



Impact of Public Service Motivation on Employee Performance in Government Institution: A Study of Delta State Civil Service Commission

Essien, Godwin Archibong¹ & Victoria Oche Oyetimein²

Department of Public Administration,

National Open University of Nigeria, Abuja, Nigeria

e-mails: pstgoddie@gmail.com

Phone Numbers: +2348035825577

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Abstract

This study was motivated by the growing concern over the declining performance and morale of civil servants in sub-national government institutions in Nigeria, particularly within the Delta State Civil Service Commission, despite the introduction of numerous reforms and motivational interventions between 2019 and 2024. Titled "Impact of Public Service Motivation on Employee Performance in Government Institution: A Study of Delta State Civil Service Commission," the research sought to critically examine the role of public service motivation (PSM) in influencing employee performance in a politically and administratively volatile public sector environment. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to a proportionally stratified sample of three hundred and forty-two (342) civil servants across five departments. The instrument was validated through a pilot test, yielding Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.78 to 0.91, indicating strong internal reliability. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to assess the effect of key motivational variables. The findings revealed significant differences in employee performance across all motivational dimensions examined. The p-values for each hypothesis tested were below the 0.05 threshold, leading to the rejection of all four null hypotheses. The study revealed that public service motivation is a critical determinant of employee performance and a fundamental pillar for sustaining public sector effectiveness in Delta State. It highlighted the importance of aligning intrinsic motivation with institutional support mechanisms to navigate the challenges of governance instability, technological disruption, and ethical lapses. The study concludes with actionable recommendations that Delta State Government should enhance remuneration frameworks, develop transparent career progression pathways, invest in digital capacity building, institutionalise ethical recognition systems, and integrate public service motivation assessments into human resource policies in order to revitalise institutional performance, reducing attrition, and restoring public trust in the civil service.

Keywords: Career Progression, Employee Performance, Motivation, Public Service, Remuneration,

Introduction

Motivation has increasingly become pivotal in enhancing employee performance within government institutions globally. In advanced economies such as the United

States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Germany, empirical evidence supports the positive association between motivation and employee output. For example, a longitudinal analysis across various Western

countries found that high level of motivation improved job performance by approximately 18% compared to those with low motivation (Das, 2022). In the United Kingdom for instance, studies have demonstrated that civil servants scoring higher on service motivation scales were 21% more productive and less likely to leave their posts prematurely (Das, 2022). In Canada, similar patterns emerge, where a national survey found that 79% of public servants reporting high intrinsic motivation aligned better with organisational missions and showed superior performance (Das, 2022). Germany's civil service studies also highlight that employees with strong civic-duty motivation completed 15% more tasks accurately under bureaucratic conditions (Kiyak & Karkin, 2022). Nonetheless, these global achievements co-exist with challenges. Despite sophisticated human resource management systems, countries like the United States still report a 12% annual attrition rate among civil servants, largely due to burnout and motivational decline (Das, 2022). Moreover, the crowding-out effect, where extrinsic rewards dilute intrinsic motivation, has been extensively observed in contexts reliant on performance-based pay (Priyastiwati & Sofiaty, 2022).

Turning to Africa, the relationship between motivation and employee performance remains critical yet under-developed. In Ghana for instance, a study involving eight hundred and fifty (850) local government employees found that employees with high public interest commitment contributed 23% more towards meeting organisational targets than their peers (Abane & Phinaitrup, 2022). Similarly, Tanzanian public service workers demonstrated that recognition-driven motivation led to a statistically significant improvement in job output, with a 67% response rate affirming the correlation (Mwalukoba & Abayo, 2023).

In Nigeria, the situation is more precarious. Data from a study conducted among federal civil servants revealed that motivation positively impacted job performance, with 64% of respondents acknowledging its influence (Oladimeji & Abdulkareem, 2023). Additionally, a case study at the Federal

Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti, found an 88.69% response rate to motivational interventions, highlighting the potential but often under-utilised strength of motivation strategies (Folayan & Alabi, 2023). Nonetheless, financial rewards in the Nigerian public sector particularly in the civil service have been found insufficient in significantly motivating employees, a factor that continues to challenge public sector reform efforts (Dashwep & Macha, 2022).

