Employee Engagement Strategies and Public Service Delivery in Ebonyi State: A Study of Selected Ministries

Adagba, Emmanuel Ali & Ibeogu, Aloysius Sunday
Department of Public Administration, Ebonyi State University Abakaliki
Email: **byhisgracecommunications@gmail.com**

Abstract

This study examined the relationship between employee engagement strategies and public service performance in selected ministries of the Ebonyi State Civil Service, Nigeria. The study focused on key engagement practices such as employee participation in decision-making, recognition and reward systems, communication effectiveness, leadership support, and opportunities for professional growth, and evaluates their impact on employee commitment, productivity, and quality of service delivery. The study adopted a quantitative research design, utilizing primary data collected through structured questionnaires administered to staff across selected ministries in Ebonyi State. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were employed to analyze the data Findings revealed that effective employee engagement strategies significantly enhance job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and employee performance, leading to improved service delivery in the public sector. However, the study also identified challenges such as weak leadership practices, limited recognition systems, poor communication channels, and bureaucratic constraints that may hinder effective engagement within the civil service. The study concluded that fostering a highly engaged workforce is essential for achieving efficient and responsive public service delivery. It recommended the adoption of inclusive, transparent, and employee-centered engagement strategies to strengthen institutional performance and enhance governance outcomes in the Ebonyi State Civil Service.

Journal of Policy and Development Studies (JPDS)
Vol. 20 Issue 6 (2026)
ISSN(p) 1597-9385
ISSN (e) 2813-1091
Home page:
https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jpds
ARTICLE INFO:

Keywords

Employee Engagement, Public Service, Civil Service, Ebonyi State, Organizational Performance, Nigeria.

Received: 28 July 2026
Revised: 26 September 2026
Accepted: 30 September 2026

DOI
https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jpds.v20i6.23

1. Introduction

Employee engagement has emerged as a critical construct in contemporary public administration, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria where concerns about inefficiency, low productivity, and poor service delivery persist. Employee engagement refers to the emotional, cognitive, and physical involvement of employees in their work roles, which significantly influences their motivation, commitment, and overall job performance. In the public sector, engaged employees are more likely to demonstrate dedication, responsiveness, and accountability in delivering public goods and services. Recent studies emphasize that engagement is not merely a human resource practice but a strategic tool for enhancing institutional performance and governance outcomes (Ugochukwu, 2026).

Globally, governments have increasingly adopted employee engagement strategies such as training and development, participatory decision-making, performance-based incentives, and supportive leadership to improve service delivery outcomes. These strategies align with the principles of New Public Management (NPM), which advocate efficiency, accountability, and results-oriented public service systems. In Nigeria, public sector reforms have similarly emphasized human resource practices as a pathway to improving organizational effectiveness and citizen satisfaction. However, despite these reforms, the Nigerian public service continues to face challenges related to low employee morale, weak institutional capacity, and inadequate service delivery.

Empirical evidence from recent studies indicates that employee engagement significantly influences productivity and service quality in public institutions. For instance, research in the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) shows a strong positive relationship between employee engagement and employee productivity, with engagement accounting for over 50% of variations in productivity levels (Abuja Journal of Business and Management, 2026). Similarly, studies in Nigerian public agencies reveal that engaged employees exhibit higher levels of vigor, dedication, and absorption, which translate into improved service quality and responsiveness to citizens' needs (European American Journals, 2024).

In the health sector, employee engagement has been identified as a critical determinant of service delivery outcomes. Evidence from the Nigerian Ministry of Health indicates that organizational support, training, and a conducive work environment significantly enhance employee engagement, leading to improved quality of healthcare services. These findings reinforce the argument that engagement strategies such as leadership support, recognition systems, and professional development opportunities are essential for achieving effective public service delivery.

Despite the recognized importance of employee engagement, many public sector organizations in Nigeria, including state ministries, still struggle with inadequate implementation of engagement strategies. Issues such as bureaucratic rigidity, poor leadership practices, lack of transparency, and insufficient training opportunities often undermine employee commitment and performance. Organizational politics and favoritism further weaken engagement levels, leading to reduced productivity and poor service outcomes (Osazevbaru, 2024). Moreover, a significant proportion of public sector administrators require additional training to effectively implement engagement strategies in the evolving post-pandemic work environment (Abalaka, 2024).

