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Employees' Engagement and Organizational Performance in Abia State Civil Service Commission, Umuahia, Abia State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the effect of employee engagement on organizational performance in Abia State Civil Service Commission. The study adopted survey research design and data collected through a structured questionnaire shared to the target respondents who were the employees of Abia State Civil Service Commission. The data generated were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings of the study revealed that job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, feedback, autonomy, flexible schedules etc.) have significant effect on service delivery; rewards and recognition (pay, salaries, compensation, promotion etc.) have significant relationship with job commitment; positive and significant relationship exists between organizational policies/company culture (vision/mission, readiness to accept innovative and creative ideas, dress code, communication styles, etc.) on operational effectiveness and professional career development opportunities (platform for skill acquisition, advancement opportunities, sense of personal achievement) have significant impact on satisfaction of the workforce of Abia State Civil Service Commission. The study concluded that employee engagement is a critical factor influencing organizational performance, as it represents the degree of commitment, enthusiasm, and emotional connection employees have with their organization and its goals. Based on this, the study recommends the need for fostering a strong organizational culture that promote clear vision values; creating an inclusive environment that encourage diversity and inclusion to ensure all employees feel valued and respected, which enhances their sense of belonging and commitment, enhance leadership effectiveness that train managers in engagement practices as to inspire, motivate and support teams.

KEYWORDS: Employee Engagement, Organizational Performance, Job Commitment, Organizational Culture, Diversity and Inclusion.

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INTRODUCTION

In a globalized world like ours where innovative and creative ideas are driving the economy, there is need to fully engaged employees effectively for improved performance, productivity, business sustainability and survival in a competitive era (Etim & Nneji, 2023; Sinurat & Berampu, 2021; Reissová & Papay, 2021; Tshukudu, 2020), better team performance, higher retention rates and decreased burnout (Gyensare *et al.*, 2017; Byrne, 2014: Mone & London, 2014). Hence, effective management of human resources can make employee performance better, because if the company can relate well to employees, employees will provide feedback to the company (Zahro *et al.*, 2022; Thesiasari, 2019).

However, engagement is a workplace approach designed to ensure that employees are committed to their organization's goals and values, motivated to contribute to organizational success, and are able at the same time to enhance their own sense of well-being (Satata, 2021). Thus, employee engagement is an essential tool and it positively contributes to organizational performances (Rajendran and Doraisamy, 2022). According to Satata (2021), employee engagement is a physical and psychological condition related to work that helps organizations to achieve stated goals. For Shrestha (2019), employee engagement refers to the emotional commitment and active involvement of employees towards their work, organization, and its goals, while organizational performance represents the overall effectiveness, productivity, and success of the organization. Also, employee engagement can

be discoursed as employees' emotional connection to the company, their willingness to go beyond the status quo and to show dedication by staying invested in their job (Qualtrics, 2020). It has been reported that businesses with engaged employees are 21% more profitable and scored 17% of more productivity (Gallup, 2017).

In the words of Othman and Mahmood (2019), Kazimoto (2016), Obeidat (2016), Reissová & Papay (2021), employee engagement is positively related to organizational performance and it's constructs include job characteristics, organizational support, rewards and recognition, work environment, training and development, professional career growth and opportunities, organizational policies/company culture, workplace well-being, vigor, dedication and absorption. However, these components of employee engagement have correlation with organizational performance indicators.

In the bid of the above statement, Govender and Bussin (2020), Kazimoto (2016), cited that organizational performance of a given institution can be effectively improved with greater achievement of stated objectives when employees are fully engaged since they tend to contribute what they have, hence this calls for organizations such as public sectors like Abia State Civil Service Commission, private sectors and other parastatals to frequently review their organizational policies, company strategic objectives, employees' job characteristics, rewards/recognition systems, work environment platforms and professional career development.

Admittedly, employee engagement is thus desirable for organizations and it positively affects organizational outcomes such as low turnover, retention, productivity and loyalty (Guan, Yeh, Chiang & Huan, 2020; Verčič, 2021). According to Shekari (2015), Govender and Bussin (2020), employees who are absorbed in their jobs are characterized by being fully concentrated in their job and have difficulty detaching from work. These dimensions affect the performance and continuity of business organizations. It is on the above premise that this study is carried out to determine the relationship as well as the effect of employee engagement on organizational performance using Abia State Civil Service Commission as a study area.