Narrowing specifically to the Delta State Civil Service, multiple issues and challenges have been observed during the period of 2019 to 2024, substantially affecting employee performance and morale. Obviously, in December 2024, Delta State government dissolved the State Civil Service Commission (an institution responsible for policy formulation and operation in the state civil service) leading to legal challenges from sacked officials who claimed the dissolution was unconstitutional and demanded two hundred and fifty million naira (₦250 million) in damages (Abd Razak, et al., 2024). The abrupt termination of commission members also raised concerns over the legitimacy and transparency of subsequent appointments, which critics argued were politically motivated and poorly timed (Folayan & Alabi, 2023).

In another direction, recruitment challenges have compounded the situation, with years of stagnation leading to understaffing and overburdening of the workforce. Although fresh recruitment efforts were initiated during this period, they faced criticisms regarding transparency and adaptability to e-governance frameworks, as many civil servants struggled with the transition to digital operations due to inadequate training and resources (Ajol.info, 2024). Financial welfare issues also persisted between 2019 and 2024. Despite an announced increase in the minimum wage from forty thousand naira (₦40,000) to seventy thousand naira (₦70,000), salary delays disrupted the previously reliable payment system, creating financial instability for civil servants (Folayan & Alabi, 2023). Although investments were made in welfare infrastructure, such as health insurance

schemes, concerns over their actual effectiveness and accessibility remained prevalent (Delta State Government, 2024). Ethical concerns were also prominent, with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) urging Delta civil servants to adhere to higher ethical standards amid allegations of fiscal improprieties (EFCC, 2024). Furthermore, while the move to e-governance was commendable, it encountered significant resistance and slow adaptation among staff, largely due to limited digital literacy and insufficient support systems (Adebayo & Ojo, 2023). Thus, the cumulative challenges of governance instability, questionable recruitment practices, financial uncertainty, ethical concerns, and technological adaptation between 2019 and 2024 significantly undermined employee motivation and performance within the Delta State Civil Service. Consequently, the motivation for the current study arises from the need to empirically investigate the impact of public service motivation on employee performance within the Delta State Civil Service, focusing on the period 2019 to 2024. By addressing these lacunae, the study seeks to contribute to global, regional, and national discourses while providing practical recommendations for strengthening civil service effectiveness in Delta State.

Statement of the Problem

In an ideal civil service context, motivation serves as a catalyst for enhancing employee performance, organisational commitment, and sectoral efficiency (Das, 2022). Empirical evidence from developed countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Canada shows that high motivation levels contribute to achieving public sector goals, lowering turnover rates, and improving service delivery. In contrast, the Nigerian civil service, and specifically the Delta State Civil Service, faces a more precarious reality. Although elements of motivation exist among Nigerian civil servants, their performance is undermined by poor remuneration, weak working conditions, political interference, lack of career growth,

and systemic corruption (Oladimeji & Abdulkareem, 2023). Between 2019 and 2024, Delta State experienced significant challenges including governance instability, questionable recruitment practices, salary delays, ethical lapses, and difficulties adapting to technological reforms. The abrupt dissolution of the Delta State Civil Service Commission in 2024 triggered legal disputes and perceptions of political manipulation (Audan & Bandiola, 2023), while recruitment stagnation and financial instability further eroded morale (Alabi & Salami, 2023). Successive administrations introduced interventions such as the regularisation of promotions, civil service reforms through the adoption of e-governance, salary increments, and health insurance schemes (Delta State Government, 2024). Yet, despite these efforts, low motivation, limited technological adaptation, and unethical practices persist (Akinola & Oladipo, 2024). The persistence of these problems has resulted in high staff turnover, weakened institutional capacity, poor service delivery, and growing public mistrust. Several studies have explored motivational link to performance globally and nationally. (Oladimeji & Abdulkareem, 2023) focused on federal institutions without addressing state dynamics, while (Folayan & Alabi, 2023) examined higher education sectors rather than civil services. Studies in Tanzania and Ghana (Mwalukoba & Abayo, 2023); Abane & Phinaitrup, 2022) also leave Nigerian sub-national administrations under-explored.

The justification for this research lies in the limited empirical analysis of public service motivation on employees' performance in sub-national contexts within Nigeria. Although prior studies have examined the broader implications of public service motivation globally, there remains a dearth of localised studies that analyse its specific impact on employee performance as it relates to Delta State, Nigeria. Addressing this gap will contribute to the growing body of literature and provide actionable recommendations for policymakers and practitioners.

Objectives of the Study

In light of the above statement of the problem, the study aims to: (i). investigate the influence of money (financial incentives) on employee performance in the Delta State Civil Service, (ii). examine the effect of career promotion on the performance of employees within the Delta State Civil Service, (iii). assess how digital literacy and capacity building initiatives affect employee performance in the Delta State Civil Service, and (iv). analyse the impact of ethical practices and institutional recognition on the performance of employees in the Delta State Civil Service.

