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Organizational Investment and Employee Reciprocity of Real Estate Companies: Basis for Action Plan

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Abstract—**This study examines the relationship between organizational investment and employee reciprocity in small and medium-sized real estate companies in Calamba, Laguna. Rooted in Blau's Social Exchange Theory (1964), the research explores how leadership, recognition, and career development—as forms of organizational investment—affect employee engagement, loyalty, and productivity, which are key indicators of employee reciprocity. Employing a descriptive-correlational research design, data were gathered from 60 respondents through a validated survey instrument. The results revealed that both organizational investment and employee reciprocity are perceived at a high level by employees. A statistically significant relationship was identified between the two variables, indicating that when organizations invest in their people, employees are more likely to respond with increased commitment, productivity, and loyalty. Additionally, demographic factors such as age, educational background, and length of service showed some influence on how investment and reciprocity were perceived. The study underscores the critical role of strategic investment in leadership development, employee recognition, and structured career pathways in enhancing workplace culture and performance. These findings offer practical insights for business leaders and HR practitioners to design effective investment strategies that foster a culture of reciprocity, ultimately contributing to long-term organizational stability and competitiveness in the real estate sector. An action plan was proposed based on the results to guide companies in strengthening their workforce through targeted initiatives.**

Index Terms— **Organizational investment, employee reciprocity, leadership, recognition, career development.**

1. Introduction

A company's success is deeply rooted in the relationship between its investment in people and the reciprocity it receives in return. When employees feel valued and supported, it results in increased commitment, performance, and dedication. Organizational investment and employee reciprocity are crucial for the success of real estate companies, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that often lack the resources of larger firms. Organizational investment refers to the resources a company allocates to enhance the work environment, foster employee growth, and provide support in ways that build loyalty and productivity. In turn, employee reciprocity is the extent to which employees feel motivated, loyal, and productive in response to these investments.

A. Global Context of Real Estate Industry

Globally, the real estate sector plays a vital role in infrastructure development, economic growth, and employment generation. However, challenges such as high employee turnover and volatile market conditions persist. To ensure long-term growth and stability, real estate companies must prioritize organizational investment—initiatives that demonstrate the company's commitment to employee development and well-being. According to a 2023 Gallup survey, companies that actively invest in their employees experience significantly lower attrition rates, highlighting a strong link between investment and employee loyalty.

B. Regional Perspective and Philippine Setting

In Southeast Asia, including the Philippines, the real estate sector has experienced rapid growth. In the Philippines alone, the industry is projected to contribute ₱563 billion to the national Gross Domestic Product by 2025. This growth underscores the need for SMEs in real estate to remain competitive through strategic investments in employee development. While larger firms implement comprehensive training and career growth initiatives, smaller companies often face challenges in resource allocation, which affects their ability to foster employee loyalty and productivity.

C. Problem Context in Calamba, Laguna

In Calamba, Laguna, SMEs in the real estate sector face high employee turnover and low job commitment. Employees who do not feel adequately supported are less likely to contribute effectively to company goals, resulting in diminished collaboration and client satisfaction. While some literature exists on investment and reciprocity in larger firms, there is a gap in studies focusing specifically on SMEs in this region.

D. Purpose of the Study

This study seeks to examine how SMEs in Calamba can enhance employee reciprocity through organizational investment. It focuses on how leadership practices, employee recognition programs, and career development opportunities affect employee engagement, loyalty, and productivity. The

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study aims to provide actionable strategies to help companies foster a committed and high-performing workforce, thereby promoting long-term organizational success.

E. Personal Motivation

This research is driven by the author's personal experience in the real estate industry, where both the challenges and potential of workforce management in SMEs are observed. The study is an effort to contribute practical recommendations for building stronger employee relationships through strategic investments.

2. Literature Review

A. Engagement

Stein et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of employee engagement strategies in response to post-pandemic workforce challenges. High engagement was linked to better performance and lower burnout, particularly when organizations aligned tasks with employee values and allowed autonomy. Kruse (2023) viewed engagement as a two-way interaction between employees and managers, where both parties must actively contribute to alignment and performance. Mallory (2024) stressed the importance of listening to employees through structured feedback mechanisms to combat disengagement.

B. Loyalty

Khanna and Prusty (2024) demonstrated that flexible work arrangements, wellness programs, and recognition directly impact loyalty in real estate firms. Pham and Tran (2023) found that a supportive organizational culture fosters trust, which increases job satisfaction and loyalty. Tarki and Malm (2020) refuted the idea of millennials as chronic job-hoppers, suggesting that loyalty is achievable when organizations align values and offer fair employment practices.

