 4) integrity as being true to oneself; 5) and integrity as morality/ethics (including constructs such as honesty, trustworthiness, justice and compassion) (Palanski&Yammarino, 2009).

Concern has been raised about the overlapping of various definitions of integrity. The interchangeable use of the concept leads to considerable difficulty when trying to operationalise, measure, and test integrity (Palanski&Yammarino, 2007, 2009). Palanski and Yammarino (2007) proposed that this problem can be addressed by considering integrity as a virtue, which is defined as a discrete component of good character (Palanski&Yammarino, 2009). Such an approach provides a sound theoretical basis for establishing a distinct and usable conceptualisation of integrity. Based on the consideration of integrity as a virtue, Palanski and Yammarino (2007) recommend that the domain of integrity best fits the second category of the five noted above, i.e., integrity as consistency of words and actions. They argue that the other four categories of integrity (i.e., wholeness, being true to oneself, consistency in adversity, and morality/ethics) are previously established as other virtues in their own right (e.g., being true to oneself may be considered as the virtue of authenticity) (Panlanski&Yammarino, 2007).

In general, there are two perspectives on the concept of integrity (Six, Bakker & Huberts, 2007): firstly, the consistency or wholeness perspective which does not have an explicit moral component and, secondly, the moral perspective which stresses what is right and wrong (i.e., a moral component). From the consistency perspective, integrity is seen as embodying wholeness or completeness, and as representing the consistency and coherence of principles and values. Montefiore's (as cited in Six *et al.,* 2007) literature review recognises that the consistency perspective dominates the existing research. Brenkert (2004) is of the opinion that the consistency perspective lacks a 'moral filter', however. He asserts that integrity should involve more than simply doing what one says, but what one says and does must also pass through some moral filter (Brenkert, 2004). Similarly, McFall (1987) argues

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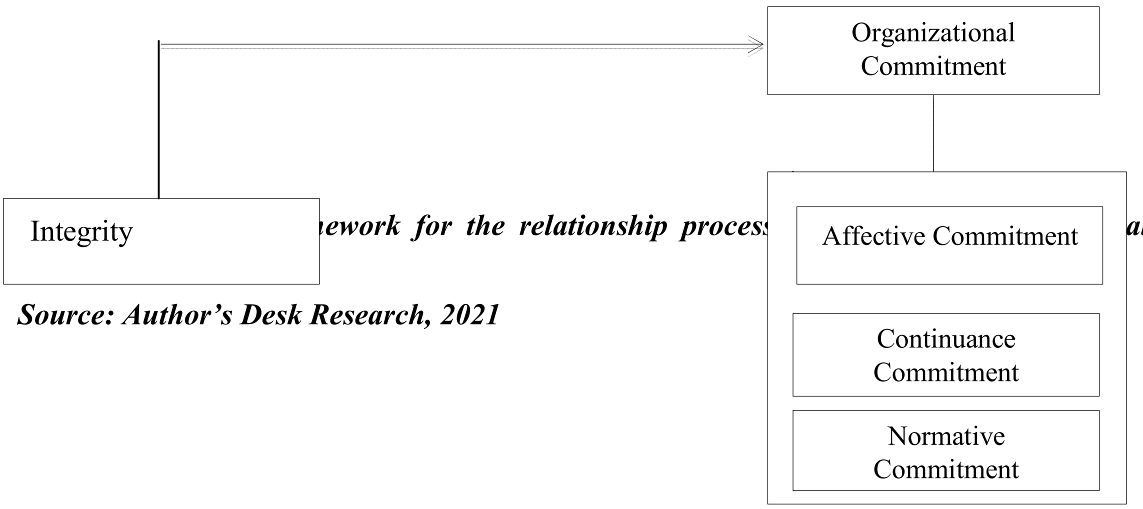
that the consistency perspective is deficient in a moral dimension (Six et al., 2007). This study focuses on process integrity. This is the alignment of individual and collective moral awareness, deliberation, character and conduct on a sustained basis so that reputation becomes a major intangible asset to be carefully nurtured and protected (Rest, 1986). This study therefore examines the relationship between process integrity and organizational commitment of manufacturing firms in Rivers State. Furthermore, this study will also be guided by the following research questions:

i. What is the relationship between process integrity and affective commitment of manufacturing firms in Nigeria?
ii. What is the relationship between process integrity and continuance commitment of manufacturing firms in Nigeria?
iii. What is the relationship between process integrity and normative commitment of manufacturing firms in Nigeria?