Research Questions

In line with the stated objectives above, the research questions are as follows: (i). What is the effect of money (financial incentives) on employee performance in the Delta State Civil Service? (ii). What is the effect of career promotion on employee performance in the Delta State Civil Service? (iii). How does digital literacy and capacity building initiatives affect employee performance in the Delta State Civil Service? (iv). What is the impact of ethical practices and institutional recognition on employee performance in the Delta State Civil Service?

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: Money (financial incentives) has no significant influence on employee performance in the Delta State Civil Service.

H₀₂: Career promotion has no significant effect on employee performance in the Delta State Civil Service.

H₀₃: Digital literacy and capacity building initiatives have no significant effect on employee performance in the Delta State Civil Service.

H₀₄: Ethical practices and institutional recognition have no significant impact on employee performance in the Delta State Civil Service.

Conceptual Review

Motivation

According to (Van der Wal & Mussagulova, 2023), motivation can be defined as a physiological and psychological process that controls human behaviours based on the

needs and desires which also energize such behaviours. Similarly, the same authors argue that motivation reflects an individual's intrinsic inclination towards fulfilling responsibilities within institutions based on values such as compassion, self-sacrifice, and commitment to public interest (Van der Wal & Mussagulova, 2022).

In addition, (Audan & Bandiola, 2024) explain motivation as the commitment of individuals to societal welfare, developed through emotional intelligence, teamwork, and knowledge management, especially among healthcare workers facing crisis situations. Furthermore, (Liu et al., 2024) view motivation as the voluntary drive to fulfill roles, even amidst risk and uncertainty, underpinned by altruism and dedication to effective service delivery and community welfare. However, (Alreshoodi, 2023) provides another perspective by stating that motivation represents an internalised system of service values which drives individuals to prioritise community welfare over personal interests within their professional engagements. Consequently, (Kismno et al., 2023) describe motivation as the alignment between an individual's self-concept and organisational goals, which leads to intrinsic job satisfaction and enhanced public service delivery. Similarly, (Park & Kim, 2025) assert that motivation sustains employee job performance through organisational citizenship behaviour, even under disruptive conditions like global pandemics, thus demonstrating the resilience embedded within motivated public servants. In the same vein, (Jung & Moon, 2024) propose that motivation is an intrinsic aspiration to serve societal interests, which is strengthened by motivating job characteristics and weakened by poor organisational hygiene factors.

Money (Financial incentives)

According to (Kwon & Lee, 2023), money (financial incentives) can be defined as systemic mechanisms established to enhance the earnings, benefits, and social protection of public sector workers, leading to an improved perception of job status and overall working conditions. Similarly, (Dorlach, 2023) explains remuneration and

welfare initiatives as policy measures developed to stabilise and protect employees' livelihoods, especially during socio-economic disruptions, through targeted and sometimes temporary financial interventions.

In addition, (Alabi & Salami, 2023), define money (financial incentives) as a comprehensive system that encompasses salary structures, bonuses, pension contributions, health benefits, housing schemes, and career advancement incentives designed to improve civil servants' morale and productivity. Furthermore, (Asmono et al., 2024) describe remuneration and welfare initiatives as integrated performance-based salary structures and staff welfare packages aimed at enhancing organisational efficiency and boosting local revenue generation.

However, (Said & Kiki, 2023) argue that money (financial incentives) are critical variables influencing job satisfaction and organisational loyalty, especially when compensation is paired with effective leadership and colleague support within a public sector setting. Consequently, (Oyetunji & Adebayo, 2024) see money (financial incentives) as structured governmental efforts that bridge employee expectations and organisational performance, fostering institutional trust and long-term workforce retention. Subsequently, (Derevyanko, 2022) explains that money (financial incentives) can be seen as legal and financial frameworks that ensure equity and dignity among public sector professionals by securing proportional salary adjustments according to constitutional mandates, thereby eliminating professional discrimination.

