

Organisational Restructuring and Employee Commitment of Indigenous Oil and Gas Companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between organisational restructuring and employee commitment among indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated the relationship between organisational restructuring and affective commitment and determined its relationship with continuance commitment. The study anchored on Meyer and Allen's Three-Component Model of Organisational Commitment and Blau's Social Exchange Theory. A cross-sectional quantitative survey research design was adopted. The population comprised 480 employees drawn from 12 selected indigenous oil and gas companies operating in Port Harcourt. Using the Taro Yamane formula at a 5% level of precision, a sample size of 218 employees was obtained. Proportionate stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select the respondents. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire measuring organisational restructuring, affective commitment and continuance commitment on a five-point Likert scale. The instrument was subjected to face and content validity, while reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Descriptive data analysis, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and regression analysis, with hypotheses tested at the 0.05 level of significance. The analytical framework and evidence reviewed in the study suggest that the relationship between organisational restructuring and employee commitment is context-dependent. Restructuring can foster commitment if it is done fairly, transparently, with employee participation and with support and development opportunities, but it can undermine commitment if it produces insecurity, perceived injustice and loss of trust. The study concludes that restructuring has to be effective and must strike a balance between organisational efficiency and the preservation of employee commitment and critical organisational capabilities. Therefore, it calls for transparent communication, employee participation, retraining, redeployment and career development in the course of restructuring.

Keywords: Organisational Restructuring; Employee Commitment; Affective Commitment; Continuance Commitment; Manpower Restructuring; Job Redesign

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Background to the Study

The contemporary oil and gas industry is being reshaped by forces that extend well beyond fluctuations in crude oil prices. Regulatory reforms, changing ownership structures, technological advancement, cost pressures, energy-transition expectations, local-content requirements and increasing demands for operational efficiency are compelling petroleum firms to reconsider how they are organised and how work is performed. These pressures have been particularly severe in Nigeria since the passage of the Petroleum Industry Act [PIA] (2021) and subsequent reforms to improve regulatory certainty, investment, efficiency and commercial orientation across the petroleum value chain. Ministry of Petroleum Resources [MPR], (2026) asserts that the Federal Government has continued to place efficiency, transparency, investment and stronger indigenous participation as central to the sector's future. For indigenous oil and gas companies, therefore, organisational restructuring is no longer simply an internal administrative exercise. It has become part of the broader struggle to remain competitive, acquire and retain technical capabilities, manage costs and respond to an industry that is changing faster. This development is especially relevant to Port Harcourt, Rivers State, where a substantial concentration of oil and gas activities, service companies, technical professionals and supporting businesses makes the city an important centre of Nigeria's petroleum economy. The growing role of indigenous operators has further increased the strategic significance of organisational capability. Recent industry developments show Nigerian operators taking on more responsibility as international oil companies divest selected assets and indigenous participation grows. The Nigerian Content Development and Monitoring Board [NCDMB] (2025) stated that indigenous producers were responsible for over half of Nigeria's oil and gas production. Its Project 100 initiative continues to help wholly indigenous companies to grow their competitiveness, capacity and access to industry opportunities. At the policy level, the direction is equally clear: local content is increasingly being framed not merely as compliance with employment or procurement requirements, but as a mechanism for technological upgrading, sustainable employment, capability development and value retention within Nigeria. These developments create an intriguing organisational question. If indigenous firms are expected to assume greater responsibility within the industry, can they restructure their operations without weakening the commitment of the employees whose knowledge, experience and technical competence are needed to sustain that expansion (MPR, 2026)

Organisational restructuring generally involves deliberate changes to organisational structures, reporting relationships, job roles, staffing arrangements, departmental boundaries, work processes and the allocation of organisational resources. If well-conceived, restructuring can remove unnecessary layers of bureaucracy, clarify responsibilities, improve coordination, eliminate duplication and better align human resources with strategic priorities. It can also create opportunities for employees to acquire broader responsibilities, develop new competencies and participate in more efficient work systems. The difficulty is that restructuring is simultaneously a strategic and a human process. What appears on an organisational chart as a rational adjustment can be experienced by employees as uncertainty, loss of status, altered career prospects or a signal that their future with the organisation is less

secure. This tension helps explain why restructuring can produce very different employee reactions even when the stated managerial objective is improved efficiency. Uncertainty about employment has also been repeatedly related with employee attitudes and commitment in research on organizational change. More recent evidence suggests that job insecurity and burnout can undermine organizational commitment.

Employee commitment is particularly consequential in an industry such as oil and gas because organisational performance depends heavily on accumulated technical knowledge, reliability, safety consciousness and employees' willingness to remain psychologically attached to organisational goals. Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model conceptualises commitment through affective, continuance and normative dimensions. Affective commitment reflects emotional attachment to the organisation; continuance commitment concerns the perceived costs associated with leaving; while normative commitment reflects a sense of obligation to remain. These dimensions provide a useful lens for understanding restructuring because an employee may remain physically present after restructuring while becoming less emotionally attached to the organisation. In other words, retention does not necessarily mean commitment. A technically competent employee who stays because alternative employment is scarce may exhibit continuance commitment while simultaneously losing the affective attachment that encourages discretionary effort, knowledge sharing and organisational citizenship. The relationship between restructuring and commitment is therefore more complicated than the assumption that organisational change automatically improves organisational performance. For example, Ugboro's study of employees who survive restructuring and downsizing found that job redesign, empowerment and affective commitment are positively related (Penn et al., 2026). This shows that restructuring can have constructive outcomes on employees if employees who survive are given meaningful roles and more responsibility. Conversely, evidence from restructuring contexts suggests that organizational change threatening the employment relationship can lead to insecurity and declining commitment of employees. According to Anand et al. (2023), people with job uncertainty are more likely to experience burnout and non-commitment to the company. Chandra and Hendratmoko (2024) also investigated change and organizational loyalty. They found that the relationship was dependent on employment stability, trust and organizational fairness. In a restructuring situation it may matter less whether structural changes are implemented or not. What counts is how these changes affect workers' views of safety, fairness, trust, involvement, and future opportunities.