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Source: Author's Desk Research, 2021

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"Integrity as a function of Commitment of employees in Nigeria organisations: The case of Rivers State in the Repositioning of the Nigerian Economy "

LITERATURE REVIEW

Integrity

Integrity is the alignment of individual and collective moral awareness, deliberation, character, and conduct on a sustained basis so that reputational capital results (Patricia, 2010). The need to address lapses in process integrity capacity is manifest by the routine fragmentation of managerial moral attention and behavior that arouses stakeholder concern about the moral hypocrisy of management practices (e.g., Enron top managers tout their public relations images as responsible corporate citizens while defrauding investors and employees and secretly lining their own pockets with diverted funds) (Patricia, 2010).

While it is unlikely that Enron executives failed to perceive the relevant moral issues, it is clear that they were not sensitive to them. They appeared to be erroneously and overly confident of their initial distorted perceptions of morally acceptable business conduct, and when challenged, as Fastow was regarding the appropriateness of his financial structures, retaliated against accusers and sought information in ways that confirmed what they already believed (Messick & Bazerman, 1996). Since top management and board members ignored whistleblower feedback, they became morally blind, deaf, and mute, thereby diminishing their capacity for ethical awareness and eventual strategic responsiveness for which they are held morally accountable (Cavanagh & Moberg 1999). Moral deliberation, the second component of process integrity, is the capacity to engage in the critical and comprehensive appraisal of causal factors and recognized moral options to arrive at a balanced and inclusive reasonable decision/resolution/policy that provides a standard for future determinations (Petrick & Quinn 2002). The decision making style of the Skilling-Fastow-Kopper circle demonstrated a tendency to suppress all but one aspect of a moral decision, i.e., its short term financial impact, and to exclude other parameters that might inhibit decisive action or constrain executive perks (Messick and Bazerman 1996). Enron managers and board members, who poorly analyzed and resolved moral conflicts of interest through self-centered policies also ignored or trivialized the harm caused to other stakeholders.

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Moral character, the third component of process integrity, is the individual and collective capacity to be ready to act ethically. The greed, dishonesty, arrogance, selfishness, cowardice, hypocrisy, disrespect , and injustice that characterized top Enron executives intentions discloses their culpable motives and the corrupting workplace culture they created (Sennett, 1998). The overemphasis on personal financial gain at the expense of others destroyed any remnant of employee trust. The visionless accumulation of rapid wealth exposed the absence of leadership wisdom and the deliberate obfuscation of financial structures to preclude a fair picture of the financial health of the firm eroded their characters; they de-humanized themselves and others with whom they interacted. The lack of the political virtue of citizenship is particularly damaging to internal and external character cultivation (Logsdon & Wood, 2002).

Moral conduct, the fourth component of process integrity, is the individual and collective carrying out of justifiable actions on a sustained basis. Managers that exhibit ethical conduct develop a reputation for dependability and alignment of moral rhetoric and reality but the duplicitous exploitation of employee retirement savings exposed the cruel behavioral hypocrisy of top Enron executives (Cruver, 2002).

Employee Commitment

Employee commitment is the emotional and psychological bond between an employee and their organisation, characterised by loyalty, dedication, and desire to contribute to the company's success. It encompasses employees' attachment to company's values, goals and overall mission, influencing their willingness to exact efforts and remain the organisation long-term. High employee commitment fosters positive organisational performance, reduces turnover and strengthens team moral.

Employee commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. In essence, measuring organizational commitment is an assessment of the congruence between an individual's own values and beliefs and those of the organization (Swailes, 2002). Organizational commitment is characterized as employees' willingness to contribute to organizational goals. When employees are sure that they will

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grow and learn with their current employers, their level of commitment to stay with that particular organization is higher (Opkara, 2004). In order to make employees satisfied and committed to their jobs, there is a need for strong and effective motivational strategies at various levels of the organization. Besides that, Ayeni and Phopoola (2007) have found a strong relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. According to them job satisfaction is mostly determine how well the organization meets employees expectations.

On the other hand, Maxwell and Steele (2003) believed that the organization concerned on the look after employees' interest. It is clear, the higher the experience, the more positive the impact on the commitment. Further, an individual's experience with their co-workers had the impact on highly commitment to the organization (Maxwell and Steele, 2003). High level of organizational commitment provide a clear focus for human resource manager on the grounds that commitment is in itself good and positive that should lead to high level of work performance.

