

WORK ATTITUDE AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE: A STUDY OF MID-LEVEL CIVIL SERVANTS IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, DELTA STATE

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Abstract: *This examined the influence of work attitude and performance of mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State. The objectives are to assess the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants and to evaluate the extent to which job satisfaction affects organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State. This study adopted a quantitative descriptive correlational survey design. The study population comprised all mid-level civil servants across ten administrative zones of the Post Primary Education Board (PPEB) in Delta State, the researcher purposively selected a sample size of 50 respondents for the study. Data were analysed using IBM SPSS Version 26, employing descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation to test the relationships and predictive strength of the independent variables on performance, all at a 0.05 significance level. The result of the study revealed that there is no significant relationship between organizational commitment and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State and that there is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State. The study found no statistically significant relationship between organisational commitment or job satisfaction and organisational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State. This implies that factors such as leadership style, resource availability, institutional policies, and work environment may have a more critical influence on performance outcomes within the studied context. It was recommended among other things that the Ministry should conduct a thorough performance gap analysis to identify structural, resource-based, and managerial factors influencing organisational output, ensuring improvement strategies go beyond employee attitudes.*

Keywords: *Work Attitude, Organizational commitment, Job satisfaction, Performance, Mid-level civil servants, Ministry of Education.*

1.1 Background to the Study

Organizational performance is a key concern for governments, especially in the public service sector where institutional efficiency and service delivery are fundamental to national development. In Nigeria, civil service performance has been increasingly scrutinized due to recurring issues of inefficiency, low morale, and underachievement of strategic objectives (Eze, Okafor, & Nwosu, 2023). Among the many factors influencing public sector productivity, employee work attitude stands out as a significant determinant of how effectively individuals contribute to institutional goals.

Work attitude encompasses an employee's predisposition toward their job and the organization at large. It is reflected in dimensions such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction, both of which have shown strong predictive power in determining individual and organizational outcomes (Oyeniran & Ugochukwu, 2022). Organizational commitment refers to the psychological attachment an employee has to their workplace and the willingness to align personal goals with that of the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). In the civil service, this form of commitment ensures that workers uphold ethical standards, comply with policy directives, and remain focused on institutional objectives, even in the face of bureaucratic bottlenecks.

Similarly, job satisfaction is considered a key component of positive work attitude. It reflects the degree to which employees are content with their roles, working conditions, supervision, and opportunities for advancement (George & Atuma, 2021). When civil servants experience satisfaction in their job, they are more likely to demonstrate higher productivity, reduced absenteeism, and increased innovation all of which contribute significantly to organizational performance. Conversely, dissatisfaction often leads to low morale, passive resistance to reform initiatives, and a general decline in service quality (Okolie & Iheriohanma, 2020).

Within the Ministry of Education in Delta State, mid-level civil servants play a pivotal role in translating policies into action. They are responsible for implementing government education programs, managing school inspections, and supervising lower-tier staff. Given this strategic position, their attitude to work especially their level of commitment and job satisfaction—can significantly influence the overall performance of the ministry. Despite the importance of this administrative tier, limited research has been directed at understanding how their work attitudes shape institutional outcomes.

Existing studies have examined work attitudes in Nigeria's public sector, but most have either generalized the civil service population or focused predominantly on senior executives or entry-level workers (Adeleke & Akinyemi, 2022; Ibrahim & Musa, 2021). This gap underscores the need to explore

the attitudinal dimensions of mid-level civil servants and how they impact organizational performance, particularly in the education sector where human capital development is at stake.

Therefore, this study seeks to examine the influence of work attitude specifically organizational commitment and job satisfaction—on the performance of mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State. Findings from this study are expected to provide insight into how employee attitudes can be improved to foster better performance and public service delivery.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Organizational performance in the Nigerian civil service has remained persistently below expected levels, with recurring issues of inefficiency, poor service delivery, and unresponsiveness to public needs. The Ministry of Education, which plays a critical role in shaping human capital through policy implementation and administrative oversight, is not exempt from these challenges. Despite reforms and restructuring efforts at various levels of government, the performance output of public institutions continues to be suboptimal (Eze, Okafor, & Nwosu, 2023). Scholars and practitioners alike have identified employee work attitude as a pivotal factor influencing organizational effectiveness, particularly in public sector environments where motivation is often low, and accountability mechanisms are weak (Adeleke & Akinyemi, 2022).