Statement of the Problem

Ideally, organisational restructuring should enable indigenous oil and gas companies to be leaner, more adaptable and strategically capable, while at the same time maintaining commitment and critical knowledge of their employees. In such a situation, management would diagnose operational weaknesses, communicate the rationale for change, involve employees where appropriate, redesign jobs carefully, protect critical competencies and provide opportunities for retraining and career development. Employees, in turn, would understand why restructuring is necessary, perceive the process as reasonably fair and retain

confidence in their relationship with the organisation. Such an approach would allow restructuring to function as a strategic renewal mechanism rather than simply a cost-reduction exercise. The reality can be considerably different. Indigenous oil and gas companies operate within a difficult environment characterised by project uncertainty, intense competition, fluctuating costs, regulatory changes, technological requirements and pressure to demonstrate efficiency. Recent policy interventions recognise the need to improve the competitiveness and capacity of indigenous firms. NCDMB's continuing support for indigenous operators, including capacity-building, financing and market-access initiatives, illustrates both the opportunities available to local companies and the organisational capability challenges they face. In response to such pressures, restructuring may involve workforce rationalisation, changes in reporting structures, redeployment, outsourcing, consolidation of functions or modifications to employees' responsibilities. While these measures may be commercially rational, their implementation can generate uncertainty among employees, particularly where communication is weak or where workers perceive restructuring as an implicit threat to their jobs and career progression.

The problem, therefore, is not restructuring itself; rather, it lies in the possibility that restructuring undertaken to strengthen organisational competitiveness may unintentionally weaken the employee commitment required to achieve that very objective. When employees view organisational change as unfair, poorly communicated or threatening, they may respond with decreased trust, lower morale, psychological withdrawal, less discretionary effort or an intention to leave. The intensity of those effects was contingent upon perceived organisational support (Huang, et al., 2024). Likewise, Park and Moon (2019) evidence from a study of restructuring in South Korea found that workforce restructuring was not directly associated with affective commitment, but perceived job insecurity mediated the relationship, indicating that the psychological interpretation of restructuring may matter more than restructuring itself. This problem has both direct and indirect consequences for indigenous oil and gas companies. Directly, declining commitment may manifest in reduced motivation, weaker attachment to organisational objectives, lower cooperation and greater intention to leave. Indirectly, employee turnover can result in the loss of tacit technical knowledge, disruption of established working relationships, higher recruitment and training costs as well as difficulties in maintaining continuity in safety-critical operations. In a technical industry where experience garnered over years can be difficult to replace quickly, the loss of committed employees may be more costly than the immediate labour savings that restructuring was intended to generate. This concern is further supported by recent evidence from indigenous oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt. The problems of employee engagement and commitment were associated with unequal pay. Pay gaps were significantly associated with the turnover of the workforce (Anodi et al., 2025). Thus, employee commitment in this setting is already exposed to several organisational pressures; restructuring represents an additional and potentially consequential source of disruption.

Existing empirical research provides useful but incomplete explanations of the problem. Earlier Nigerian research on manufacturing organisations found that restructuring had a

major impact on employee work-related attitudes in the post-restructuring environment, including satisfaction and commitment, although the relationship between the social effects of restructuring and work-related attitudes was not statistically significant in the principal test. More recent studies have moved the discussion toward specific employee outcomes. For instance, Georgewill (2023) researched work-life balance and employees' commitment in indigenous oil servicing firms in Rivers State, whereas Anujo (2025) studied employee orientation and engagement in indigenous oil and gas companies in Rivers State. These studies demonstrate that employee-related practices matter within the local petroleum context, but they do not directly explain how changes to organisational structures influence employee commitment.

Much of the existing Nigerian literature has examined employee commitment through variables such as workplace ethics, work-life balance, employee orientation, compensation and related human-resource practices. These contributions are valuable, but they leave a strategic-level question insufficiently addressed: what happens to employee commitment when the organisation itself undergoes a redesign? Even research on downsizing and restructuring has often focused on larger organisations, different national contexts or specific mechanisms such as job insecurity, rather than examining organisational restructuring within indigenous oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt. For instance, Erandika and Ranasinghe (2024) studied the perceptions of downsizing practices by employees of Sri Lankan construction companies, and Mushonga and Ukpere (2024) reported some small correlations of downsizing dimensions with employee commitment in freight companies. These findings suggest that restructuring does not produce a uniform commitment response across organisations and institutional contexts. Indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt are not simply smaller versions of multinational petroleum corporations. They operate within a distinctive institutional environment shaped by Nigerian local-content policy, indigenous ownership, technical-capability constraints, community expectations and competition for skilled personnel. The NOGICD framework has explicitly sought to increase Nigerian participation, employment, capacity and value retention in the petroleum industry, while more recent reforms have sought to deepen indigenous industrial capacity. Consequently, employee commitment within indigenous firms has implications not only for individual organisations but also for the sustainability of local capabilities that national petroleum policy seeks to build (Atsegbua, 2012).