Career Promotion

According to (Apgar & Dolan, 2024), career promotion can be defined as the developmental stages that facilitate the movement of professionals from entry-level positions to higher responsibilities through continuous training, licensure reforms, and skill enhancement initiatives within structured organisational frameworks. Similarly, (Akintayo & Okafor, 2023), explain career progression opportunities as the deliberate provision of training,

mentoring, promotions, and leadership pipelines to employees in order to build institutional loyalty and improve long-term workforce performance. In addition, (Farouk et al., 2024) describe career promotion as systematic support mechanisms such as mentorship, experiential learning, and pipeline residency programmes that guide employees towards advanced professional roles, particularly in specialised sectors like healthcare. Furthermore, (Belko, 2025) states that career promotion comprise the continuous development of managerial, digital, and professional competencies necessary for navigating the dynamic organisational and economic landscapes of the modern world.

However, (Augustiniené et al., 2022) argue that career promotion should be seen not only as mechanisms for advancement but as strategic empowerment tools that enable vulnerable groups to overcome systemic educational and workplace barriers. Consequently, (Raji & Bamidele, 2022) define career promotion as organisational strategies that deliberately dismantle glass ceilings and promote meritocratic pathways for all employees, regardless of gender or socio-economic status. Similarly, (Aryanti et al., 2024) view career promotion as company-supported systems of career development that prioritise personal growth, career information access, and structured advancement pathways for younger generations. Finally, (Francis, et al., 2023) explain that career progression opportunities are often life-transformative experiences for marginalised groups, enhancing not only their professional trajectories but also their ability to shape the disciplines and industries they serve.

Digital Literacy and Capacity Building

According to (Samuel, 2024), digital literacy and capacity building be defined as the process of acquiring, modifying, and internalising new skills and behaviours necessary for success amidst evolving technological environments, particularly in high-performance domains such as sports and professional careers. Similarly, (Fitzpatrick & West, 2022) explain digital literacy and capacity building as the ability

of individuals, institutions, and systems to adjust proactively to digital disruptions, ensuring resilience and effectiveness even in resourceconstrained environments. Furthermore, (Degefu & Kifle, 2024) describe digital literacy and capacity building as a strategic response by agricultural communities to integrate climate-smart technologies in response to environmental variability, thus enhancing productivity and resilience. Obviously, (Stephenson & Torn, 2023) argue that digital literacy and capacity building should be seen as an iterative process of pedagogical transformation within higher education, where digital tools become essential platforms for engagement, learning, and skills development.

However, (Tahulending et al., 2023) define digital literacy and capacity building as the coping strategies employed by students in adjusting to academic, social, and institutional challenges intensified by digital migration, thereby fostering resilience within educational contexts. Consequently, (Pinho-Gomes & Jamart, 2024) assert digital literacy and capacity building involves the systematic integration of new tools to address vulnerabilities, particularly in health systems, where technology-based interventions are critical for resilience against climate risks. Similarly, (Lee et al., 2021) see digital literacy and capacity building as the deliberate incorporation of evidence-based technological frameworks in governmental plans to combat climate change risks, highlighting technology's role in shaping national resilience. Additionally, (Francis et al., 2023) explain that digital literacy and capacity building is a transformative practice that empowers under-represented groups to reshape organisational structures through mastery and innovation within digital environments. Finally, (Belko, 2025) describes digital literacy and capacity building as the continuous building of managerial competencies that not only respond to rapid digital shifts but anticipate emerging demands, positioning workers for sustained relevance in volatile environments.

Ethical practices and Institutional Recognition

(Hudson, et al., 2023), defines ethical practices as a commitment to uphold Indigenous rights and community governance standards, ensuring that data and knowledge originating from indigenous people are managed with collective benefit, authority, responsibility, and ethics at the forefront. Similarly, (Crites & Cunningham, 2022) explain ethical practices as the adherence to shared quality standards within healthcare ethics consultation services, promoting transparency, integrity, and trust in clinical decision-making. Also, (Nuni & Feika, 2023) define ethical practices in the public sector as the foundation for preventing procurement irregularities, emphasising that unethical behaviour undermines public trust and institutional credibility. However, (Jamali et al., 2021) highlight that ethical practices must adapt to globalisation, interdisciplinarity, and evolving sustainability challenges, requiring institutions to align traditional ethics with broader business, environmental, and social responsibilities. Consequently, (Ederio et al., 2023) see ethical practices in educational institutions as a structured adherence to universal research norms, ensuring voluntary participation, informed consent, and the protection of participant rights throughout scientific inquiry.