Evidently, the zeal, motivation, dedication and contributions of most civil servants in contributing maximally to the actualization civil service commission goals, vision, culture and vision have been on the decrease. This mostly is frequently observed when civil servants abstain from delivering their required tasks, job misconducts, low morale, negative attitudes, conflicts and lack of cooperation among the staff. Furthermore, it could be observed that some unscrupulous workers had developed ingenious ways of pretending to be at work when they were actually out of the office pursuing private businesses (Kibirango, 2014).

However, it is also a well-known fact that there might be reasons for these actions by the civil servants which could range from poor working environment, culture of the organization and the need to match talented employees to jobs (Collings & Mellahi, 2009); communication problems, negligence on the side of government for career development, growth opportunities; extents to which employees are engaged in decision making, lack of rewards and recognition platforms, issues of work-life balance etc (Alfes, Truss, Soane, Rees & Gatenby, 2009 in Kibirango, 2014).

Employee work engagement has thus received considerable scholarly attention recently (Kazimoto, 2016; Ahmed, Ahmad Jaaffar, 2017; Al-Dalahmeh, Masa'deh, Abu Khalaf & Obeidat, 2018; Devi, 2017; Ahmed, Khanb, Thitivesab, Siraphatthadab & Phumdarab, 2020). Recent researches suggest that employee engagement is an important strategy for organizational performance (Sudiroa, Adia & Fakhria, 2021). Few studies however showed the link between employee engagement and organizational performance using various constructs of employee engagements such as vigor, dedication and absorption (Devi, 2017), but no study both nationally and internationally have adopted job characteristics, rewards and recognition, organizational policies/company culture as well as professional career development/growth opportunities as constructs of employee engagement on testing organizational performance using service delivery, job commitment, operational effectiveness and employee satisfaction. Hence, it is on the above premises that this study is initiated to investigate the effect of employee engagement on organizational performance using Abia State Civil Service Commission, Umuahia as a study area.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement can be viewed as a workplace approach in ensuring highly motivated and devoted employees in contributing to the organizational success and growth (Agrawal, 2015; Vorina *et al.*, 2017). Employee engagement acts a measurement tool for the employee's actions, passions, energy and their obligation in harnessing success to their institutions and organizations (Hewitt, 2012). Therefore, employee engagement can be an employee's cognitive, emotional and performance level that channeled towards coveted organizational outcomes (Khan, 2013). Engagement is a concept designed to ensure employees are committed to achieving company goals. Employee engagement contributes to the success of the company in order to be able to increase a sense of self-worth (Bakker *et al.*, 2012). The application of the concept of employee engagement will have strength with clear evidence of trust and fairness based on mutual respect, both of which have promises and commitments that can be fulfilled (Zahro *et al.*, 2022). Employee engagement is also important for anyone who manages or leads a company, because this concept provides the tools needed to ensure employees do their best work. This concept is also used to develop employee policies. Employee engagement has become a high priority for all organizations, as to turn a company into a success requires high

competence and high employee involvement. High employee involvement to ensure customers have an unforgettable experience, be innovative and make products more attractive, create better quality to produce, stay up to date with rapid field changes, be collaborative and flexible (Zahro *et al.,* 2022). Employee engagement shows how much employees identify with their work and are emotionally committed to their work and have the ability to do work. Schaufeli and Bakker divide the three elements of employee engagement, namely, vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor is shown by employees through their physical and mental strength when doing the assigned tasks. Vigor can be seen from the high level of power and mentality at work, daring to complete the work with all his might, seriousness in carrying out the given task, not giving up and persisting when facing difficulties in completing work (Zahro *et al.,* 2022).

Dedication is shown by employees emotionally towards their work. Judging from the enthusiasm of employees when working, they are proud of the work they do and are proud of their place of work. Employees who have a high sense of dedication unite themselves with their work because they see their work as a valuable experience. Absorption is described by the behavior of employees who devote their full attention to their work. Employees who have high absorption feel that time passes quickly when they are doing tasks so it is difficult to get away from their work (Zahro *et al.,* 2022).