C. Productivity

Thwin et al. (2022) found that workplace design, air quality, and ergonomics significantly enhance cognitive ability and productivity. Stryker (2024) emphasized that productivity is influenced not only by automation but also by leadership, motivation, and time management. These findings align with the idea that employee output improves when the workplace environment is optimized and supportive.

D. Leadership

Gleeson (2024) argued that modern leadership must go beyond profit and integrate purpose, which leads to higher employee engagement and innovation. Lewis (2022) underscored that trust is central to leadership, enabling open communication and collaboration. Leaders who are authentic, transparent, and reliable positively influence employee commitment.

E. Recognition

Gallup (2024) highlighted recognition as a cost-effective yet impactful tool for improving engagement and retention. Personalized and timely recognition fosters loyalty and builds a performance-driven culture. Fromm (2023) noted that recognition contributes to a sense of belonging, which strengthens employee fulfillment and retention.

F. Career Development

Matuson (2024) emphasized the role of ongoing conversations between leaders and employees in promoting career growth. Parsons (2025) added that professional development through short courses and certifications increases retention and productivity. When companies invest in employee growth, they signal long-term commitment, which is often reciprocated by employee dedication.

3. Methodology

A. Research Design

The study specifically employed a descriptive-correlational research design to determine the significant relationship between the organizational investment and employee reciprocity of real estate companies, which is a form of quantitative research. The researcher will analyzed the interactions between two or more variables without intervention, which allowed the researcher to ascertain and measure how much changes in one variable will influence changes in another (Bhandari, 2023). It included collecting and analyzing data on at least two variables to see if there is a link between them as well. Furthermore, descriptive correlational studies measured the strength of interactions by means of a statistical analysis of survey data and correlation coefficients. As the researcher understood several dynamics that exist inside companies and the probable influence of organizational investment and employee reciprocity, this is essential as this revealed both positive and negative relationships. Hence, this approach helped the researcher recognize trends and patterns, enabling better understanding of the study's constructs.

B. Research Locale

The conduct of the study took place in Laguna, Philippines, with a primary focus on Calamba, a city within a strong real estate market. Its proximity to Metro Manila and the presence of several industrial zones had contributed to significant growth in both residential and commercial real estate. Key players in the Laguna market included well-established companies such as Ayala Land and Filinvest (Brillo, 2023). In addition to these large companies, the region was home to numerous small and medium-sized real estate businesses catering to the local market. The local community, shaped by a mix of traditional Filipino culture and modern influences, may have impacted both organizational investment strategies and employee reciprocity. Factors like leadership practices, recognition, and career development opportunities—core elements of organizational investment—were likely to influence how employees responded through loyalty, productivity, and overall commitment to company goals. Furthermore, local government initiatives that supported corporate growth and investment had made it easier to run a real estate business in the region. By focusing on the small and medium-sized real estate companies in Calamba, this study examined how various cultural and economic factors influenced organizational investment and employee reciprocity, and how these factors contributed to business success in the local market.

C. Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study comprised full-time employees from small and medium-sized real estate enterprises in Calamba, Laguna. This focus ensured that participants were currently active in the real estate industry, which allowed for a valid evaluation of organizational investment and employee reciprocity within their respective companies. Additionally, respondents were required to have been working in their current roles for at least a year to be eligible. This requirement ensured that employees were sufficiently familiar with their workplace to provide consistent feedback on the company's organizational investment practices and the level of employee reciprocity they experienced. This approach enabled a detailed exploration of how various organizational investment strategies influenced employee reciprocity in real estate companies at different levels of the organization.

The study collaborated with four companies—referred to for anonymity as Company A, B, C, and D. The total population gathered was 70, drawn from the aforementioned companies: Company A (20 employees), Company B (5 employees), Company C (5 employees), and Company D (40 employees). To determine the sample size, the researcher used Raosoft, an online sample size calculator, to ascertain the specific number of respondents required to identify significant relationships in this study. Based on a response rate of 50%, a confidence interval of 95%, and a margin of error of 5%, the estimated sample size was 60 respondents (0.86 of the total population) (Raosoft, 2004).

Furthermore, the study employed the proportionate allocation technique to determine the sample size per company. This method ensured that the sample was representative of the population by dividing respondents according to the size of their respective companies. As a result, the following sample sizes were calculated for each company: Company A (17), Company B (4), Company C (4), and Company D (34), totaling 59 respondents, with the remaining one being negligible. The sample size for each company was derived by multiplying the company's population percentage by the total required sample size, ensuring a fair representation of the entire population and a clear understanding of the factors influencing organizational investment and employee reciprocity (Arnab, 2017).