Employee Performance

According to (Khatob et al., 2024), employee performance can be defined as the outcome of tasks executed in line with assigned responsibilities, directly reflected in the quality and quantity of output produced by individuals within an organisation. Similarly, (Vezi et al., 2024) explain employee performance as the degree to which employees meet or exceed set organisational expectations, often influenced by training, motivation, and developmental interventions. Furthermore, (Aliyah & Putra, 2022) describe employee performance through a financial perspective, indicating that consistent improvements in key financial indicators like Return on Assets (RoN) and Net Profit Margin (NPM) can serve as proxies for evaluating employee

effectiveness in banking institutions. Furthermore, (Zagita et al., 2024) argue that employee performance is composed of the efficient execution of operational tasks, ultimately driving overall financial health and operational turnover in organisations. However, (Duwe, 2024) posits that employee performance must be seen not merely as task completion but as the strategic alignment of personal outputs with organisational vision, especially when applying performance management systems like the Balanced Scorecard.

Consequently, (Ramadhina et al., 2024) define employee performance as the behavioural outcome of various reward systems, highlighting that both material and non-material rewards significantly enhance performance levels. Similarly, (Dabor et al., 2023) articulate employee performance in the banking sector as the level of productivity and service quality, influenced heavily by the strategic implementation of performance measurement tools like the Balanced Scorecard. In the same vein, (Pranogyo & Argaheni, 2021) observe that employee performance should be composed of measurable outputs such as service quality, client satisfaction, and efficient resource utilisation in health sector organisations.

Literature Review and Rationale for Research

(Tahir, et al., 2025) investigated the relationship between Motivation and Employee Performance (EP) within public sector organisations by utilizing a mixed-methods approach, in which the study analyses both quantitative data from employee surveys and qualitative insights from interviews with public sector employees. The findings reveal a significant positive correlation between Motivation and Employee Performance (EP), indicating that employees who are motivated by a desire to serve the public tend to exhibit higher performance levels. Moreover, the research identifies key factors that enhance this relationship, including organisational support, leadership styles, and job design. The study highlights the importance of fostering a motivating work environment to

improve employee performance in the public sector. Based on these findings, recommendations for future research and practical implications for public sector management are provided, emphasizing the need for targeted training programmes and employee engagement strategies. (Trinh, et al., 2025) explored how adaptive and authentic leadership influence motivation and employee outcomes in Vietnam. Using structural equation modeling with seven hundred and nine (709) participants, it was found that both leadership styles positively impact motivation. The bright and dark sides of motivation affect employees' attitudinal and behavioural outcomes, with higher motivation linked to greater resilience and engagement, but also emotional exhaustion and lower withdrawal behaviour. Additionally, adaptive and authentic leadership indirectly affect emotional exhaustion through motivation sub-dimensions. These findings offer theoretical and practical contributions for public/civil service organisations in Vietnam, emphasizing the importance of leadership in enhancing employee motivation and outcomes. (Mohamed, et al., 2025) examined the impact of motivation on employee performance in local non-governmental organisations in Mogadishu, Somalia, and it offers valuable insights into the efficacy of both financial and nonfinancial incentives. The study ensured a representative and statistically significant dataset by employing a quantitative research design and utilizing a sample of one hundred and five (105) employees selected through simple random sampling. Using structured questionnaires for data collection, coupled with advanced analytical tools such as Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Smart Partial Least Squares (SmartPLS) facilitated a robust evaluation of the relationship between incentives and employee performance. The findings underscore the importance of a multifaceted approach to employee motivation. Financial incentives, including salary, bonuses, and compensation, significantly influenced employee performance, highlighting the continued relevance of monetary rewards in

motivating staff. Equally significant were non-financial incentives such as improved working conditions, recognition, and opportunities for personal development, demonstrating a substantial positive impact on employee performance. (Pham, et al., 2024) investigated the linkages among motivation, transformational leadership, person-organisation fit, innovative work behaviour, organisational commitment, and job performance in Vietnam's public sector, drawing on the literature on psychological empowerment and social exchange theory. Analysing data from four hundred and sixty-four (464) individuals at public organisations, the study employs Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Model (PLS-SEM) to reveal significant positive associations between motivation, transformational leadership, person-organisation fit, and the impact of organisational commitment on job performance. The study highlights the pivotal role of person-organisation fit as a mediator in the relation between motivation, transformational leadership, and innovative work behaviour. Additionally, innovative work behaviour, organisational commitment, and psychological empowerment act as mediators in the impact of transformational leadership on job performance. (Fabre, et al., 2024) explored the relationship between motivation and job performance among government personnel in public sector organisations. Specifically, it seeks to understand how various motivational factors influence employee productivity and overall performance in the context of public sector work environments. Motivation theories like Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs propounded in 1943 which are composed of five levels of human needs for survival, and individual's lower-level needs must be satisfied before they can address their higher-level needs. Intrinsic motivation engages a person in an activity for self-satisfaction while extrinsic motivation drives a person to function due to rewards or punishment. This allows foreseeing the incoming demotivator for the personnel and how it affects the performance of the agency where they work. The study used a quantitative research design through a Likert scale questionnaire