Among the key components of work attitude are organizational commitment and job satisfaction, both of which have been shown to significantly influence employee behavior and institutional outcomes (Meyer & Allen, 1997; George & Atuma, 2021). Employees who are committed to their organization tend to exhibit loyalty, proactive engagement, and a willingness to go beyond formal job requirements. Similarly, job satisfaction is associated with improved morale, reduced turnover intention, and higher productivity (Okolie & Iheriohanma, 2020). However, despite the well-documented theoretical and empirical links between these variables and performance, there remains a noticeable lack of contextualized research focusing on mid-level civil servants, particularly within state-level ministries such as the Ministry of Education in Delta State.

Most existing studies on work attitude in the Nigerian civil service have generalized findings across the entire workforce or focused predominantly on either senior management or junior officers (Oyeniran & Ugochukwu, 2022; Ibrahim & Musa, 2021). This leaves a significant gap in understanding the work attitudes of mid-level employees—those who occupy a strategic position between policy formulation and operational implementation. These officers are instrumental in interpreting directives from senior leadership and coordinating frontline workers. If their attitudes toward work are unfavorable, it can lead to administrative delays, policy failures, and reduced service quality in educational outcomes.

The absence of focused empirical investigation on how organizational commitment and job satisfaction among mid-level civil servants affect performance in the Ministry of Education represents a critical research gap. Without clear insights into the attitudinal disposition of this category of workers, reform

efforts may remain ineffective or misdirected. Therefore, this study becomes imperative in identifying the extent to which these attitudinal variables influence organizational performance in this vital sector. The findings will provide evidence-based recommendations for improving employee engagement and institutional productivity within the public education administration in Delta State.

1.3 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of work attitude and performance of mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State. The specific objectives are;

1. To assess the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State.
2. To evaluate the extent to which job satisfaction affects organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State?
2. To what extent does job satisfaction influence the organizational performance of mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State?

1.5 Hypotheses (Non-directional)

1. **H₀₁:** There is no significant relationship between organizational commitment and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State.
2. **H₀₂:** There is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State

Review of Related Literature

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Work Attitude

Work attitude is a psychological tendency expressed by evaluating a particular entity (job, role, organization) with some degree of favor or disfavor (Robbins & Judge, 2019). In organizational settings, it encompasses an individual's consistent feelings, beliefs, and behavioral intentions toward work-related tasks and the organization itself. These attitudes influence how employees engage with their roles and coworkers and ultimately shape performance outcomes.

2.1.2 Importance of Work Attitude in Public Administration

In public administration, particularly in bureaucratic environments like civil services, work attitude is a critical determinant of service delivery and institutional efficiency. A positive work attitude drives civil servants to uphold public interest, maintain ethical standards, and contribute to national development goals (Eze, Okafor, & Nwosu, 2023).

According to Perry and Wise (1990), individuals with a strong sense of public service motivation are more likely to perform effectively, even in the absence of monetary incentives. This is particularly relevant in low-resource public systems such as Nigeria's, where intrinsic factors like commitment and pride in one's role significantly influence performance.

2.1.3 Dimensions of Work Attitude

i. Organizational Commitment

Organizational performance refers to the extent to which an institution effectively achieves its set goals and objectives. Within public institutions, performance encompasses not only the quality, efficiency, and timeliness of service delivery but also adherence to regulatory frameworks, stakeholder satisfaction, and long-term institutional sustainability (Adeleke & Akinyemi, 2022). Metrics for evaluating performance are both quantitative such as output levels, cost-efficiency, and absenteeism rates and qualitative, including employee engagement, public trust, and effectiveness in policy implementation.