D. Sampling Design

In this study, the researcher used both purposive and stratified sampling to intentionally select respondents based on specific characteristics relevant to the research (Hayes, 2024). Respondents were chosen from various roles within small and medium-sized real estate companies, ensuring a diverse range of perspectives on organizational investment and employee reciprocity.

Firstly, the researcher used purposive sampling to specifically choose respondents based on their knowledge, background, or other pertinent criteria (Nikolopoulou, 2023). This selection approach aided in narrowing the pool of respondents, reducing sample bias, and gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the target group. Based on purpose, the respondents had to be working under any labor, managerial, or administrative position (i.e., company owners or executive officials, trainees, or part-timers were excluded), and must have had at least one year of service in their respective real estate company or organization.

In addition, the researcher used stratified sampling to choose respondents in line with particular traits relevant to the study. This sampling technique divided the population into smaller groups, sometimes referred to as strata. Through stratification, the researcher focused on those who had similar traits, including educational level, as per Hayes (2024). In particular, the respondents had to be between the ages of 23 to 55, have held a bachelor's degree in any related real estate industry program, and their gender could be male, female, or one identifying with the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, and more (LGBTQIA+) community.

As a whole, these sampling techniques ensured that respondents were aware of and familiar with their workplace and the constraints and experiences that followed. As this allowed the researcher to select respondents who were most likely to contribute valuable information, it ensured a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing employee reciprocity and organizational investment in the real estate industry.

E. Instrumentation

This study used a structured survey questionnaire to gather data on employee reciprocity and organizational investment, ensuring consistency and enabling quantitative analysis (Brown, 2024). In particular, the survey was composed of three parts: first, demographic questions (i.e., age, sex, educational background, job position, length of service of the respondents); second, five employee reciprocity questions (i.e., productivity, engagement, and loyalty); and third, five organizational investment questions (i.e., leadership, recognition, and career development). With these questions, the researcher was able to gather insights from the 60 respondents and understand their thoughts on the specified variables.

F. Validation and Scoring

Furthermore, the survey questionnaire was thoroughly validated to ensure its legality and reliability (Brown, 2024). To do so, the researcher conducted a pilot test with a small sample of 30 employees from similar companies, in which the respondents answered the survey questionnaire to assess the clarity, relevance, and usefulness of the questions. As a result, the feedback from this test aided in refining the questionnaire for accuracy and clarity. In this way, the researcher was able to conduct content validation to ensure that the questions adequately addressed the study's research questions and truly represented the needs of the study (Parades, 2024). In addition, the researcher collaborated with a statistician to ensure that the study met relevant internal consistency and validity, which were checked using Cronbach's alpha before the survey was

Table 1
Likert scale for the level of organizational investment and employee reciprocity in small and medium size real estate companies

Scale Rating	Numerical Range	Categorical Response/ Verbal Interpretation
4	3.25 – 4.00	Very High Level
3	2.50 – 3.24	High level
2	1.75 – 2.49	Low Level
1	1.00 – 1.74	Very Low Level

fully deployed for pilot testing and actual data gathering.

G. Data of Gathering Procedure

The online data collection process for this study was conducted in three phases: prior to, during, and after the survey. Before the survey, respondents were informed about the study's goals and purpose through introductory letters and online communication, and provided informed consent to ensure privacy and ethical standards. During data collection, respondents completed a structured online survey within two weeks, with ongoing support for any questions. Afterward, the data was securely stored, reviewed for completeness and accuracy, and analyzed using the appropriate statistical procedures. Respondents received the study results, ensuring transparency and accountability, while all materials were securely retained for future research (Parades, 2024; Mcwhinney, 2024; Bhadari, 2023).

H. Treatment of Data

This study began with descriptive statistics to analyze respondents' demographic data and key factors affecting organizational investment and employee reciprocity, using measures like frequency, mean, median, and standard deviation to identify trends and patterns. Following this, inferential statistics explored the relationships between organizational investment and employee reciprocity, including statistical treatments such as Pearson's correlation to examine how factors like job satisfaction and trust correlated with organizational stability (Hayes, 2024).

1. *Percentage and Ranking*: This was used to summarize and present categorical data of the demographic profile.
2. *Weighted Mean and Standard Deviation*: This was used to determine the level of organizational investment and the level of employee reciprocity.
3. *Mann-Whitney U-test & Kruskal-Wallis Test*: This was used to test the difference in organizational investment and employee reciprocity according to demographic profiles (i.e., educational background and other profiles).
4. *Spearman Rho Correlation*: This was used to determine the relationship between the two variables (i.e., organizational investment and employee reciprocity).