research instrument. Descriptive statistics and Multivariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were applied to analyse the data, acknowledging potential biases from personal beliefs, professional background, and participant interaction to enhance the study's reliability. The survey results indicated a balanced gender distribution among respondents, falling in the 26 to 35 age group, and most were identified as permanent government personnel. The overall sentiment toward intrinsic motivation and recognition in the workplace was positive, suggesting a healthy organisational climate and a need for improved recognition practices. (Abd Razak, et al., 2024) explored the inter-relationships among motivation, leadership style, employee satisfaction, and organisational commitment to employee performance. Utilizing a quantitative approach, data were collected from a sample of employees across various public sector organisations, comprising two hundred and eighty-eight (288) respondents. Comprehensive surveys were utilized to gather data regarding employee perceptions and experiences related to the studied constructs. The analysis employed Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to examine the proposed hypotheses, allowing for robust insights into the relationships among constructs and their impact on employee performance. The hypotheses testing results revealed that leadership style, organisational commitment, and employee satisfaction positively influence employee performance, while motivation did not demonstrate a significant effect in this context. These findings indicate that public organisations must focus on enhancing leadership effectiveness and employee commitment to improving service delivery and overall organizational outcomes. (Lee & Na, 2024) explored how COVID-19–induced work intensity and COVID-19–related organisational support influence motivation and job satisfaction. Using survey data from a nationally representative sample of one thousand, four hundred and thirty (1,430) South Korean central government employees collected during the pandemic (May–June 2020), the findings revealed that COVID-19–induced

work intensity is positively associated with motivation, which in turn has a positive association with job satisfaction. It was also revealed through the findings that COVID-19-related organisational support has both direct and indirect associations with job satisfaction through motivation. These findings underscore the importance of organisational support in times of widespread crisis and invite further investigation of motivation during the COVID-19 pandemic using an institutional approach to motivation.

Materials and Methods

The research specifically utilised a Mixed-Methods Approach (Triangulation) that combines (both quantitative and qualitative methods) to interpret the data collected. This study engaged a Mixed-Methods Approach, specifically the Convergent Parallel Design. In this design, quantitative and qualitative data were collected concurrently, analysed separately, and then merged during the interpretation phase to provide a holistic understanding of the multifaceted public service motivation and employee performance spectacle. This method involved systematically categorising and analysing factual/numerical data to

identify recurring themes, patterns, and causal linkages between public service motivation and employee performance. The use of this analytical method ensured that the research captured nuanced insights into how public service motivation are operationalised and their consequent impact on job performance in Delta State. The target population comprised employees of the Delta State Civil Service who served between 2019 and 2024. These included personnel across administrative, technical, and support departments. Based on records from the Office of the Head of Service, the total estimated staff strength within the period was approximately two thousand, one hundred and fifty (2,150). Moreover, a multistage sampling technique was used to ensure representativeness as follows: Firstly, purposive sampling was applied to select key departments most impacted by administrative reforms (e.g., Administration, Finance, and Information Communication and Technology (ICT)). Secondly, the workforce was divided into strata based on job cadre (junior, mid, and senior levels), and finally, proportionate random sampling was used within each stratum to select respondents.

*To determine an appropriate sample size, the study employed Yamane's (1967) formula for sample size determination for a finite population, expressed as: $n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$, where: n = desired sample size, N = total population (2,150), e = margin of error (0.05 for 95% confidence level) $n = 2150 / (1 + 2150(0.05)^2$
 $= 2150 / (1 + 2150(0.0025))$
 $= 2150 / (1 + 5.375)$
 $= 2150 / 6.375$
 $\approx 337.25 = 338$*

To account for non-response and invalid questionnaire, the sample size was increased by 2% (approx. 7 questionnaire). The total quantitative sample size = 345 respondents with eventual incident of 342 (valid responses). Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire designed to measure perceptions of motivation and employee performance. All items were based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree (1)" to "Strongly Agree (5)". A pilot test was conducted with 30 civil servants from excluded departments to

ensure clarity and reliability, yielding Cronbach's alpha values between 0.78 and 0.91 for different sections, indicating strong internal consistency. Secondary data were also reviewed from government circulars, policy memos, union reports, and media sources between 2019 and 2024 to contextualise findings.