In ministries such as education, where public policy is operationalized and social outcomes are directly influenced, organizational performance is especially pivotal to national development. Among the most influential determinants of performance are the attitudes, satisfaction levels, and commitment of civil servants particularly those at the mid-level, who act as intermediaries between strategic planning and ground-level execution (Eze, Okafor, & Nwosu, 2023). One critical attitudinal factor in this context is organizational commitment, which refers to the psychological attachment and loyalty an employee has toward their organization. Meyer and Allen (1991) conceptualize organizational commitment as a multidimensional construct consisting of three distinct components: affective commitment (emotional attachment to the organization), continuance commitment (perceived cost of leaving the organization), and normative commitment (a sense of obligation to remain). Each component plays a unique role in shaping employee behavior and, by extension, the broader performance of public institutions.

ii. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as an individual's affective response to their job, which results from a comparison between expected and actual job experiences (Locke, 1976). It includes cognitive judgments and emotional reactions to various job aspects such as pay, supervision, promotion opportunities, coworkers, and the nature of the work itself (Spector, 1997). Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) distinguishes between: Motivators (intrinsic factors): achievement, recognition, responsibility, and personal growth. Hygiene factors (extrinsic conditions): salary, working conditions, and job security. In public administration, job satisfaction affects motivation, innovation, and service delivery. Dissatisfaction, conversely, contributes to absenteeism, disengagement, and attrition (Ali, Zhang, & Azam, 2021). Satisfied civil servants are more likely to remain in service, show initiative, and participate in institutional reforms.

2.1.4 Organizational Performance

Organizational performance refers to how effectively an organization achieves its goals and objectives. In public institutions, this includes the quality, efficiency, and timeliness of service delivery; compliance with regulatory standards; stakeholder satisfaction; and institutional sustainability (Adeleke & Akinyemi, 2022). Performance can be measured using both quantitative indicators (e.g., outputs, cost-efficiency, and absenteeism rates) and qualitative indicators (e.g., employee engagement, public trust, policy implementation effectiveness).

In ministries such as education, organizational performance is critical for national development, as it directly affects policy outcomes and the delivery of social services. The attitudes, satisfaction, and commitment of employee's particularly mid-level officers serve as crucial determinants of performance (Eze, Okafor, & Nwosu, 2023).

2.1.5 Mid-Level Civil Servants

Mid-level civil servants occupy intermediate administrative or supervisory roles within the bureaucratic hierarchy. They bridge the gap between policy formulation at the senior level and frontline execution at the lower level. Their responsibilities often include program coordination, staff supervision, data reporting, compliance enforcement, and resource allocation (Ibrahim & Musa, 2021).

Due to their strategic positioning, mid-level officers play a pivotal role in shaping institutional outcomes. Their attitudes, competencies, and motivation can either enhance or hinder the effective implementation of public policies. In ministries of education, they are responsible for ensuring that school inspections, teacher deployment, curriculum enforcement, and community engagement are executed effectively. Despite their significance, this group is often under-researched, especially in Delta State, where the civil service faces challenges of politicization, underfunding, and low morale (Nwachukwu & Chladkova, 2020).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Meyer and Allen's Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment

Meyer and Allen's (1991) Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment provides a robust framework for understanding the psychological attachment an employee has to their organization. The theory categorizes commitment into three dimensions: Affective Commitment – emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization; Continuance Commitment – awareness of the costs associated with leaving the organization; Normative Commitment – a sense of obligation to remain with the organization. These dimensions jointly capture the motivations behind employees' loyalty and sustained contribution to organizational goals.

2.3 Empirical Review

Osibanjo, Salau, & Falola (2022) this study investigated the influence of workplace culture on organizational commitment among civil servants in the Nigerian public sector. Using a structured questionnaire and structural equation modeling (SEM), the researchers found that supportive workplace culture significantly enhances affective and normative commitment. The study revealed that when employees perceive fairness, communication, and recognition in the system, they develop stronger emotional and moral ties to their organizations. The findings support the application of Meyer and Allen's three-component model in African bureaucratic contexts.

Ibrahim & Musa (2021) this quantitative study examined the relationship between public service motivation and organizational commitment among 300 civil servants in northern Nigeria. The authors found that public service motivation particularly the desire to serve society and adhere to civic duty was a strong predictor of normative and affective commitment. Interestingly, continuance commitment had a weak relationship with motivation, suggesting that employees were not simply staying due to lack of alternatives but were emotionally invested in the mission of public service.

George & Atuma (2021) this study examined the relationship between job satisfaction and productivity among employees in selected Nigerian public institutions, including education ministries. Using survey data and multiple regression analysis, it identified pay, promotion opportunities, supervision quality, and work environment as critical determinants of job satisfaction. A positive correlation was observed between job satisfaction and employee productivity, with satisfied employees reporting lower absenteeism and higher performance ratings.