While according to Lok and Crawford (2001), a number of demographic variables, frequently included in this study. Variables such as age (Celeb &Yilmazturk, 2012), organization tenure and position tenure have been found to be positively associated with organizational commitment. Mathieu and Zajac (1990) concluded that age is considerably more strongly related to attitudinal than to behavioural commitment. ` They further study suggested that older workers are more satisfied with their job, receiving better positions and having 'cognitively satisfied' their remaining in the organization. Cognitively satisfy means satisfied to all what they get and they felt comfortable in the organization. The researcher also found that the number of year in position significantly positive related to attitudinal commitment, and length of service is significantly positively to behavioural commitment. Similar results were reported by Gregersen and Black (1992).

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Measures of Employees Commitment

Affective Commitment (AC)

Meyer & Allen (1997) IN Iroawusi (2021) affective commitment refers to the employee's emotional attachment to identification with, and involvement in the organization based on positive feelings, or emotions, toward the organization. The antecedent for affective commitment include perceived job characteristic where there is task autonomy, task significance, task identity, skill variety and supervisory feedback, organizational dependability that mean extent to which employees feel the organization can be counted on to look after their interest, and perceived participatory management that they can influence decisions on the work environment and other uses of concern to them (Madi *et al,* 2012). They further asserted that the use of these antecedents is consistent with the findings by Rowden (2002) that these factors all create rewarding situations, intrinsically conducive to development of affective commitment.

Also, Meyer &Herscovitch (2001) argued that the primary basis for the development of affective commitment are personal involvement, identification with the relevant target, and value congruence (Meyer, Becker & Vandenberghe, 2004). As a result of the above view of Meyer &Herscovitch (2001), which states that when there is a high level of affective commitment, employees will be willing to remain in that organization, otherwise the reverse will be displayed. It has also been seen in the view of Bal, Sullivan & Harper, (2014) that affective commitment reflects an emotional attachment and involvement in the organization. But earlier, Allen & Meyer (1991) defined affective component as an emotional attachment to the organization via identification, involvement and enjoyed membership. It has also been said that affective commitment shows commitment that depends on emotional ties the employee develops with the organization through work experiences that are positioned. The 'work experience relates to the boss-driven development as a dimension in management development.

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Normative Commitment (NC)

Iroawusi (202) quoting Madi, *et al* (2012) sees normative commitment as an employee's feeling of obligation to remain with the organization where it based on the employee having internalized the values and goals of the organization. Normative commitment is said to reflect a sense of obligation on the part of the employee to maintain membership in the organization (Bal,*et al,* 2014). It has also been conceived that the potential antecedents for normative commitment include co-worker commitment where it includes affective and normative dimensions as well as commitment behaviour, organizational dependability and participatory management. And that co-workers' commitment is expected to provide normative signals that influence the development of normative commitment. It is worthy to mention that organizational dependability and participatory management are key issues that will foster and install a sense of moral obligation to reciprocate to the organization. Normative commitment is said to reflect a sense of obligation instilled in the employee to sustain membership in the organization (Bal, *et al,* 2014).

Unarguably, Meyer & Maltin (2010) opined that latter observation regarding normative commitment is consistent with recent findings; demonstrating that normative commitment can have two faces, one reflecting a moral imperative and the other reflecting indebted obligation (Geltatly, Meyer & Luchak, 2006; Meyer &Parfyonova, 2010). Firstly, the moral imperative mindset is experienced when normative commitment combines with strong affective commitment. Secondly, the indebted obligation mindset results from a combination of strong normative commitment and continuance with weak affective commitment. Also, Lee & Chen (2013) asserted that normative commitment relates to obligation employee may feel they owe the organization for being given a job when they need it most. That in no small measure will increase or boost the employee level of commitment especially in a society where there is an army of unemployed people. And in another view, normative commitment is said to develop as a junction of cultural and organizational socialization and the receipt of benefits that activate a need to reciprocate (Scholl, 1981). Meyer & Allen (1991) stated that the normative approach is a less common approach to commitment. The internalized moral

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obligation is contributor behaviour and is therefore, prominent in the individuals terminating employment with the organization. But in this type of commitment the employee is expected to pledge unalloyed loyalty to the organization without opposing and criticizing the activities of the organization.