Job Characteristics

Job characteristics are core aspects of employees' daily tasks. Negative job characteristics (work overload, role conflict, and emotional demands) are aspects of employees' tasks that require sustained effort and are associated with certain physical and/or psychological costs (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Positive job characteristics are aspects that support employees in the accomplishment of their tasks and stimulate personal growth, learning, and development (e.g., job control, skill utilization; Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Job characteristics influence the psychological state of an employee. Employees will perceive the significance of the tasks they are performing, feel responsible for the outcomes of their work, and apply the knowledge they have gained to perform their functions better. This, in turn, results in high internal work motivation, high-quality performance, employee satisfaction, and low employee absenteeism and turnover rates (Gusti, 2023). The model provides five characteristics that state how best to design work including: skill variety, task identity, task significant, autonomy and feedback. The Job Characteristics Model states that these characteristics influence outcomes of motivation, satisfaction and performance. The model also includes intervening variables of meaningfulness, responsibility, and knowledge of results.

- **Skill variety:** Skill variety occurs when the individual engages in a wide range of activities that require different skills.
- **Task identity:** Task identity occurs when the employees complete a whole segment of work from start to end.
- **Task significance:** Task significance occurs when the job has real meaning through making an impact on people.
- **Feedback:** Feedback refers to the extent to which the performance of work activities provides a person with clear and direct information about the effectiveness of their work. These five dimensions of job characteristics create psychological reactions in an individual regarding the meaning, responsibility, and knowledge derived from the job. Ultimately, this impacts employee motivation, performance, and job satisfaction, as well as turnover and absenteeism rates.
- **Autonomy:** Autonomy occurs when employees have freedom and discretion in deciding how to carry out their work. Feedback is when employees are given clear feedback on their performance effectiveness (Oldham & Hackman, 2010).

To assess whether jobs provide enrichment and also to test their model, Oldham and Hackman created the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS). The JDS is a self-report measure that assess employees' assessment of the five job characteristics (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). The JDS also assesses employees' Growth Need Strength. Growth Need Strength assesses how much the employee values opportunities to grow and develop at work. The Model also makes the assumption that the job holder has the appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) to do the work. The main benefit of the JCM is that it provides professionals with a template on how to design jobs through the five core characteristics. The research on the JCM have demonstrated key work design variables including the following (Parker *et al.*, 2017): job characteristics, job attitudes, complexity, feedback design, variety and skill utilization. In addition, the JCM characteristics are related to job analysis so can be used in designing jobs to aid in selection and job training.

REWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Rewards and recognition are seen as one of the important programs nowadays in any organizations in retaining well eligible employees and engaging them in customer satisfaction, management of scarce resources and to improvement of performances. Rewards and recognition are also seen as a motivator that every organization should devise it as per employee to keep their performance at higher level and help in shaping certain behaviours. Researcher has opined that an employee who is rewarded considers their work to be of worth developing a sense of recognition that drives them to perform well (Bamel *et al.*, 2013). Reward and recognition are considered as an important factor to boost morale and to create goodwill between employees and managers. Asserting this, Jackson *et al* (2012) stated that rewarding high performing employees by leaders encourages them to uphold their performance levels and work hard channelizing more efforts to attain goals as per path goal theory (Jackson *et al.*,

2012). In addition, Rana (2015) has explained that rewards can be classified as extrinsic or intrinsic covering aspects such as team incentives, profit sharing, pay and promotion, and praise and recognition (Rana, 2015). An intrinsic reward is considered as part of work and it does not have any physical presence. Some intrinsic rewards include professional growth and achievement, employee recognition, immediate tasks authorization, commendation from managers and co-workers, personal satisfaction, self-esteem, respect and appreciation (Kilimo *et al.*, 2016). On the other hand, extrinsic rewards are considered as physical existence and cash-based rewards such as pay raises, bonuses, fringe benefits, job security, promotions, private office space, the enterprise social climate and overtime payment (Kilimo *et al.*, 2016).

ORGANIZATIONAL POLICIES/COMPANY CULTURE/COMPANY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Organizational policies/company strategic objectives or guidelines of an organization entails managing employees, delegating schedules, goals, performance tracking and other important aspects of their job. Some characteristics of clear guidelines that could be find productive in a given organization ought to have the following: effective span of control, flexibility, proper emphasis on staff activities, clear cut line of authority, minimum management level, unity of direction, and application of ultimate responsibility and adequate delegation of authourity (Priyali, 2023). Some clear guidelines for effective running of an organization include the following (Priyali, 2023):

CAREER DEVELOPMENT/GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The degree to which companies offer personal and professional growth opportunities for employees plays into the overall work environment. Opportunities to learn new skills, take on new responsibilities, achieve higher compensation and gain new positions can allow employees to set and work towards goals, conveying a sense of personal achievement that boosts employee satisfaction. Employees rarely prefer to remain static in their careers for long. Rather, most people continually look for opportunities to advance. Providing these opportunities can keep your employee turnover levels under control, as employees stick with you for longer to achieve their personal and career goals (Odembo, 2013).