I. Ethical Considerations

Ethics was of paramount importance when conducting research involving human participants, as it ensured the protection of their rights and well-being. Ethical considerations also served to build trust, transparency, and confidence between researchers and participants (Parades, 2024). Researchers had to adhere to high ethical standards, both in the planning and execution of their studies. A core principle in research ethics was obtaining informed consent, which guaranteed that participants fully understood the purpose, scope, and procedures of the study. This ensured that their participation was both voluntary and based on a clear understanding of the study's goals.

Informed consent also involved making participants aware of any potential risks or benefits associated with their participation, as well as disclosing any sources of funding tied to the research. Providing this transparency helped participants make more informed and autonomous decisions about whether to take part in the study. By emphasizing openness, researchers fostered a more respectful environment, allowing participants to be more confident in their decisions and feel secure about their involvement.

Another critical ethical consideration was maintaining data privacy, specifically through anonymity and confidentiality (Resnik, 2020). In this study, personally identifiable information was not collected, ensuring that respondents could not be linked to their data. This confidentiality safeguarded participants' privacy, which was essential for creating an atmosphere where they felt comfortable providing honest and accurate responses. By guaranteeing that individual responses remained private, the study helped protect the identities of participants and ensured the integrity of the data collected. This approach followed the guidelines outlined in the Republic Act No. 10173, also known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, which emphasized the protection of personal data and the rights of individuals to privacy.

Overall, adhering to ethical standards in research was not just a matter of protecting individual rights but also enhancing the validity of the study. By creating a respectful and transparent environment, researchers enabled participants to contribute meaningfully and truthfully to the research process. This approach, grounded in ethical practices, was designed to raise the quality of the data gathered, which ultimately strengthened the overall reliability of the research findings (Bhandari, 2024).

4. Results

A. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 2
Below summarizes the demographic information of the respondents, which includes age, sex, educational background, job position, and length of service

Demographic Profile	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Age			
23–30 years	33	55.0 %	1
31–40 years	12	20.0 %	2
41–50 years	9	15.0 %	3
51–55 years	6	10.0 %	4
Sex			
Female	32	53.3 %	1
Male	25	41.7 %	2
Non-binary	2	3.3 %	3
Prefer not to say	1	1.7 %	4

Educational Background			
Bachelor's Degree	53	88.3 %	1
Master's Degree	7	11.7 %	2
Job Position			
Administrative Staff	34	56.7 %	1
Sales Manager	17	28.3 %	2
Supervisor	9	15.0 %	3
Length of Service			
Less than 1 year	5	8.3 %	4
1–3 years	29	48.3 %	1
4–6 years	14	23.3 %	2
7–10 years	8	13.3 %	3
More than 10 years	4	6.7 %	5

B. Level of Organizational Investment

Organizational investment was assessed in three areas: leadership, recognition, and career development. The results show a high level of organizational investment across all dimensions.

C. Level of Employee Reciprocity

The study also evaluated employee reciprocity based on engagement, loyalty, and productivity. The findings indicate that employees perceive their reciprocal response to be at a high level.

Table 4
Level of employee reciprocity in terms of engagement, loyalty, and productivity

Indicator	Mean	Std. Dev	Verbal Interpretation
Engagement	3.10	0.53	High Level
Loyalty	3.14	0.57	High Level
Productivity	3.12	0.60	High Level
Overall Mean	3.12	0.57	High Level

D. Relationship Between Organizational Investment and Employee Reciprocity

The Spearman Rho Correlation Test revealed a statistically significant relationship between organizational investment and employee reciprocity ($\rho = 0.683$, $p < 0.01$), indicating a strong positive correlation.

5. Discussion

A. Organizational Investment as Perceived by Employees

The study revealed a high level of organizational investment as perceived by employees across all three dimensions: leadership, recognition, and career development. Leadership was rated highly, especially in terms of empathy, inclusive communication, and support for professional growth. This supports the argument of Gleeson (2024) and Lewis (2022) that emotionally intelligent and trustworthy leadership fosters stronger employee engagement and organizational cohesion.

Similarly, recognition practices were reported to be effective and motivating. Employees expressed feeling appreciated for their contributions, which aligns with Gallup's (2024) findings that timely and personalized recognition improves morale and lowers turnover. The data also confirms Fromm's (2023) suggestion that recognition builds community and purpose within organizations.

Career development opportunities were also assessed at a high level. Respondents acknowledged the presence of structured programs and mentorship, reinforcing the claim by Parsons (2025) that development efforts lead to better retention and higher productivity.