Moreover, the instrument was divided into five sections covering: demographics, money (financial incentives), career promotion, digital literacy and capacity building, ethical practices and recognition,

and employee performance outcomes. Also, data were collected and analysed using the (SPSS) in two stages: (i). Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were used to summarise responses and highlight general trends in motivation and performance across the civil service, and (ii). Inferential statistics, specifically One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), was applied to test the study's hypotheses in order to determine whether there are significant differences in employee performance across varying levels of: (i). money (financial incentives), (ii). access to career promotion, (iii). digital

literacy/capacity building initiatives, and (iv). exposure to ethical recognition practices. The decision rule was to reject the null hypothesis (H_0) where the p-value was less than 0.05, indicating a significant difference in performance based on the motivational factor being tested.

The null hypothesis (H_0) for each test stated that there would be no significant difference in mean performance across the groups. The decision rule was to reject the null hypothesis where the p-value was less than 0.05, indicating a statistically significant difference.

Results, Findings and Discussion

The summary of the tables generated from the analysis for each stage are as shown in tables 4.1 to 4.5 below:

Table 4.1: Sample Distribution by Department and Cadre

Department	Estimated Population (N)	Proportional Sample Size (n)	Junior Staff	Middle Staff	Senior Staff	Total per Department
Administration	450	72	18	20	22	60
Finance &Accounts	510	81	20	22	23	65
ICT	300	48	15	18	17	50
Human Resources	420	67	17	19	19	55
Planning	470	75	32	36	44	112
Total	2,150	342	102	115	125	342

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4.2: ANOVA Table for H_{01} : Remuneration and Welfare Initiatives

Money (financial incent) Level_	Mean Performance Score_	Std. Dev._	Sample-Size (N)
Low	3.45	0.55	85
Medium	3.89	0.48	130
High	4.25	0.50	127

Source: Field Survey, 2025

F-value: 7.832 p-value:

0.000

Decision: Reject H_{01}

The findings from the study conducted on the Delta State Civil Service between 2019 and 2024 revealed significant insights into the impact of service motivation on employee performance. In terms of money (financial incentives), the analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated that the levels

of money (financial incentives), had a statistically significant effect on employee performance, with employees receiving higher remuneration exhibiting better performance. Specifically, those in the high money (financial incentives) category had a mean performance score of 4.25, compared

to 3.89 for those in the medium category and 3.45 for those in the low category. The p-value of 0.000 suggested that the null hypothesis (H_{01} : Money (financial incentives) has no significant influence on employee performance) should be rejected. This finding aligns with previous studies, such as those by (Mohamed et al., 2025) and (Said

& Kiki, 2023) which emphasised the critical role of both financial and non-financial incentives in improving employee motivation and performance. These findings confirm the importance of fair and timely financial incentives in enhancing employee output within public sector institutions.

Table 4.3: ANOVA Table for H_{02} : Career Promotion

Career Prom.	Mean Performance Score	Std. Dev. _____	Sample Size (N)
No Access	3.40	0.60	77
Partial Access	3.85	0.52	121
Full Access	4.30	0.46	144

Source: Field Survey, 2025

F-value: 9.214 p-value:
0.000

Decision: Reject H_{02}

The second hypothesis focused on career promotion and its impact on employee performance. The ANOVA results showed a clear relationship between access to career growth and performance. Employees with full access to career promotion scored the highest in terms of performance (mean score of 4.30), followed by those with partial access (3.85), while those with no access recorded the lowest performance score (3.40). The p-value of 0.000 again led to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_{02} : Career

promotion has no significant effect on employee performance). This finding is consistent with research studies by Akintayo & Okafor, (2023) and (Farouk et al., 2024), which highlighted that career promotion, such as promotions and continuous professional development, enhance employee performance and foster greater institutional loyalty. Therefore, career promotion was confirmed as an essential driver of public sector performance in the Delta State Civil Service.