According to Zacher, Rudolph, Todorovic, and Ammann (2018), career development is a separate concept that describes the process by which people and their employers manage different responsibilities, behaviors, and experiences within and across jobs and organizations over time, with implications for employees' identities related to their work. In order to affect changes in values, attitudes, and motivation, employee career development, according to Cedaryana (2018), is a structured, ongoing endeavor that aims to add to an employee's abilities, skills, and expertise. A person's career is developed over the course of their entire life. It is the ongoing process of managing employment work experience within or across organizations. The idea entails both official and informal methods for helping people grow in capacities including teaching, guiding, and counseling.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Organizational performance is the means through which firms achieve their set goals and it is usually measured using financial and non-financial indicators (Gibson, Ivancevich & Donnelly, 2010). Organizational performance refers to ability of a firm to achieve stated objectives such as profit, quality product, market share, employee productivity, business growth and survival (Lee & Whitford, 2013). Organizational performance in profit-oriented business can also be used to view how an enterprise is doing in terms of level of profit, market share and product quality in relation to other enterprises in the same industry. Organizational performance is an intricate concept to measure hence several indicators is used in measuring the performance of organizations. Lee and Whitford (2013), stated that organizations measure their performance using financial measures (sales growth, profit growth, and asset growth or capital growth) and nonfinancial measures (employee turnover, customer satisfaction, business growth and expansion and employee productivity). The indices for measuring performance according to Azeem, Abrar, Bashir and Zubair (2015) include profitability, business expansion and sales turnover.

JOB COMMITMENT

According to Akoto and Allida (2018), job commitment is a critical aspect in determining the success of organizations, their reforms and effectiveness because highly committed employees are willing to contribute their extra effort to achieve the organizational vision and goals. Additionally, organizational commitment is crucial, particularly in this day and age when the majority of workers are looking for "greener pastures". Accordingly, an employee's level of loyalty to his employer is known as organizational commitment (Donald, Lucia & Victor, 2016). The writers also emphasized that workers who are more committed to the organization are more responsible, productive, dependable, and have higher levels of satisfaction.

There are three types of commitment namely, affective, normative and continuance. Affective commitment refers to employees' emotional connection to their employer, which generates a sense of belonging to, identification with and loyalty toward the organization. Employees who identify with their employer have a greater desire to remain in the organization (Brown & Barker,

2019). Normative commitment reflects employees perceived moral obligation to stay with an organization, a willingness generated by a sense of duty and compulsion (Brown & Barker, 2019). Continuance commitment emerges from employees' assessment of opportunities associated with remaining with an organization compared to the cost of leaving the employment (Brown & Barker**,** 2019).

THEORETICAL REVIEW

Self-Determination Theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985)

The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) revolves around the inherent drive and psychological requirements of individuals (Bakker & Van Woerkom, 2017). When it comes to involvement, SDT proposes that the levels of devotion and engagement can be understood through the fulfillment of psychological needs such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Bakker and Van Woerkom, 2017). If employees perceive a sense of independence in their work, feel skilled and accomplished, and enjoy positive social interactions and connections, they are more inclined to exhibit dedication and complete absorption in their assigned tasks (Goodboy *et al.*, 2020).

Kahn's Engagement Theory (Homans, 1958)

Kahn's Engagement Theory, developed by William A. Kahn, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding employee engagement (Schneider *et al.*, 2018). According to Kahn, engagement is a psychological state that occurs when individuals bring their full selves, both physically and emotionally, to their work roles (Huang *et al.*, 2022). It goes beyond mere job satisfaction and involves a deep sense of connection, fulfillment, and involvement in one's work. Kahn, provides a framework for understanding employee engagement and its dimensions, including vigor, dedication, and absorption (Gupta and Sharma, 2018). According to Kahn, employee engagement is a state of "psychological presence" in which individuals bring their full selves, both physically and cognitively, to their work roles. Within this theory, vigor, dedication, and absorption are key components of engagement (Nimon and Suck, 2020). These theories provide different perspectives on the underlying mechanisms and factors that contribute to vigor, dedication, and absorption within the broader context of employee engagement. The theories reviewed here above are essentially provide a foundation for organizing knowledge, explaining phenomena, generating hypotheses, making predictions, integrating findings, and guiding

Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1958)

Social exchange theory (SET) proposed by Homans (1958) has a stronger theoretical rationale in understanding the underlying psychological mechanism involved in employee engagement (Homans, 1958). Social exchange theory was developed by a sociologist, George Homans (1958) focusing on people and behavior and it first appeared in "Social Behavior as Exchange" (George Homans, 1958). The discourse on social exchange theory dates as far as Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and consist of distinctions between social and economic exchanges (Blau, 1968). The main idea of the theory is that parties enter and sustain social exchange relationships with others in anticipation that doing so will be rewarding (Blau, 1968; Homans, 1958). As per the theory, each party owns something of value that the other wants and the parties decide what to exchange and the quantity. In addition, Homans (1961) also opined that the underlying basis for human behavior is the exchange of benefits or giving something that is more valuable to a receiver than it is to the giver. The theory is limited to observing activities that are contingent on rewarding reactions from others (Blau, 1964) and it assesses two-sided, mutually contingent, and mutually rewarding processes called "transactions" and relationships called "exchanges" (Emerson, 1976). This further been discussed by Lawler & Thye (1999) stating that in achieving outcomes that neither could accomplish, self-interested parties transact or exchange with self-interested others (Lawler & Thye, 1999). Also, Blau (1994) added that the exchanges would end as soon as the it is perceived to be not mutually rewarding by both parties (Blau,1994).

Application of Theory

The suitable theory on which the study relies on and draws foundation is on Social Exchange theory. However, there are many previous studies that have used this theory in their research and many scholars analysed the relationship between organization and members based on social exchange theory. According to Homans (1961), people create stable interaction as social relations where each party receive profits and once the initial relation has been made, the received rewards maintain and improves this interaction (Homans, 1961). Researchers have gone through the earlier works on this theory and rekindled their interest in understanding and enhancing quality of relationship between employee and employers (Moorman, 1991; Settoon *et al.*, 1996). These findings support that the application of social exchange theory in an organization result in positive actions towards employees and it plays an important role in the creation of interrelationship and subsequent obligations among workers to reciprocate in positive ways (Settoon *et al.*, 1996). Hence, the mediating effect of employee engagement is built on SET where an organization's act towards employee in a beneficial or positive way generates reciprocity such that employees respond in a beneficial manner that favors the organization (Blau, 1964). Moreover, scholars like Schaufeli (2013) have argued that benefits given by the organization in the

form of a good salary, recognition and development opportunities will oblige employees to respond and repay them by engaging themselves in the organization (Schaufeli, 2013). This idea has also been proven in another research conducted by Nawaz et.al. (2014) in Pakistan in examining the relationship among training, empowerment, employee engagement and creativity. They validated SET stating that a sense of commitment and positive engagement relationship is built between employee and organizations which invest in training and empowerment. Supporting this, Shantz *et al.* (2013) added some of the benefits for the organization including engaged employees who exhibit positive work attitude, implement basic knowledge of the business context and show effort to increase productivity for the organization (Shantz *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, employee engagement within the ambit of SET demonstrates that in response to the resources they receive from their organizations, employees choose to engage themselves to varying degrees (Praveen & Kumra, 2020). In this study, the engagements factors such as job characteristics (belonging, clients/employees' relationship, flexible work schedules etc), rewards and recognition (pay, salaries, compensation) organizational policies/company culture/company strategic objectives (freedom to try new things, ability to accept innovation and appreciation of creative ideas, communication skills, participation in decision making) and career development/growth opportunities/professional development (ability to learn new skills, dress code policies, opportunity to advance) can be represented as positive action by the public sector workers with correspondence for employee engagement which further contributes to organizational performance.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopted the survey research design for analyzing the respondents' opinions. The Primary and secondary sources of data collection were used. The study's target population was drawn from four (4) selected ministries in Abia State Civil Service Commission. The selected ministries included Ministry of Education, Ministry of Information, Ministry of Works and Industry, and Ministry of Science and Technology. The Civil Service Commission Staff considered for the study comprised of the Heads of Departments and Employees in the four (4) selected Ministries. The choice of the Heads of Departments and Employees in this study was to reflect both the management and non-management staff of Abia State Civil Service Commission. The total populations of Civil Servants in each of the four (4) selected Ministries included:

Table 1: Tabulation of the Population

S/NO	Ministry	Number of Staff
1.	Ministry of Information	240
2.	Ministry of Education	264
3	Ministry of Works	160
4	Ministry of Industry, Science and Technology	151
	Total	815