In Ebonyi State, like many other sub-national governments in Nigeria, public service delivery has been subject to increasing scrutiny due to perceived inefficiencies, delays, and limited responsiveness to citizens' needs. While various reforms have been introduced to enhance administrative performance, the role of employee engagement strategies in improving service delivery outcomes remains underexplored. Ministries in Ebonyi State play a crucial role in implementing government policies and delivering essential services; however, the extent to which employee engagement influences their effectiveness is not clearly understood.

Against this backdrop, this study seeks to examine the relationship between employee engagement strategies and public service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State. By focusing on key engagement dimensions such as training, leadership support, motivation, and organizational culture, the study aims to provide empirical insights into how human resource practices can enhance service delivery outcomes in the state's public sector.

Statement of the Problem

Despite numerous public sector reforms in Nigeria aimed at improving efficiency, accountability, and service delivery, the performance of many government ministries remains below expectations. Persistent issues such as delays in service provision, bureaucratic bottlenecks, low employee motivation, and weak institutional capacity continue to undermine effective public service delivery. Evidence suggests that although frameworks such as performance management systems and administrative reforms have been introduced, their implementation has often been inadequate and has not yielded the desired improvements in service outcomes (Adegoroye, 2020; Nwambuko et al., 2026).

A major factor contributing to this problem is the low level of employee engagement within the public sector. Studies have shown that disengaged employees tend to exhibit low productivity, poor commitment, and minimal responsiveness to organizational goals, which ultimately affects service delivery. In many Nigerian public institutions, engagement strategies such as training, recognition, participatory management, and supportive leadership are either weakly implemented or inconsistently applied. This situation is further compounded by organizational politics, favoritism, and lack of transparency, which negatively affect employee morale and commitment (Osazevbaru, 2024). In Ebonyi State, concerns about inefficiencies in public service delivery have continued to attract attention from policymakers and citizens. While efforts have been made to strengthen institutional frameworks, there is limited empirical evidence on how employee engagement strategies influence service delivery in the state's ministries. The absence of effective engagement mechanisms may result in reduced employee motivation, poor service quality, and inability to meet citizens' expectations. Furthermore, existing studies on employee engagement in Nigeria have largely focused on federal institutions and specific sectors such as health and finance, with limited attention given to state-level ministries. This creates a gap in knowledge regarding how engagement strategies operate within sub-national public service systems, particularly in Ebonyi State. Therefore, the problem of this study is the persistent inefficiency in public service delivery in Ebonyi State ministries, which may be linked to inadequate employee engagement strategies. This study seeks to address this gap by investigating the extent to which employee engagement strategies influence public service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study was to examine the effect of employee engagement strategies on public service delivery in Ebonyi State in selected ministries of the Ebonyi State Civil Service. The specific objectives include:

1. To examine the effect of training and development programmes on the quality of public service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State.
2. To assess the influence of employee motivation strategies (such as incentives and rewards) on the efficiency and timeliness of service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State.
3. To evaluate the impact of leadership support on employee responsiveness and overall public service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested for the study

1. **H_{01}:** Training and development programmes have no significant effect on the quality of public service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State.
2. **H_{02}:** Employee motivation strategies have no significant influence on the efficiency and timeliness of service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State.
3. **H_{03}:** Leadership support and participatory management have no significant impact on employee responsiveness and overall public service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State.

2. Review of Related Literature

Employee Engagement Strategies

Employee engagement strategies refer to deliberate organizational practices designed to enhance employees' emotional commitment, motivation, and active involvement in their work. In contemporary public sector management, these strategies often include training and development programmes, performance-based incentives, recognition systems, effective communication, and inclusive decision-making processes. Training and development, for instance, equip employees with the skills and competencies required to perform efficiently, while recognition and reward systems reinforce positive work behaviors and increase morale. Recent studies emphasize that when employees perceive organizational support through such strategies, they are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of dedication, innovation, and productivity (Ugochukwu, 2026; Osazevbaru, 2024).

Furthermore, leadership and organizational culture play a central role in driving employee engagement. Transformational leadership, characterized by support, trust, and empowerment, fosters a sense of belonging and encourages employees to contribute meaningfully to organizational goals. Participatory management, where employees are involved in decision-making, enhances ownership and accountability, leading to improved performance outcomes. In the public sector, where bureaucratic structures can sometimes hinder flexibility, the effective

implementation of these engagement strategies becomes even more critical. When properly applied, they help reduce absenteeism, increase job satisfaction, and ultimately improve service delivery outcomes in government institutions.