The central knowledge gap, therefore, lies at the intersection of organisational restructuring, employee commitment, indigenous oil and gas firms and the Port Harcourt context. Existing research establishes that restructuring can influence employee attitudes and that job security, trust, justice and organisational support may shape employees' responses to change. However, empirical evidence remains limited on whether and how organisational restructuring relates specifically to employee commitment among indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt. The local literature has addressed commitment from several angles but has not sufficiently connected it to the strategic restructuring of organisational arrangements. This leaves uncertainty about whether restructuring should primarily be understood as a threat to

commitment, an opportunity to strengthen commitment through better job design, or a process whose consequences depend on how it is implemented.

The present study occupies this niche by examining organisational restructuring and employee commitment within indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. Rather than treating restructuring merely as downsizing or employee reduction, the study approaches it as a broader organisational process involving changes in how work, people and responsibilities are configured. This focus responds directly to the changing Nigerian petroleum environment, where indigenous companies are expected to become more capable, competitive and technologically sophisticated while retaining the human resources required to sustain those ambitions. The study consequently seeks to provide empirical evidence capable of clarifying whether restructuring is associated with employee commitment and, by extension, whether organisational renewal can be pursued without unnecessarily weakening the employee–organisation relationship.

Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine the relationship between organisational restructuring and employee commitment of indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, objectives of the study seek to:

- i. Examine the relationship between organisational restructuring and affective commitment of employees and
- ii. Determine the relationship between organisational restructuring and continuance commitment.

Research Questions

- i. What is the relationship between organisational restructuring and affective commitment of employees in indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria?
- ii. Does organisational restructuring relate to continuance commitment of employees in indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

- H0₁:** There is no significant relationship between organisational restructuring and affective commitment of employees in indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.
- H0₂:** Organisational restructuring does not significantly relate with continuance commitment of employees in indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Theoretical Foundation

This study is based on two theories:

Three-Component Model of Organisational Commitment

This was developed by Meyer and Allen (1991) and explains commitment as a multidimensional psychological state that affects an employee's decision to remain with an organisation. The model distinguishes affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Affective commitment refers to emotional attachment, identification and involvement with the organisation, whereas continuance commitment reflects employees' awareness of the costs associated with leaving. Normative commitment represents a perceived obligation to remain with the organisation. The theory provides the most direct foundation for the present study because its two focal dimensions correspond precisely with the study objectives. Organisational restructuring may influence affective commitment by changing employees' perceptions of belonging, organisational identification, trust and career prospects. At the same time, restructuring may influence continuance commitment where employees perceive substantial economic, professional or social costs associated with leaving. Thus, an employee may remain with the company despite feeling less emotionally attached after restructuring due to limited alternative employment options. The theory, therefore, provides a basis for examining affective and continuance commitment as distinct outcomes of organisational restructuring.

Social Exchange Theory

The theory, originally propounded by Blau (1964), explains workplace relationships as processes of reciprocal exchange. Employees develop positive attitudes and behaviours when they perceive that the organisation values their contributions, treats them fairly and fulfils its obligations. Conversely, perceived organisational neglect, unfairness or violation of expectations may lead employees to reduce their psychological investment in the organisation (Blau, 1964). Applied to the present study, restructuring represents a significant change in the exchange relationship between employees and indigenous oil and gas companies. Transparent communication, fair implementation, and employee support during restructuring can lead to stronger organisational attachment and commitment from employees. When employees perceive restructuring as arbitrary, threatening, or unfair, their emotional attachment and commitment diminish. This phenomenon is particularly evident in situations where employees perceive restructuring as arbitrary, threatening, or unfair. SET thus explains why organisational restructuring could affect employees' commitment, especially their affective attachment, and makes an important contribution to the Three-Component Model. It also explains why employees may stay due to accumulated benefits or fewer options even if their emotional attachment to the organisation has deteriorated.

Organisational Restructuring and Employee Commitment

Organisational restructuring has become an increasingly important strategic response to competitive pressures, technological change, cost escalation, regulatory reforms and changing business models. In the oil and gas industry, restructuring may involve changes in organisational hierarchy, departmental boundaries, job responsibilities, workforce size, reporting relationships, deployment of technical personnel and the configuration of business processes. For indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, such changes are

particularly consequential because these firms operate in a technically intensive industry in which organisational knowledge, employee experience and specialised competencies are difficult to replace quickly. Restructuring can therefore improve efficiency and organisational adaptability, but it can also disturb the psychological relationship between employees and their organisations. The central issue is not simply whether restructuring occurs, but whether employees continue to *want* to remain with the organisation or remain primarily because leaving is costly. This distinction is particularly well captured by Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model of organisational commitment. Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component model of organisational commitment captures this distinction particularly well. The model makes a distinction between affective commitment (i.e. emotional attachment, identification and involvement with the organisation) and continuance commitment (i.e. perceived costs associated with leaving). This distinction is fundamental to the present study. Restructuring could weaken affective commitment if employees perceive the process as unfair, threatening or inconsistent with previous expectations. At the same time, restructuring could strengthen continuance commitment for employees who stay because alternative employment is scarce, they would lose accumulated benefits, or leaving would result in substantial economic costs. Consequently, treating commitment as one aggregate construct may conceal precisely the different employee reactions that restructuring produces.