Source: Personnel Unit of Studied Firms (2025)

Purposive sampling technique was used to select the four (4) Ministries followed by the stratification of the Heads of departments and other staff. In order to pick the sample, the researcher makes use of a random sampling technique. The primary instrument used to collect data by the researcher was a well-structured questionnaire. In designing the questionnaire, the researcher used the five (5) point Likert scale questions issued to the respondents to choose options best suitable to them critically. The data generated was analyzed using descriptive statistics, frequencies, and percentages. The hypotheses were analyzed with a simple linear regression analysis model and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient (PMCC) analysis model.

Model specification

Simple Regression Model

$Y = \beta o + \beta 1\, X1 + ei$ (Explicit Model) ----------(3.1)

Where;

Y = Dependent Variable
X = Independent Variable
βo = Intercept
$\beta 1$ = Slope
e = Error Term

The implicit models were specified as follows;

Hypothesis one

SD = $\beta o + \beta 1$(JC) + ei---------- (3.2)

Where;

JC = Job Characteristics

SD = Service Delivery
βo = Intercept
$\beta 1$ = Slope
ei = Error Terms

Hypothesis Two

JC = $\beta o + \beta 1$(RR) + ei---------- (3.3)
Where;
RR = Rewards and Recognition
JC = Job Commitment
βo = Intercept
$\beta 1$ = Slope
ei = Error Terms

Hypothesis Three

Correlation model

$$r = \frac{n\sum x\sum y - \sum x\sum y}{\sqrt{[n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n\sum x^2 - (\sum y)^2]}} \text{ ---------- (3.4)}$$

Where
r = correlation co-efficient
n = number of respondents
x = the independent variable
y = the dependent variable
$\sum$ = Summation coefficient

Implicitly,
X = Organizational Policies/Company Culture
Y = Operational Effectiveness
OP/CC = Independent Variable (Organizational Policies/Company Culture)
OP = Dependent Variable (Operational Effectiveness)

OP = $\beta o + \beta 1$ (OP/CC) + ei----------(3.5)
Where;
OP/CC = Organizational Policies/Company Culture
OP = Operational Effectiveness
βo = Intercept
$\beta 1$ = Slope
ei = Error Term

Hypothesis Four

ES = $\beta o + \beta 1$(CD) + ei ---------- (3.6)
Where;
CD = Career Development/Growth Opportunities monitoring
JD = Employ Satisfaction
βo = Intercept
$\beta 1$ = Slope
ei = Error Terms

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

In this section of the research, both descriptive statistics and empirical analyses and the interpretations of the results are presented. The chapter is divided into five (5) sections: section 4.1 shows questionnaire administration and 4.2 results of demographic characteristics of the respondents; section 4.3 presents the descriptive statistics based on questionnaire items, 4.4 shows the test of hypotheses and 4.5 discussions of results.

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 2: Distribution of Socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Female	137	56.8
Male	104	43.2
Total	241	100
Marital status		
Single	92	38.2
Married	129	53.5
Divorced	2	0.8
Widow	10	4.1
Separated	8	3.3
Total	241	100
Educational qual.		
WASSCE/NECO	30	12.4
OND/NCE	71	29.5
B.Sc./HND	105	43.6
PGD/PGDE	18	7.5
M.Sc./MBA	11	4.5
PhD	6	2.5
Total	241	100
Age bracket		
Below 25	5	2.1
26 – 30	12	5.0
31 – 35	25	10.4
36 – 40	102	42.3
41 – 45	79	32.8
46 and above	18	7.4
Total	241	100
Rank		
Junior	111	46.1
Senior	121	50.2
Principal Officers	9	3.7
Total	241	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

As shown in the table above, the gender row in the table, 137 respondents representing 56.8% were females while 104 respondents representing 43.2% were males indicating that Abia State Civil Service Commission has a staff strength dominated by females.

Marital Status**:** The results in Table 1 showed that 129 respondents representing 53.5%, 92 respondents representing 38.2%, 10 respondents representing 4.1%, 8 respondents representing 3.3% and 2 respondents representing 0.8% were married, single, widowed, separated and divorced respectively.

Educational Qualifications: From the table it is observed that 105 respondents representing 43.6%, 71 respondents representing 29.5%, 30 respondents representing 12.4%, 18 respondents representing 7.5%, 11 respondents representing 4.5% and 6 respondents representing 2.5% had B.Sc./HND, OND/NCE, WASSCE/NECO, PGD/PGDE, M.Sc./MBA and PhD respectively as their educational qualifications.