Table 4.4: ANOVA Table for H_{03} : Digital Literacy and Capacity Building Initiatives

Training Received	Mean Performance Score	Std. Dev. _____	Sample Size (N)
No Training	3.50	0.64	88
Some Training	3.95	0.50	119
Extensive Training	4.28	0.45	135

Source: Field Survey, 2025

F-value: 8.721 p-value:
0.000

Decision: Reject H_{03}

The study further examined the influence of Digital literacy and capacity building initiatives on employee performance. The results indicated that employees who received extensive training in technological tools out-performed those who received partial or no training, with the extensive training group scoring an average of 4.28 in

performance. This was in contrast to employees who received some training (mean score of 3.95) and those who received no training (3.50). With a p-value of 0.000, the null hypothesis (H_{03} : Digital literacy and capacity building initiatives have no significant effect on employee performance) was rejected. These findings support the

assertions made by (Degefu & Kifle, 2024) and (Samuel, 2024), who identified the role of digital literacy and capacity building initiatives in enhancing employee performance in public sector organisations.

The results underscore the necessity of continuous capacitybuilding initiatives, especially in the context of evolving digital governance practices.

Table 4.5: ANOVA Table for H₀₄: Ethical Practices and Institutional Recognition

Recognition Level	Mean Performance Score	Std. Dev.	Sample Size (N)
Low	3.38	0.58	81
Moderate	3.92	0.54	124
High	4.33	0.47	137

Source: Field Survey, 2025

F-value: 10.043 p-value:
0.000

Decision: Reject H₀₄

Finally, the analysis on ethical practices and institutional recognition demonstrated a significant positive relationship between these factors and employee performance. Employees who responded in terms of high levels of recognition and adherence to ethical practices achieved the highest performance scores (mean of 4.33), while those with moderate and low levels of recognition scored 3.92 and 3.38, respectively. The p-value of 0.000 led to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H₀₄: Ethical practices and institutional recognition have no significant impact on employee performance). This finding is consistent with studies by (Hudson et al., 2023) and (Nuni & Feika, 2023), which highlighted the importance of ethics and recognition in fostering a positive work environment, leading to higher performance. The results indicate that institutional recognition and the enforcement of ethical standards are crucial to maintaining high levels of employee motivation and performance in the public sector. Additionally, a theoretical approach is applied to enhance the validity of the findings. By linking perspectives from Abraham Maslow's Theory of Motivation, the study provides a multi-dimensional understanding of public service motivation and its implications for job performance. The theory provides a fundamental lens through which employee motivation and performance within an organisation can be understood, particularly focusing on the various levels of human needs, starting with

the most basic needs, which are physiological in nature and ending with the most supposed needs, which are psychological in nature. Maslow's theory revolves around the idea that an individual's unmet needs motivate him to ascend to the hierarchy so that he can satisfy them. Recent empirical studies have further validated the relevance of Abraham Maslow's Motivation Theory in explaining employee behaviours in diverse service sector contexts. For instance, (Liu et al., (2024) found that employees with strong motivation consistently demonstrated higher resilience and task performance even under high-risk conditions. Similarly, (Park & Kim, 2025) established that during periods of systemic disruption such as the COVID-19 pandemic, employees exhibiting higher motivation levels maintained superior job performance and contributed to organisational stability through citizenship behaviours. In the African context, (Alabi & Salami, 2023) observed that Nigerian civil servants with heightened motivation were more committed to organisational goals despite persistent challenges like low remuneration and poor working conditions. The selection of Abraham Maslow's Motivation Theory as the foundational framework for this study is further justified by the nature of the research variables and the study context. This study investigates how money (financial incentives), career promotion, digital literacy/capacity building as well as ethical practices and institutional recognition

influence employee performance in the Delta State Civil Service. All these elements can be meaningfully interpreted through the Abraham Maslow's motivation theory lens— money (financial incentives) relate to sustaining intrinsic motivation amidst economic pressures; career promotion supports a sense of duty and institutional loyalty; digital literacy and capacity building reflects resilience in fulfilling public service duties; and ethical practices align with the civic-oriented values intrinsic to motivation.

Recommendations

Based on these findings, the study recommended the following: (i). Delta State Government should ensure timely payment of salaries, implement equitable reward

structures, and maintain transparency in financial management to reinforce employee trust and motivation, (ii). Civil servants in Delta State should have access to transparent promotion criteria, regular training opportunities, and clear performance metrics. (iii). Comprehensive training programmes should be rolled out by the Delta state Civil Service to improve Information and Communication Technology (ICT) literacy across all cadres, and (iv). Regular ethical training, performance recognition ceremonies, and whistle-blower protections should be institutionalised by the Delta State Civil Service. These efforts will reinforce a culture of accountability, fairness, and moral responsibility within the civil service.

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