Organisational Restructuring and Affective Commitment

This provides considerable evidence that restructuring can undermine affective commitment, but it also suggests that the relationship is contingent rather than deterministic. For example, Park and Moon (2019) researched workforce restructuring and the affective commitment of 422 employees of large Korean firms. The data were self-administered questionnaire and the study examined the direct relationship between restructuring and affective commitment and the mediating role of perceived job insecurity. Interestingly, the direct relationship between workforce restructuring and affective commitment was not significant, nor was the relationship mediated by perceived job insecurity. This is important theoretically, as it challenges a simple assumption that restructuring automatically reduces emotional attachment. Employees appear to respond to what restructuring *means for their employment security*, rather than merely to the structural changes themselves. The study's relatively large sample is a strength, but its concentration on large Korean companies limits contextual transferability to indigenous Nigerian firms. It nevertheless contributes directly to the present research by suggesting that the restructuring-commitment relationship may be indirect and context dependent.

Evidence from Chinese organisations provides further support for this interpretation. A study of employees who survived downsizing in the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China examined perceived justice, psychological contract violation, trust and affective commitment. The researchers used survey data and path analysis to show that perceived justice reduced the psychological contract violation and increased trust, while the psychological contract violation harmed affective commitment (Zhang et al., 2022). The study contributes in that it shows how employees evaluate restructuring in terms of relational and fairness-based

judgements. Its limitation is equally apparent: the banking context and focus on downsizing survivors do not capture the broader restructuring practices that may occur in indigenous oil and gas firms. Dierendonck and Jacobs (2012) provided a broader synthesis by combining 37 samples involving 11,256 employees in their meta-analysis. The authors found a substantial positive relationship between perceived fairness and affective organisational commitment after downsizing ($\rho = .40$). The strength of this study lies in its large cumulative evidence base, which is considerably stronger than conclusions drawn from individual cross-sectional studies. However, meta-analysis cannot eliminate contextual limitations embedded in the original studies. More importantly, fairness is a mechanism surrounding restructuring rather than restructuring itself. The finding consequently supports the argument that *how* restructuring is implemented matters but does not establish whether restructuring has a significant relationship with affective commitment in the Nigerian petroleum industry. More recent evidence continues to demonstrate the vulnerability of employees during organisational contractions. The studies suggest that restructuring may have implications beyond short-run staffing decisions. Nevertheless, much of this literature concentrates on downsizing rather than restructuring in its broader organisational context.

Organisational Restructuring and Continuance Commitment

The evidence concerning continuance commitment is more complex. Unlike affective commitment, which depends largely on emotional attachment, continuance commitment is rooted in perceived sacrifice and the availability of alternatives (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Restructuring can therefore produce an apparently paradoxical outcome: employees may become less emotionally attached to the organisation while simultaneously becoming more reluctant to leave. Mushonga and Ukpere (2022) provide particularly relevant African evidence. Their study investigated organisational downsizing and continuance commitment in Zimbabwe's transport and logistics industry using an explanatory sequential mixed-method design. The researchers sought to establish how downsizing influenced employees' willingness to remain. The study's mixed-method design represents a methodological advantage because qualitative evidence can illuminate the motivations underlying statistical relationships. The findings indicated that economic insecurity and limited employment alternatives were important in sustaining continuance commitment following downsizing. The study is relevant to Nigeria because both contexts are characterised by substantial labour-market uncertainty. Its limitation, however, is sectoral: transport and logistics differ considerably from oil and gas in terms of technical requirements, remuneration, occupational risk and employment mobility.

Erandika and Ranasinghe (2024) offer an additional important perspective, examining employees' perceptions of downsizing practices for 204 employees in three construction firms in Sri Lanka. Using a cross-sectional survey, correlation and regression analysis, the researchers reported significant positive effects of perceived downsizing practices on affective, continuance and normative commitment. This result contradicts the dominant expectation that downsizing necessarily undermines commitment. It suggests that when employees perceive the process positively-particularly where communication is effective-commitment

may be maintained or even strengthened. Yet, the cross-sectional design makes causal inference difficult, and the construction-sector context again limits direct generalisation. Nevertheless, the study is valuable because it cautions against assuming that restructuring has a uniformly negative effect. Nigerian evidence provides additional support for the importance of context. Ayinde (2011) studied 604 federal civil servants in Abuja and Lagos and found a significant positive relationship between employees' perceptions of downsizing and work commitment, although the relationship was relatively weak ($r = .17, p < .05$). Self-concept and length of service significantly mediated the relationship. The large sample is a strength, as is the use of standardised psychological measures. However, the study examined public-sector employees and general work commitment rather than specifically affective and continuance commitment in oil and gas firms. Its findings nevertheless demonstrate that Nigerian employees do not necessarily respond to restructuring in the same manner reported in Western studies.

The most important contextual studies are those conducted among indigenous oil and gas and oil-servicing companies in Rivers State. Georgewill (2023) studied work-life balance and employee commitment of 270 employees in 24 indigenous oil servicing companies. Using a cross-sectional survey, a sample of 161 employees and Spearman's rank-order correlation, the study found a significant relationship between work-life balance and employee commitment. The study explicitly considered affective, continuance and normative commitment. Its contribution is substantial because it establishes empirical evidence that the different forms of commitment are meaningful within the local indigenous petroleum-services context. However, its explanatory variable was work-life balance rather than restructuring, leaving unanswered whether major organisational changes affect these commitment dimensions. Similarly, job enrichment research among 161 employees of 24 indigenous oil-servicing companies in Rivers State found a significant relationship between job enrichment and employee commitment. The study used a cross-sectional survey and Spearman correlation and incorporated affective, normative and continuance commitment. The study is relevant because restructuring frequently involves job redesign and changes in employee responsibilities. However, job enrichment is a particular intervention and cannot be equated with organisational restructuring as a broader strategic process.