Akinwale & George (2021) this mixed-method study explored the comparative levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment between public and private sector employees in Nigeria. It found that while private sector employees had slightly higher satisfaction levels due to better compensation and performance-based recognition, public sector employees derived satisfaction from job security and societal prestige. The research confirmed that dimensions such as supervision, coworker relationships, and promotion opportunities significantly affect civil servants' satisfaction levels.

3.0 Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative descriptive correlational survey design to examine how work attitudes specifically organizational commitment and job satisfaction influence the organizational performance of mid-level civil servants. The design is suitable for identifying natural associations between variables without manipulation, enabling structured measurement of employee perceptions through standardised tools. The research was conducted in Delta State, Nigeria, focusing on ten administrative zones of the Post Primary Education Board (PPEB): Asaba, Warri, Kwale, Koko, Agbor, Bomadi, Oleh, Orerokpe, Ughelli, and Oghara. These zones are responsible for supervising public secondary schools and managing staffing, inspections, and compliance.

The study population comprised all mid-level civil servants across these zones, who are integral to policy implementation and oversight. Due to the unavailability of detailed staffing data, the researcher purposively selected a sample size of 50 respondents, ensuring equal representation of five participants from each zone using purposive and stratified sampling techniques. Data were collected via a structured questionnaire rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). Data were analysed using IBM SPSS Version 26, employing descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation to test the relationships and predictive strength of the independent variables on performance, all at a 0.05 significance level.

Data Analysis and Presentation

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.1.1 Assessment of Employees' Commitment and Satisfaction in the Ministry of Education (N = 50)

Survey Question	S (f, %)	A (f, %)	N (f, %)	D (f, %)	S D (f, %)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1. I feel a strong sense of belonging to the Ministry of Education.	8 (16.0%)	18 (36.0%)	9 (18.0%)	11 (22.0%)	4 (8.0%)	3.30	1.22
2. I am willing to go the extra mile to help the Ministry achieve its goals.	10 (20.0%)	21 (42.0%)	9 (18.0%)	8 (16.0%)	2 (4.0%)	3.58	1.11
3. I would prefer to remain with the Ministry even if given a better job elsewhere.	9 (18.0%)	9 (18.0%)	10 (20.0%)	15 (30.0%)	7 (14.0%)	2.96	1.34
4. My commitment to the Ministry positively influences how well I perform my duties.	13 (26.0%)	22 (44.0%)	13 (26.0%)	1 (2.0%)	1 (2.0%)	3.90	0.89
5. When the Ministry performs well, I feel personally satisfied and fulfilled.	14 (28.0%)	22 (44.0%)	10 (20.0%)	1 (2.0%)	3 (6.0%)	3.86	1.05

Source: Field survey, 2025

Item 1 (Sense of Belonging): Mean = 3.30, shows moderate agreement with moderate variability (SD = 1.22). While many feel a sense of belonging, a notable portion is neutral or disagrees. Item 2 (Going the Extra Mile): Mean = 3.58, indicates general agreement with relatively low variability (SD = 1.11). Most respondents are motivated to support the Ministry's goals. Item 3 (Retention Preference): Mean = 2.96, the lowest among all, with the highest standard deviation (SD = 1.34), implying diverse opinions and lower commitment to staying despite external offers. Item 4 (Commitment and Performance): Mean = 3.90, high agreement with the lowest variability (SD = 0.89). Employees believe their commitment

drives their performance. Item 5 (Satisfaction with Ministry Performance): Mean = 3.86, high agreement (72% agree or strongly agree) and relatively low variability (SD = 1.05), indicating emotional alignment with institutional success.