Age Bracket: From the results, 102 respondents representing 42.3%, 79 respondents representing 32.8%, 25 respondents representing 10.4%, 18 respondents representing 7.4%, 12 respondents representing 5.0 and 5 respondents representing 2.1% were 36-40, 41-45, 31-35, 46 and above, 26-30 and less than 25 years old respectively.

Rank: The results on the table revealed that 121 respondents representing 50.2%, 111 respondents representing 46.1% and 9 respondents representing 3.7% were of senior, junior and principal cadres

Department: From the results of the table, 91 respondents representing 37.8%, 43 respondents representing 17.8%, 35 representing 14.5%, 25 respondents representing 10.4%, 20 respondents representing 8.3% and 18 respondents representing 7.5% were in the department of administration, recruitment/discipline, planning, education, finance, public affairs and matters; research and statistics respectively.

Years of Experience: From the table, 87 respondents representing 36.1%, 65 respondents representing 27.0%, 29 respondents representing 12.0%, 21 respondents representing 8.7%, 15 respondents representing 6.2 and 4 respondents representing 1.7% had 16-20, 21-25, 11-15, 26-30, 6-10, above 31 and less 5 years of experience respectively.

Table 3: Effect of Job Characteristics on Service Delivery of the Workforce of Abia State Civil Service Commission

S/No.	Statement Item	SA	A	D	SD	U	Total	$\bar{X}$
1.	Having varied skills creates a sustainable work environment for speedily completion of task(s) with high accuracy as well as efficient actualization of organizational goals	161 66.8%	39 16.2%	18 7.5%	20 8.3%	3 1.2%	241 100.0%	4.39
2.	Having knowledge for identifiable pieces of work ensures efficient acceleration of responsibilities	90 37.3%	70 29.0%	38 15.8%	39 16.2%	4 1.2%	241 100.0%	3.84
3.	Having positive perception that delegation and completion of duties impact on others creates an avenue for acceleration of loyalties	87 36.1%	81 33.6%	27 11.2%	41 17.0%	5 2.1%	241 100.0%	3.84
4.	Job autonomy influences employees' efforts, motivation and concentration for sustainable discharge of responsibilities	100 41.5%	91 37.8%	35 14.5%	10 4.1%	5 2.1%	241 100.0%	4.12
5.	Flexible work schedules impact greatly on employees' job habits and empathy among colleagues	54 22.4%	115 47.7%	45 18.7%	21 8.7%	6 2.5%	241 100.0%	3.79

Field Survey, 2025

The results revealed that 161 respondents representing 66.8%, 39 respondents representing 16.2%, 20 respondents representing 8.3%, 18 respondents representing 7.5%, and 3 respondents representing 1.2% with a mean score of 4.39 strongly agreed, agreed, strongly disagreed, disagreed and undecided respectively that to statement item 1. On statement item 2, 90 respondents representing 37.3%, 70 respondents representing 29.0%, 39 respondents representing 16.2%, 38 respondents representing 15.8% and 4 respondents representing 1.2% with a mean value of 3.84 strongly agreed, agreed, strongly disagreed, disagreed and undecided that having knowledge for identifiable pieces of work ensures efficient acceleration of responsibilities. For statement item 3, 87 respondents representing 36.1%, 81 respondents representing 33.6%, 41 respondents representing 17.0%, 27 respondents representing 11.2% and 5 respondents representing 2.1% with a mean score of 3.84 strong agreed, agreed, strongly disagreed, disagreed and undecided respectively that having positive perception that delegation and completion of duties impact on others creates an avenue for acceleration of loyalties. For statement item 4, 100 respondents representing 41.5%, 91 respondents representing 37.8%, 35 respondents representing 14.5%, 10 respondents representing 4.1% and 5 respondents representing 2.1% with a mean score of 4.12 strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed, and undecided respectively that job autonomy influences employees' efforts, motivation and concentration for sustainable discharge of responsibilities. The responses on the last statement item revealed that 115 respondents representing 47.7%, 54 respondents representing 22.4%, 45 respondents representing 18.7%, 21 respondents representing 8.7% and 6 respondents representing 2.5% with a means score of 3.79 agreed, strongly agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed and undecided respectively that flexible work schedules impact greatly on employees' job habits and empathy among colleagues. Conclusively, since the mean value for the respective statement items is above the bench mark of 3.0, it implies that all the items were adopted as having impact on the variables.