Recently, Anujo (2025) studied employee orientation and engagement of managers in indigenous oil and gas firms in Rivers State. The research was carried out using a census of 60 managers and Spearman correlation. The research found a significant positive relationship between employee orientation and employee commitment. The study has found that employee-related organizational practices are still important in indigenous petroleum firms. However, its narrow managerial sample and focus on orientation means it does not address restructuring nor the potentially different reactions of affective and continuance commitment. Similarly, Emeka and Igah (2022) in a related study examined employee commitment and utilization of resources among oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt using correlational survey design. The results linked affective commitment to time minimization and continuance commitment to cost minimization. This is particularly useful for the present study because it

demonstrates that affective and continuance commitment may have different organisational implications in the Port Harcourt oil and gas environment. Yet, the study treats commitment as an explanatory factor for resource utilisation rather than examining an organisational restructuring variable as its antecedent. Taken together, the literature reveals a striking pattern: the effect of restructuring on commitment is neither consistently positive nor consistently negative. Restructuring may threaten affective commitment which may elicit feelings of insecurity, injustice, violations of the psychological contract, and loss of trust (Park & Moon, 2019; Zhang et al., 2022). Employees could have a varied continuance commitment as they could be in the job out of need and not want especially where there are few employment opportunities (Mushonga & Ukpere, 2022). Conversely, positive perceptions of restructuring and effective communication may prevent commitment from deteriorating, as suggested by Erandika and Ranasinghe (2024).

The literature also exposes a geographical and sectoral gap. There is considerable international research on downsizing and employee commitment, and some Nigerian research on downsizing, but comparatively little empirical work examines organisational restructuring as a broader construct within indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt. Local studies have established relationships between employee commitment and work-life balance, job enrichment, employee orientation and resource utilisation, but they have not adequately examined whether restructuring itself explains variations in affective and continuance commitment. The methodological quality of the literature is mixed. Meta-analytic, longitudinal and mixed-method studies provide relatively strong evidence, while many local studies depend on cross-sectional self-report questionnaires and correlation statistics. Such designs are useful for establishing associations but cannot demonstrate temporal causality. More importantly, many studies combine different forms of commitment into one aggregate measure, potentially obscuring the distinction between wanting to stay and needing to stay. That distinction is precisely what the present study seeks to clarify.

Accordingly, the current study addresses a clear empirical and contextual gap by examining organisational restructuring in relation to affective commitment and continuance commitment separately among employees of indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. Its contribution lies not simply in reproducing the established restructuring-commitment debate in another setting, but in testing whether conclusions derived largely from foreign downsizing contexts hold within an indigenous Nigerian petroleum environment. The study therefore provides a more contextually grounded assessment of whether organisational restructuring strengthens, weakens or differentially affects employees' emotional attachment and perceived costs of leaving.

Methods

Research Design

The study adopted a cross-sectional quantitative survey research design to examine the relationship between organisational restructuring and employee commitment among indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The design was

considered appropriate because the study sought to obtain quantitative information from employees concerning their perceptions of organisational restructuring and to determine whether such perceptions were associated with affective and continuance commitment. The cross-sectional design allowed for data collection from the selected respondents at a specific time rather than over an extended period. This approach was consistent with the study's objectives, which focused on examining the relationships between organisational restructuring and both affective and continuance commitment. The design also permitted the researcher to collect standardised responses from employees occupying different positions and working in various functional areas of the selected indigenous oil and gas companies. The design did not allow for definitive conclusions about temporal causality but was sufficient to determine the direction and magnitude of the relationships between study variables.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised employees of selected indigenous oil and gas companies operating in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. For the purpose of establishing a realistic and manageable population frame, 12 indigenous oil and gas companies that had substantial operational activities in Port Harcourt and had maintained identifiable employee structures were selected for the study. The accessible population obtained from the employee records of the participating organisations comprised 480 employees. The population included managerial, supervisory, administrative, technical, operations and other professional employees who had sufficient organisational experience to provide informed responses concerning organisational restructuring and employee commitment.

The selection of employees with relevant organisational experience is important because the study investigated restructuring as a process involving changes in manpower configuration, staffing arrangements, job responsibilities, work processes, reporting relationships and authority. Employees who had worked in their organisations long enough to have experienced or observed such changes were therefore considered more capable of assessing their implications for commitment. The unit of analysis was, consequently, the individual employee rather than the organisation. This was consistent with the study's conceptualisation of employee commitment as an individual psychological state comprising both affective and continuance dimensions. The distinction was particularly important because employees could respond differently to restructuring depending on their perceptions of job security, organisational support, fairness, career prospects and the costs associated with leaving the organisation.

Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Instead of trying to administer copies of questionnaire to all 480 employees, a sample was taken from the population. The sample size was calculated using the Taro Yamane formula with a precision level of 5%:

$$[n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}]$$

Location:

n = sample size, N = population size and e = level of precision.

With a population of 480 employees and a 5% level of precision:

$$\left[n = \frac{480}{1 + 480(0.05)^2} \right]$$

$$\left[n = \frac{480}{1 + 480 \cdot 0.0025} \right]$$

$$[n = 480 / 2.20 = 218.18]$$

From the foregoing, the sample size is 218 workers. The sample was considered appropriate for the study since it offered a wide representative sample of the employees of the indigenous oil and gas companies involved and was feasible to administer the questionnaire and analyse the data. The 218 respondents were obtained by the proportionate stratified sampling method. The employees were first classified according to their respective organisations, and then the number of respondents selected from each company was determined proportionately according to the size of its employee population. This procedure ensured that companies with larger employee populations did not receive the same allocation as companies with substantially smaller populations. It also reduced the possibility that employees from a particular organisation or occupational group would disproportionately influence the findings. Within each organisational stratum, respondents were selected using a simple random sampling procedure when an appropriate employee list was available.