Continuance Commitment (CC)

In the views of Bal, *et al* (2014) continuance commitment is based on the perceived costs associated with discontinuing employment work with the organization. Kanter (1968) argued that continuance commitment is a cognitive orientation where costs are considered when leaving or remaining with the organization. Continuance commitment is that which is largely dependent on cost that the employee is associated with when leaving the organization (due to high cost of leaving). And the potential antecedents of continuance include age, tenure, career satisfaction and intent to leave. Age and tenure can be seen as adopted predictors of continuance commitment, as a result of their roles as substitute measures of investment in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). In the view of Madi *et' al* (2012), tenure indicates non-transferable investments that means close working relationship with co-workers, retirement investments, career investments and skills peculiar to the particular organization while age can be negatively related to the number of available job opportunities. Career satisfaction was said to provide a more direct measure of career related investments which could be at risk if the individual leaves the organization. They went further to assert that whatever employees perceive to as sunk costs, resulting from leaving the organization, are antecedents of continuance commitment.

Also, Bal e*t al*, (2014) further opined that continuance commitment is based on the perceived costs associated with discontinuing employment with the organization. It is imperative to assert that while employees with strong affective commitment will continue employment with the organization because they want to, those with strong continuance commitment remain because they need to; and those with strong normative commitment because they feel they ought to do so (Meyer & Allen, 1991). In the same vein continuance commitment is said to relates to such terms of employment as job contract, which may make leaving the current

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job very costly and troublesome (Mullins, 2001). Continuance commitment is further developed as the result of accumulated investments, or side-bets that would be lost if the individual discontinued a course of action, and as a result of lack of alternative to the present course (Powell & Meyer, 2004).

The Relationship between integrity and Employee Commitment

Employee commitment has been shown to be related to a broad range of attitudinal and behavioral outcomes such as job satisfaction, in-role and extra-role performance, absenteeism, turnover intentions, and effective turnover (Meyer & Allen, 2000; Meyer *et al.,* 2002). Concerning its antecedents, managerial integrity (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 2000) has been proposed as a key predictor of organizational commitment. Managerial integrity is defined as the ability of a manager to strictly adhere to a moral code, reflected in transparent, honesty and complete harmony in what he thinks, says, and does.

Although they both focus on the connection between an individual employee and the organization (Bishop, Scott, Goldsby, &Cropanzano, 2005), there is evidence at the theoretical and the empirical level that organizational commitment and managerial integrity are distinct constructs. Indeed, it has been argued that employee commitment reflects an attitude of employees toward the organization whereas managerial integrity reflects employees' perceptions about manager's attitude toward them. Accordingly, numerous studies have shown that employee commitment and managerial integrity are empirically distinguishable yet strongly related (Bishop *et al.,* 2005).

Evidence for a positive relationship between perceived managerial integrity and employee commitment has been found in numerous studies (e.g., Bishop et al., 2005; Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis, 1990; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Shore & Wayne, 2001). More precisely, Rhoades and her colleagues (2001) have shown, using a cross-lagged panel design, that managerial integrity was positively related to changes in organizational commitment over time, whereas the reverse was not true, supporting the antecedence of managerial integrity on organizational commitment.

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The relationship between managerial integrity and employee commitment has been primarily explained in terms of social exchange (Lee & Peccei, 2007). Based on the reciprocity norm (Gouldner, 1960), the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) holds that social life is regulated by social exchange processes. Social exchange theory posits that when an individual does something in favor of another individual, the other individual is expected to return the favor. In opposition to economic exchanges, which are related to financial and tangible aspects, social exchanges are often associated to socio-emotional aspects of the relationship (Shore, Tetrick, Lynch, & Barksdale, 2006). The terms of the exchange are therefore generally unclear and mainly based on trust (Blau, 2001). In line with this view, managerial integrity theory holds that managerial integrity would increase employee commitment by creating a felt obligation to care about the organization's welfare and to help it to reach its goals (Rhoades et al., 2001).

From the foregoing point of view, we hereby hypothesized thus:

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between integrity and affective commitment in organizations in Nigeria.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between integrity and continuance commitment in organizations in Nigeria.

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between integrity and normative commitment in organizations in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a cross- sectional survey design in eliciting data from respondents. Primary data was generated through structured questionnaire. The population of the study comprised of all the manufacturing companies in Rivers State. The accessible population was however 31 manufacturing companies and consist of ninety-three (93) top, middle and lower-level managers of the companies under study.The Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the assistance of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27.0.was used to analyse the stated hypotheses.