Table 4: Effect of rewards and recognition (pay, salaries, compensation, promotion, awards etc) on job commitment of the workforce of Abia State Civil Service Commission

S/No.	Statement item	SA	A	D	SD	U	Total	$\bar{X}$
1.	Payment of due salaries promote satisfaction and overall performance of workers of Abia State Civil Service	156 64.7%	72 29.9%	3 1.2%	6 2.5%	4 1.7%	241 100	4.54
2.	Regular appraisal of workers achievement and effective promotion system create avenue for satisfaction as well as enforce the employees to give in their best for attainment of high performance.	121 50.2%	94 40.7%	7 2.9%	10 4.1%	5 2.1%	241 100	4.37

3.	Provision of compensation packages accelerate ability of Abia State Civil Service workers to concentrate on delegated duties/tasks	176 73.0%	31 12.9%	18 7.5%	10 4.1%	6 2.5%	241 100	4.50
4.	Receiving award for well completed tasks from management creates friendly environment for building trust, engagement for effective actualization of goals.	28 11.6%	141 58.5%	29 12.0%	25 10.4%	18 7.5%	241 100	3.56
5.	Effective financial and non-financial packages aid workers perception as well as shaping ability to concentrate on tasks.	27 11.2%	70 29.0%	129 53.5%	15 6.2%	-	241 100	2.87

Field Survey, 2025

Result findings on statement item 1 revealed that 156 respondents representing 64.7%, 72 respondents representing 29.9%, 6 respondents representing 2.5%, 4 respondents representing 1.7% and 3 respondents representing 1.2% with a mean value of 4.54 strongly agreed, agreed, strongly disagreed, disagreed and undecided respectively that payment of due salaries promote satisfaction and overall performance of workers of Abia State Civil Service. For statement item 2, 121 respondents representing 50.2%, 94 respondents representing 40.7%, 10 respondents representing 4.1%, 7 respondents representing 2.9% and 5 respondents representing 2.1% with a mean value of 4.37 strongly agreed, agreed, strongly disagreed, disagreed and undecided respectively to the statement. For statement item 3, 176 respondents representing 73.0%, 31 respondents representing 12.9%, 18 respondents representing 7.5%, 10 respondents representing 4.1% and 6 respondents representing 2.5% with a mean value of 4.50 strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed and undecided to the statement respectively. For statement item 4, 141 respondents representing 58.5%, 28 respondents representing 11.6%, 29 respondents representing 12.0%, 25 respondents representing 12.0% and 18 respondents representing 7.5% with a mean score of 3.56 agreed, strongly agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed, and were undecided to the statement. Lastly for statement item 5, 129 respondents representing 53.5%, 70 respondents representing 29.0%, 27 respondents representing 11.2% with a mean score of 2.87 disagreed, agreed, strongly agreed and strongly decided respectively to the statement. Conclusively, four (4) items out of five (5) were above the bench mark of 3.0 indicating that these 4 statement items were adopted as having impact on the variables.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Employee engagement is a critical factor influencing organizational performance, as it represents the degree of commitment, enthusiasm, and emotional connection employees have with their organization and its goals. A well-engaged workforce has been consistently linked to higher productivity, profitability, satisfaction, and innovation. This relationship is supported by both theoretical frameworks and empirical studies, which highlight the role of engagement as a driver of operational and strategic success. The relationship between employee engagement and organizational performance is bidirectional. While engagement drives performance, strong organizational performance can also enhance engagement by creating a positive feedback loop. In conclusion, the evidence is clear: employee engagement is not just an HR initiative but a strategic imperative that underpins organizational performance. Companies that invest in cultivating an engaged workforce reap measurable benefits across operational, financial, and reputational dimensions. Therefore, organizations must prioritize engagement as a cornerstone of their strategy, recognizing that the well-being and motivation of their employees are foundational to sustainable success.

On the basis of the findings from the study, the study recommends as follows:

- That Abia State Civil Service Commission should foster a strong organizational culture that promote clear vision and values,
- The organization should create an inclusive environment that encourages diversity and inclusion to ensure that all employees feel valued and respected, which enhances their sense of belonging and commitment.
- The organization should develop career growth opportunities that provide access to skill development programs, certifications, and learning resources that align with employees' career aspirations.

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