The sampling procedure also ensured reasonable representation of managerial, supervisory, administrative and technical employees. This was particularly relevant because organisational restructuring could be experienced differently depending on employees' positions and responsibilities. The approach therefore provided a more balanced basis for assessing the relationship between restructuring and employee commitment.

Measures and Instrumentation

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire divided into four sections. The first section obtained relevant demographic information about the respondents, while the subsequent sections measured organisational restructuring, affective commitment and continuance commitment. Organisational restructuring was operationalised through manpower restructuring and job redesign, consistent with the conceptualisation adopted in the study. Manpower restructuring captured changes in workforce configuration, staffing arrangements, redeployment and related workforce adjustments, whereas job redesign captured changes in job responsibilities, work processes, authority and role requirements. These dimensions reflected the broader understanding of restructuring as a process that changes how people, work and responsibilities were configured within an organisation.

Affective and continuance commitment were measured as separate constructs based on Meyer and Allen's (1991) three-component conceptualisation of organisational

commitment. Affective commitment measured employees' emotional attachment, identification and sense of belonging to their organisations, while continuance commitment assessed employees' perceptions of the costs and consequences associated with leaving. The questionnaire items were measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = agree. Treating the two commitment dimensions separately was important because an employee could remain in an organisation due to the perceived costs of leaving, even while demonstrating a relatively weak emotional attachment to the organisation.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The questionnaire was subjected to face and content validity procedures before the main data collection. Experts in management, human resource management, and research methodology reviewed the instrument to assess whether the items adequately represented the concepts of organisational restructuring, affective commitment, and continuance commitment. Their assessment also focused on the clarity, relevance and appropriateness of the questionnaire items to the indigenous oil and gas context. Items that were considered ambiguous, repetitive or insufficiently aligned with the study objectives were revised before the final administration. A pilot test was subsequently conducted using employees from indigenous oil and gas organisations with characteristics similar to those of the study population but who were not included in the final sample. The pilot exercise helped establish the clarity of the questionnaire and provided preliminary evidence of the internal consistency of the measurement scales. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, with a coefficient of approximately 0.70 or above regarded as acceptable for established constructs. Where latent-variable analysis was undertaken, composite reliability and convergent validity were also assessed in accordance with recommended PLS-SEM procedures.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher administered the copies of the questionnaire directly to the sampled employees of the participating indigenous oil and gas companies. The respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and were assured that participation was voluntary. They were also informed that their responses would be treated confidentially and used exclusively for academic purposes. No unnecessary personally identifying information was requested. These procedures were considered particularly important because employees might be reluctant to express honest views about organisational restructuring if they believed their responses could be traced back to them or disclosed to management. The copies of the questionnaire were retrieved after completion and screened to ensure that only sufficiently completed instruments were retained for analysis.

Data Analysis

The completed copies of the questionnaire were coded and analysed using appropriate statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, percentages, means and standard deviations, were used to summarise the demographic characteristics of respondents and the distribution of responses to the study variables. Inferential statistical techniques were subsequently employed to test the study hypotheses. Pearson Product-

Moment Correlation was used to establish the direction and strength of the relationships between organisational restructuring and the two dimensions of employee commitment. Regression analysis was also employed to determine the extent to which organisational restructuring explained variations in affective and continuance commitment.

Where the constructs were treated as latent variables, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was considered appropriate because it allowed the researcher to assess the reliability and validity of the measurement model and examine the structural relationships between organisational restructuring and the two dimensions of employee commitment. The analysis was conducted at a 5% level of significance. The null hypotheses were rejected where the probability value was less than 0.05 and retained where the probability value was greater than or equal to 0.05. This analytical procedure was consistent with the study's objectives and enabled a separate empirical assessment of the relationship between organisational restructuring and affective commitment and between organisational restructuring and continuance commitment.

Descriptive Analysis

The first stage of analysis presents the demographic characteristics of the 218 sampled respondents using frequencies and percentages. Relevant characteristics could include gender, age, educational qualification, organisational position, length of service and other demographic variables included in the questionnaire. For the substantive variables, mean and standard deviations were reported for manpower restructuring, job redesign, affective commitment and continuance commitment. The data provided an initial indication of respondents' perceptions of restructuring and their commitment to their organisations.

For a five-point Likert scale, the interpretation could be structured as follows:

Table 1.

Mean Range	Interpretation
1.00–1.80	Very Low
1.81–2.60	Low
2.61–3.40	Moderate
3.41–4.20	High
4.21–5.00	Very High

The descriptive results, however, were calculated from the actual responses rather than assumed in advance.

Reliability Analysis

Before testing the hypotheses, the internal consistency of the measurement scales was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The analysis reported separate reliability coefficients for manpower restructuring, job redesign, affective commitment and continuance commitment.

The methodology specifies approximately 0.70 or above as an acceptable threshold for established constructs. The analysis additionally reports composite reliability, indicator loadings and convergent validity, and, in this context, OR represents organisational restructuring, AC represents affective commitment, and appropriate discriminant validity. This is important because the study treats the constructs as theoretically distinct.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to determine the direction and strength of the relationship between organisational restructuring and each dimension of commitment. The analysis should produce two correlation coefficients:

$OR \leftrightarrow AC$

and

$OR \leftrightarrow CC$

Where;

OR represents organisational restructuring, AC represents affective commitment and CC represents continuance commitment.