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https://ijojournals.com/ Volume 08 || Issue 10 || October, 2025 ||

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Age Distribution of Respondents

Age (Years)	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
21 – 30	18	19.4	19.4	19.4
31 – 40	36	38.7	38.7	58.1
41 – 50	25	26.9	26.9	84.9
51 and above	14	15.1	15.1	100.0
Total	**93**	**100.0**	**100.0**	—

The age distribution shows that the majority of respondents fall within the 31–40 years age bracket (38.7%), followed by those in the 41–50 years category (26.9%). Respondents aged 21–30 years constituted 19.4%, while those 51 years and above accounted for 15.1%. This implies that most respondents are in their prime working age, which strengthens the credibility of their responses, as they are experienced enough to understand organizational practices and yet young enough to remain actively engaged in the workforce.

Educational Qualification of Respondents

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
OND/NCE	12	12.9	12.9	12.9
HND/B.Sc.	48	51.6	51.6	64.5
M.Sc./MBA	25	26.9	26.9	91.4
Ph.D. and above	8	8.6	8.6	100.0
Total	**93**	**100.0**	**100.0**	—

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The educational distribution reveals that the majority of respondents are degree holders (HND/B.Sc.), accounting for 51.6% of the sample. A further 26.9% possess postgraduate qualifications (M.Sc./MBA), while 12.9% hold OND/NCE, and 8.6% have Ph.D. or higher qualifications. This indicates that the respondents are highly educated, which enhances the quality of data collected as they are likely to understand and respond accurately to questions on organizational values, integrity, and commitment

Hypotheses Testing

Correlation between Integrity and Affective Commitment

	Integrity	**Affective Commitment**
Spearman's rho	Integrity	**1.000**
	Affective Commitment	**0.642**
Sig. (2-tailed)	Integrity	—
	Affective Commitment	**.000** ($p < .001$)
N	Integrity	**93**
	Affective Commitment	**93**

Result / Decision: Sig. = .000 ($p < .001$) → Reject Ho1.The Spearman rho of 0.642 indicates a strong, positive, and statistically significant rank-order association between Integrity and Affective commitment. In practical terms, managers who scored higher on integrity (honesty, fairness, ethical consistency) also tended to score higher on affective commitment (emotional attachment, identification with, and involvement in the organization). The squared coefficient ($0.642^2 = 0.412$; ~41.22%) suggests that approximately 41.2% of the variation in ranks of affective commitment is associated with variation in ranks of integrity — interpreted cautiously

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https://ijojournals.com/ Volume 08 || Issue 10 || October, 2025 ||

Correlation between Integrity and Continuance Commitment

	Integrity	Continuance Commitment
Spearman's rho	Integrity	**1.000**
	Continuance Commitment	**0.517**
Sig. (2-tailed)	Integrity	—
	Continuance Commitment	**.000** ($p < .001$)
N	Integrity	**93**
	Continuance Commitment	**93**

Result / Decision: Sig. = .000 ($p < .001$) → Reject Ho2.The Spearman rho of 0.517 indicates a moderate to strong positive and statistically significant relationship between Integrity and Continuance commitment. This means managers with higher integrity scores also tend to register higher continuance commitment (the perceived costs associated with leaving the organization). The squared value ($0.517^2 = 0.267$; ~26.73%) indicates roughly 26.7% shared variance in ranks between integrity and continuance commitment.

Correlation between Integrity and Normative Commitment (Spearman)

	Integrity	Normative Commitment
Spearman's rho	Integrity	**1.000**
	Normative Commitment	**0.584**
Sig. (2-tailed)	Integrity	—
	Normative Commitment	**.000** ($p < .001$)
N	Integrity	**93**
	Normative Commitment	**93**

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https://ijojournals.com/ Volume 08 || Issue 10 || October, 2025 ||

Result / Decision: Sig. = .000 ($p < .001$) → Reject Ho3.The Spearman rho of 0.584 indicates a moderate to strong positive and statistically significant association between Integrity and Normative commitment. Managers with higher integrity tend to report higher feelings of obligation and moral duty to remain with the organization. The squared coefficient ($0.584^2 = 0.341$; ~34.11%) implies about 34.1% shared variance in ranks between integrity and normative commitment.

Discussion

Integrity and Affective Commitment

The result demonstrated a strong positive correlation ($\rho = 0.642$, $p < 0.001$) between integrity and affective commitment. This implies that managers who perceive higher integrity within their organization are more likely to develop emotional attachment, identification with organizational values, and a sense of belongingness.This finding is consistent with the Three-Component Model of Commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991), which posits that affective commitment arises when employees identify with organizational goals and values. Integrity characterized by honesty, fairness, and consistency between words and actions strengthens trust in organizational systems, thereby fostering emotional attachment.Okpara and Edwin (2018) found that integrity and ethical leadership significantly predicted affective commitment among bank employees in Lagos. Similarly, Amah (2019) reported that organizational justice and integrity mechanisms positively influenced employees' willingness to stay emotionally committed in public institutions. Internationally, Simons (2002) emphasized that behavioral integrity of leaders enhances trust, which in turn fosters affective commitment.