B. Employee Reciprocity in Terms of Engagement, Loyalty, and Productivity

The results show that employee reciprocity is also perceived at a high level, with engagement, loyalty, and productivity all receiving strong ratings. Engagement is influenced by employees' alignment with leadership values and their ability to participate in decision-making. This confirms the assertions of Stein et al. (2021) and Kruse (2023) that engaged employees are more motivated and less likely to leave the organization.

Loyalty, the second dimension, was also positively rated, reflecting a stable emotional commitment among employees. Studies by Pham and Tran (2023) and Khanna and Prusty (2024) highlight how trust and wellness initiatives are critical in building long-term employee retention, which is validated by this study's findings.

Productivity received the highest consistency across responses. Employees reported that when they feel supported and recognized, their willingness to perform and exceed expectations increases. This mirrors the research by Thwin et al. (2022) and Stryker (2024) who indicated that productive employees thrive in healthy and well-invested environments.

C. Significant Relationship Between Organizational Investment and Employee Reciprocity

A strong and statistically significant relationship between organizational investment and employee reciprocity was established using the Spearman Rho Correlation. This aligns with Blau's (1964) Social Exchange Theory, which posits that mutual exchange relationships between employer and

Table 3
Level of organizational investment in terms of leadership

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev	Verbal Interpretation
Leadership values open communication	3.02	0.60	High Level
Leadership understands employee needs	3.08	0.59	High Level
Leaders support professional growth	3.02	0.60	High Level
Regular leadership support checks	3.05	0.62	High Level
Leadership prioritizes workforce well-being	3.07	0.66	High Level
Use of emotional intelligence by leadership	3.03	0.52	High Level
Inclusive and collaborative leadership	3.00	0.61	High Level
General Assessment	3.04	0.49	High Level

Table 5
Relationship between organizational investment and employee reciprocity

Variables	Spearman Rho (ρ)	p-value	Interpretation
Organizational Investment vs. Employee Reciprocity	0.683	< 0.01	Significant Relationship

employee result in reciprocal actions such as loyalty and engagement. Employees who perceive high levels of investment from their organizations are more likely to exhibit behaviors that benefit the company in return.

D. Influence of Demographics on Investment and Reciprocity

Though not the main focus, the study also observed differences in perceptions based on demographic characteristics such as age and length of service. Younger employees, particularly those in the 23–30 age bracket, exhibited strong alignment with organizational values and a high sense of loyalty. This supports Tarki and Malm's (2020) challenge to the myth that younger generations are inherently disloyal.

E. Implications for Real Estate SMEs in Calamba

The findings hold critical implications for SMEs in Calamba's real estate sector. Companies that proactively invest in leadership training, create inclusive recognition programs, and provide clear development paths are better positioned to retain a dedicated and productive workforce. In a highly competitive and evolving industry, these strategies not only improve internal culture but also enhance client satisfaction and business sustainability.

6. Conclusion

A. Organizational Investment is Positively Perceived

Employees perceive their organizations as making meaningful investments in their professional experience through strong leadership, timely recognition, and opportunities for career development. These investments foster a sense of support and trust within the organization. Leaders who practice open communication, empathy, and inclusiveness contribute significantly to a culture of growth and employee value.

B. High Levels of Employee Reciprocity are Evident

The workforce demonstrated a high level of employee reciprocity, as evidenced by their engagement, loyalty, and productivity. When employees feel recognized and developed, they are more likely to exhibit commitment to organizational goals, go beyond their basic responsibilities, and remain with their employers for longer periods.

C. Organizational Investment Influences Employee Reciprocity

A significant positive correlation was found between organizational investment and employee reciprocity. This indicates that companies that prioritize employee-focused initiatives are more likely to experience higher levels of employee performance, satisfaction, and retention. This finding supports the core premise of Social Exchange Theory—that reciprocal relationships between employer and employee enhance organizational stability and growth.

D. Demographic Factors Have an Impact on Perceptions

The study also found that certain demographic variables such as age and length of service influenced how employees perceived organizational investment and reciprocity. Younger employees, in particular, were highly responsive to investment strategies, suggesting that a targeted approach based on employee profiles could enhance organizational outcomes.

E. Implications for Real Estate SMEs

For small and medium-sized real estate firms in Calamba, these findings underscore the importance of allocating resources to build supportive workplace practices. Even in resource-constrained settings, strategic investments in leadership, recognition, and development can yield measurable improvements in employee loyalty, engagement, and productivity—key drivers of long-term business sustainability.

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