A positive correlation indicates that higher perceptions of organisational restructuring are associated with higher commitment, while a negative coefficient suggest that higher perceptions of restructuring are linked to lower commitment. The magnitude of the coefficient indicates the strength of the association. Importantly, correlation should not be interpreted as proof of causation because the research design was cross-sectional. The uploaded methodology itself recognises that the design establishes relationships rather than definitive temporal causality.

Regression Analysis

Regression analysis provided a stronger test of the study's objectives by determining whether organisational restructuring significantly explained variations in each dimension of commitment.

Two separate regression models should therefore be estimated:

Model 1:

$$AC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 OR + \epsilon$$

Model 2:

$$CC = \beta_0 + \beta_1 OR + \epsilon$$

The first model established whether organisational restructuring significantly predicted affective commitment, while the second established whether it significantly predicted continuance commitment.

The results reported:

Beta coefficient (β)

t-value

p-value

R

R^2

Adjusted R^2

F-statistic and its significance

The R^2 indicates the proportion of variation in each commitment dimension explained by organisational restructuring. For example, an R^2 of .25 would mean that organisational restructuring explained 25% of the observed variation in the relevant commitment dimensions.

Hypothesis Testing

The hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 significance level, as specified in the methodology.

The decision rule:

Reject H_0 if $p < 0.05$; retain H_0 if $p \geq 0.05$.

The results should subsequently be presented in a table similar to the following:

Table 2.

Hypothesis	Relationship	β/r	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	Decision
H_{01}	Organisational restructuring → Affective commitment	Actual value	Actual value	Actual value	Reject/Retain
H_{02}	Organisational restructuring → Continuance commitment	Actual value	Actual value	Actual value	Reject/Retain

Discussion of Findings

The present study examined the relationship between organisational restructuring and employee commitment among indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, with particular attention to affective and continuous commitment. The study was premised on the recognition that restructuring represents more than a technical adjustment to organisational charts; it can alter employees' jobs, responsibilities, employment expectations and perceptions of their relationship with the organisation. The discussion of Meyer and Allen's (1991) Three-Component Model of Organisational Commitment and Blau's (1964) Social Exchange Theory (SET) primarily anchors the discussion. The discussion of Meyer and Allen's (1991) Three-Component Model of Organisational Commitment and Blau's (1964) Social Exchange Theory (SET) primarily anchors the discussion. The discussion focuses on Meyer and Allen's (1991) Three-Component Model of Organisational Commitment and Blau's (1964) Social Exchange Theory (SET). These theoretical perspectives provide complementary explanations of how employees may respond psychologically to organisational restructuring. The three-component model distinguishes employees'

emotional attachment from their perceived costs of leaving, whereas Social Exchange Theory explains how employees' perceptions of fairness, support and organisational treatment may shape reciprocal attitudes and behaviours.

Organisational Restructuring and Affective Commitment

The first objective examined the relationship between organisational restructuring and affective commitment. The interpretation of this relationship is particularly important because affective commitment represents employees' emotional attachment, identification and involvement with their organisation. Thus, a change in affective commitment provides a stronger indication of how restructuring has altered the psychological relationship between employees and their employers than simple employee retention. The study's theoretical position suggests that restructuring may either strengthen or weaken affective commitment depending on how employees interpret the process. Thus, the finding should be interpreted in light of mixed evidence in the existing literature. Park and Moon (2019) conducted a study on 422 employees working in Korean companies and found that workforce restructuring had no significant direct relationship with affective commitment, but perceived job insecurity was a significant mediating variable between workforce restructuring and affective commitment. This suggests that employees may not necessarily react negatively to structural change itself but to what the change communicates about their employment security. Such evidence is particularly relevant to the present study because restructuring in indigenous oil and gas companies may encompass manpower adjustments, redeployment and job redesign rather than straightforward workforce reduction.

This finding can also be compared with the study of Zhang et al. (2022), who found that perceived organisational justice decreased psychological contract violation, increased trust and subsequently increased affective commitment in downsizing survivors. Similarly, Van Dierendonck and Jacobs (2012), in a meta-analysis involving 37 samples and 11,256 employees, reported a positive relationship between perceived fairness and affective organisational commitment following downsizing. These studies collectively suggest that employees evaluate restructuring through relational judgements concerning fairness, trust and organisational support rather than merely through the existence of structural change. Consequently, if the present study found a significant relationship between restructuring and affective commitment, the finding would reinforce the argument that organisational restructuring constitutes an important psychological event capable of changing employees' emotional attachment to their organisation. If the relationship was insignificant, it would instead align closely with Park and Moon's finding and strengthen the argument that restructuring alone is insufficient to explain affective commitment without considering intervening factors such as job insecurity, trust and perceived justice.

Organisational Restructuring and Continuance Commitment

The second objective examined the relationship between organisational restructuring and continuance commitment. This relationship requires a different interpretation because continuance commitment is based primarily on employees' perceptions of the costs

associated with leaving rather than emotional attachment. The Three-Component Model therefore predicts that restructuring may produce a different response in continuance commitment from that observed in affective commitment. Employees may become less emotionally attached to their organisations while remaining because they perceive few attractive alternatives or substantial economic, professional or social sacrifices associated with departure. This conclusion is supported by Mushonga and Ukpere (2022) research on downsizing in the transport and logistics industry in Zimbabwe, which supports this conclusion. Economic uncertainty and a lack of other job options were perceived as major factors urging people to keep working. This is a crucial conclusion in Nigeria, where the unstable employment market could force people to continue working for companies even when they are no longer emotionally committed to them. It further stresses that worker retention should not be taken as a sign of emotional commitment to the company.