Integrity and Continuance Commitment

The study also established a moderate to strong positive correlation ($\rho = 0.517$, $p < 0.001$) between integrity and continuance commitment. This suggests that integrity does not only influence emotional attachment, but also the calculative side of staying in an organization. While continuance commitment is often associated with economic necessity and availability

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(E:ISSN 2811-2504) (P.ISSN: 2384-5961) Dr. Nwiko, Iekia Andrews

https://ijojournals.com/ Volume 08 || Issue 10 || October, 2025 ||

of alternatives, integrity appears to reinforce it indirectly. Organizations perceived to operate with integrity often provide stable work environments, fair reward structures, and predictable policies, making employees feel that leaving would entail significant personal and professional costs.This aligns with findings by Ugwu et al. (2020) who observed that ethical climate in Nigerian firms increased both affective and continuance commitment, as employees perceived long-term benefits in remaining with organizations perceived as fair. Similarly, Chen et al. (2019) argued that ethical integrity at the organizational level provides career stability, thereby influencing employees' calculative decision to remain.Thus, in Rivers State's manufacturing firms, integrity not only binds employees emotionally but also makes them weigh the risks of exit versus the security of staying.

Integrity and Normative Commitment

The correlation between integrity and normative commitment was also found to be positive and significant ($\rho = 0.584$, $p < 0.001$). This shows that employees with high perceptions of organizational integrity tend to feel a stronger sense of obligation or moral duty to remain with their organizations.This result reinforces the norm of reciprocity principle (Gouldner, 1960), which suggests that employees reciprocate organizational integrity with loyalty and obligation. When organizations treat employees with fairness, transparency, and honesty, employees feel morally bound to reciprocate through continued service.Empirical evidence supports this conclusion. Eneh and Ugochukwu (2021) reported that integrity and fairness practices in Nigerian SMEs enhanced normative commitment, as employees felt obligated to reciprocate fair treatment. Similarly, Mayer et al. (2012) found that ethical leadership fosters moral obligation and loyalty among employees across organizational settings.In the manufacturing sector, where workforce retention is often a challenge, integrity-driven practices may be a critical tool for cultivating employees' sense of duty and loyalty.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that organizational integrity is a crucial determinant of employee commitment in manufacturing firms in Rivers State. Specifically:

IJO -INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

(E:ISSN 2811-2504) (P.ISSN: 2384-5961) Dr. Nwiko, Iekia Andrews

https://ijojournals.com/ Volume 08 || Issue 10 || October, 2025 ||

"Integrity as a function of Commitment of employees in Nigeria organisations: The case of Rivers State in the Repositioning of the Nigerian Economy "

i. Integrity has the strongest impact on affective commitment, meaning employees are more emotionally engaged when they perceive honesty, fairness, and consistency in organizational practices.
ii. Integrity also enhances normative commitment, as employees feel morally obligated to reciprocate fairness and transparency with loyalty.
iii. Although continuance commitment is often associated with economic considerations, integrity contributes by creating perceptions of stability and fairness that increase the costs of leaving.

The implication is that organizations that prioritize integrity can achieve greater employee retention, stronger loyalty, and deeper emotional engagement. In the highly competitive Nigerian manufacturing environment, integrity-driven management practices can be leveraged as a strategic tool for improving workforce commitment and organizational performance.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

i. Organizations should prioritize integrity as a key criterion in leadership selection and promotion. Ethical leaders set the tone for organizational culture and directly influence employee commitment.
ii. Manufacturing firms should develop and enforce comprehensive codes of conduct, ensuring that integrity and ethical standards are embedded in policies, procedures, and reward systems.
iii. Regular training on ethical behavior, transparency, and accountability should be provided to managers and employees to reinforce integrity as a shared organizational value.
iv. Organizations should ensure fairness in promotions, appraisals, and compensation. Transparent reward systems build trust and enhance affective and normative commitment.
v. Establish confidential channels for employees to report unethical practices without

IJO -INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

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https://ijojournals.com/ Volume 08 || Issue 10 || October, 2025 ||

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https://ijojournals.com/ Volume 08 || Issue 10 || October, 2025 ||

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https://ijojournals.com/ Volume 08 || Issue 10 || October, 2025 ||

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