Table 4.2: Assessment of Employees' Job Satisfaction and Its Effect on Performance (N = 50)

Survey Question	SA (%)	(f, A (f, %)	N (f, %)	D (f, %)	SD (%)	(f, Mean	Std. Dev.
1. I am satisfied with the recognition I receive for doing a good job.	12 (24.0%)	20 (40.0%)	10 (20.0%)	5 (10.0%)	3 (6.0%)	3.66	1.10
2. I am happy with the level of support provided by my supervisors.	15 (30.0%)	18 (36.0%)	8 (16.0%)	6 (12.0%)	3 (6.0%)	3.72	1.17
3. I feel motivated to perform well because I am satisfied with my job conditions.	11 (22.0%)	22 (44.0%)	10 (20.0%)	5 (10.0%)	2 (4.0%)	3.70	1.06
4. My job satisfaction directly contributes to my effectiveness at work.	14 (28.0%)	20 (40.0%)	9 (18.0%)	4 (8.0%)	3 (6.0%)	3.76	1.08
5. I believe higher job satisfaction among staff leads to better organizational results.	17 (34.0%)	21 (42.0%)	8 (16.0%)	3 (6.0%)	1 (2.0%)	4.00	0.95

Source: Field survey, 2025

Item 1 (Recognition for Good Work): Mean = 3.66, SD = 1.10. Majority agreed or strongly agreed, indicating general satisfaction with recognition, although a small portion still feels undervalued. Item 2 (Supervisor Support): Mean = 3.72, SD = 1.17. This reflects overall satisfaction with supervisory support, with slightly more variability than item 1. Item 3 (Motivation through Job Conditions): Mean = 3.70, SD = 1.06. Responses show strong agreement that satisfactory job conditions enhance motivation, with minimal disagreement. Item 4 (Satisfaction and Effectiveness): Mean = 3.76, SD = 1.08. Most employees believe their satisfaction leads to better personal performance, supporting the link between morale and output. Item 5 (Satisfaction and Organisational Results): Mean = 4.00, SD = 0.95. The highest rated, showing broad consensus that job satisfaction positively influences organisational success.

4.2 Test of Hypotheses

4.2.1 Hypothesis One

H₁: There is a significant relationship between organizational commitment and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State.

Ho: There is no significant relationship between organizational commitment and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State.

Table 4.2.1 Correlation Coefficient

	Organizational Commitment	Organizational Performance
Organizational Commitment	1	-.175
Organizational Performance	-.175	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	—	.224
N	50	50

Source: SPSS Version 26

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient $r = -0.175$ indicates a weak negative relationship between organizational commitment and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State. However, the p-value of 0.224 is greater than the significance level of 0.05. This means the result is not statistically significant. In conclusion, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. There is no significant relationship between organizational commitment and organizational performance in the sample studied. This suggests that other factors may be influencing performance beyond employee commitment, or the relationship may not be linear or strong enough to detect in this sample size.

4.2.2 Hypothesis Two

H₁: There is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State

Ho: There is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State

Table 4.2.2 Correlation Coefficient

	Job Satisfaction	Organizational Performance
Job Satisfaction	1	-.169
Organizational Performance	-.169	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	—	.241
N	50	50

Source: SPSS Version 26

The Pearson correlation coefficient $r = -0.169$ indicates a weak negative relationship between job satisfaction and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education. The p-value of 0.241 exceeds the standard significance level of 0.05. Therefore, the result

is not statistically significant. In conclusion, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and organizational performance in the sampled group. While job satisfaction appears slightly negatively related to performance, this association could be due to random variation rather than a true effect.

5.1 Summary of Findings

- i. There is no significant relationship between organizational commitment and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State.
- ii. There is no significant relationship between job satisfaction and organizational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State

5.2 Conclusion

The study revealed that neither organisational commitment nor job satisfaction had a statistically significant relationship with organisational performance among mid-level civil servants in the Ministry of Education, Delta State. This suggests that while these work attitude factors are important for individual morale, they do not directly translate into measurable improvements in overall organisational performance within the studied context. The findings indicate that other variables such as leadership style, resource availability, institutional policies, and work environment may play more critical roles in influencing performance outcomes. Therefore, interventions aimed at improving performance should adopt a broader, more holistic approach that addresses structural, managerial, and operational challenges alongside employee attitudes. This comprehensive focus may yield more substantial and sustainable improvements in public sector performance, particularly in education ministries where operational constraints are often complex and multi-dimensional.

5.3 Recommendations

- i. The Ministry should conduct a thorough performance gap analysis to identify structural, resource-based, and managerial factors influencing organisational output, ensuring improvement strategies go beyond employee attitudes.
- ii. Government agencies should integrate performance-enhancing reforms such as clear goal-setting, process optimisation, and accountability mechanisms to complement employee development initiatives and improve overall organisational results.

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