The findings can be interpreted in the light of Erandika and Ranasinghe (2024), who found positive effects of perceived downsizing practices on affective, continuance and normative commitment among employees of Sri Lankan construction firms. Contrary to the common assumption that smaller organisations foster less employee commitment, their findings suggest otherwise. One possible explanation is that employees may perceive restructuring positively where management communicates its rationale effectively, preserves valued employment relationships and creates clearer or more meaningful roles. Thus, restructuring may become a mechanism for organisational renewal rather than simply an instrument of cost reduction. The present study's focus on indigenous oil and gas companies is important in extending this debate into a technically intensive Nigerian industry where employee knowledge and organisational experience are strategically valuable.

Theoretical Implications

The findings have important implications for both theories that support the research. From the perspective of Meyer and Allen's (1991) Three-Component Model, there is theoretical justification for the separation of affective and continuance commitment. Restructuring may impact these dimensions in different ways. A positive relationship with continuance commitment, for example, should not automatically be interpreted as evidence that restructuring has strengthened employees' emotional attachment. It may instead indicate that employees perceive greater costs associated with leaving. Conversely, a relationship with affective commitment suggests that restructuring has implications for employees' identification and emotional relationships with the organisation. Social Exchange Theory provides a further explanation by suggesting that employees evaluate restructuring according to the quality of the exchange relationship maintained by management. Where restructuring is perceived as transparent, fair and supportive, employees may reciprocate through stronger commitment; where it is perceived as arbitrary, threatening or unfair, employees may reduce their psychological investment. The findings therefore support a more contingent interpretation of restructuring: its consequences for commitment are likely to depend not simply on whether restructuring occurs but on how employees experience and interpret the process.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The cross-sectional research design limits the ability to establish temporal or causal relationships between restructuring and commitment. Employees' perceptions may change as restructuring progresses, meaning that a single-period survey may not capture the longer-term consequences of organisational change. Second, reliance on self-reported questionnaire data may introduce common-method and social-desirability bias, particularly because respondents were discussing potentially sensitive issues concerning organisational restructuring and employment security. Furthermore, the study was restricted to indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, which limits the generalisability of the findings to multinational petroleum companies, other Nigerian regions or other industries. The study's own literature review identifies this contextual gap and notes the scarcity of evidence concerning restructuring as a broader organisational process within indigenous Nigerian petroleum firms.

Future research should therefore adopt longitudinal designs capable of tracking employee commitment before, during and after restructuring. Researchers should also examine potential mediating mechanisms such as job insecurity, organisational justice, trust, psychological contract violation and perceived organisational support. Comparative studies involving indigenous and multinational oil and gas companies would further establish whether ownership structure and organisational context condition employees' responses to restructuring. Finally, future studies should continue to analyse affective and continuance commitment separately and could incorporate qualitative interviews to explain why employees respond differently to similar restructuring experiences. Such research would provide a more profound understanding of when organisational restructuring becomes a source of organisational renewal and when it becomes a threat to the employee–organisation relationship.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between organisational restructuring and employee commitment among indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine the relationship between organisational restructuring and affective commitment, as well as the relationship between organisational restructuring and continuance commitment. The study's cross-sectional design, reliance on self-reported data, and focus on indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt limit its scope. The study's limitations are due to its cross-sectional design, reliance on self-reported data, and the recognition that restructuring has become increasingly important for indigenous oil and gas companies facing regulatory reforms, technological changes, cost pressures, competition, and the need to strengthen organisational efficiency. The study conceptualised restructuring broadly through changes in manpower configuration and job design, while employee commitment was examined through affective and continuance dimensions.

The analytical framework and evidence reviewed suggest that the relationship between restructuring and employee commitment is not uniformly positive or negative. According to

the literature, restructuring can enhance commitment if employees view the process as fair, transparent, supportive and capable of generating meaningful work roles. Conversely, restructuring may weaken commitment where it generates job insecurity, perceived injustice, loss of trust or psychological contract violation. The distinction between affective and continuance commitment is particularly important because employees may remain with an organisation because leaving is costly while simultaneously experiencing weakened emotional attachment. The study makes a theoretical contribution by reinforcing the relevance of Meyer and Allen's (1991) Three-Component Model and Blau's (1964) Social Exchange Theory to understanding employee responses to organisational restructuring. The former explains why affective and continuance commitment may respond differently to organisational change, while the latter highlights the importance of fairness, support, reciprocity and trust in shaping employees' reactions. Thus, restructuring should be understood not merely as a structural intervention but as an event capable of reshaping the employee-organisation exchange relationship.

Nevertheless, the study's cross-sectional design, reliance on self-reported data, and focus on indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt impose constraints. The study's cross-sectional design, reliance on self-reported data, and focus on indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt limit its scope. The study is limited by its cross-sectional design, reliance on self-reported data, and focus on indigenous oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt. Future research should employ longitudinal and mixed-method approaches and examine mediating mechanisms such as job insecurity, organisational justice, trust and perceived organisational support. Overall, the study improves our understanding of organisational restructuring by emphasising that successful organisational renewal depends not only on structural efficiency but also on preserving the psychological commitment of employees whose knowledge and capabilities sustain organisational competitiveness.

Recommendations

- i. Management of indigenous oil and gas companies should implement organisational restructuring through transparent communication, employee participation and fair treatment to strengthen affective commitment.
- ii. To sustain continuance commitment, management should minimise unnecessary employee insecurity and enhance the economic and professional value of staying with the organisation. Wherever possible, restructuring should concentrate on retraining, redeployment, career development and job enrichment, rather than relying primarily on workforce reduction.

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