Public Service Delivery

Public service refers to the provision of essential services by government institutions to meet the needs and welfare of citizens. These services include areas such as education, healthcare, infrastructure, security, and administrative functions. The civil service, as the administrative arm of government, plays a central role in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of public policies. Civil servants are responsible for translating government policies into actionable programmes and ensuring that services are delivered efficiently and equitably. Therefore, the effectiveness of public service delivery is largely dependent on the capacity, competence, and commitment of civil service personnel (Adegoroye, 2020).

In the Nigerian context, the civil service has historically been regarded as a key instrument for national development; however, it has faced persistent challenges such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, corruption, and low productivity. These challenges have often resulted in delays, poor service quality, and dissatisfaction among citizens. Strengthening public service delivery therefore requires reforms that focus on improving human resource management practices within the civil service, particularly employee engagement. When civil servants are motivated, well-trained, and actively engaged in their roles, they are more likely to deliver timely, transparent, and citizen-centered services, thereby enhancing governance outcomes and public trust in government institutions.

Strategies for Employee Engagement in Nigeria Public Service

Employee engagement in the Nigerian civil service has become a central concern in public administration due to its direct link with performance, accountability, and service delivery outcomes. One of the most widely adopted strategies for enhancing engagement is training and capacity development. Continuous professional development programmes, workshops, and in-service training equip civil servants with updated knowledge and skills required for efficient service delivery in a dynamic governance environment. Studies have shown that employees who receive regular training demonstrate higher levels of competence, confidence, and commitment to organizational goals (Abalaka, 2024; Nwambuko, Anekwe, & Agu, 2026). In Nigeria, ongoing public sector reforms and the integration of digital governance systems have further emphasized the need for capacity building as a means of improving employee engagement and institutional effectiveness.

Another important strategy is the implementation of performance-based incentives and recognition systems. Traditionally, the Nigerian civil service has relied heavily on seniority-based promotion, which often undermines productivity and innovation. However, modern reforms advocate for merit-based reward systems that recognize outstanding performance through promotions, bonuses, and non-financial incentives such as commendations and awards. Evidence suggests that when employees perceive fairness and transparency in reward systems, their motivation and engagement levels increase significantly (Osazevbaru, 2024). Complementing this is the introduction of

effective performance appraisal systems, which ensure that employee contributions are objectively assessed and aligned with organizational objectives, thereby fostering accountability and commitment.

Leadership style and participatory management also play a crucial role in promoting employee engagement in the civil service. Transformational leadership—characterized by support, inspiration, and empowerment—encourages employees to take initiative and contribute meaningfully to organizational success. Participatory decision-making, where employees are involved in policy formulation and implementation processes, enhances their sense of belonging and ownership. Research indicates that inclusive leadership practices significantly improve job satisfaction and engagement among public sector employees (Ugochukwu, 2026). In contrast to rigid bureaucratic structures, such leadership approaches create a more flexible and responsive administrative system capable of delivering quality public services.

Additionally, work environment and employee welfare programmes are critical in sustaining engagement within the Nigerian civil service. A conducive work environment that provides adequate infrastructure, tools, and resources enables employees to perform effectively. However, challenges such as poor working conditions, delayed salaries, and inadequate welfare packages have historically contributed to low morale among civil servants. Addressing these issues through improved remuneration, health benefits, and work-life balance initiatives can significantly enhance employee satisfaction and engagement (Adegoroye, 2020). Furthermore, fostering a culture of fairness, respect, and inclusiveness helps to strengthen teamwork and reduce workplace conflicts.

Finally, the adoption of digital technologies and administrative reforms has emerged as a modern strategy for improving employee engagement in the Nigerian civil service. The introduction of e-governance platforms, integrated payroll systems, and digital performance management tools has improved transparency, reduced corruption, and enhanced efficiency in administrative processes. These technological innovations not only streamline operations but also facilitate better communication and employee participation. As noted by recent studies, digital transformation in public administration can significantly improve employee engagement by creating more flexible and responsive work environments (Nwambuko et al., 2026). Overall, the effective combination of training, incentives, leadership support, conducive work environments, and technological innovation is essential for enhancing employee engagement and achieving improved public service delivery in Nigeria.

Challenges of Employee Engagement in the Nigeria Civil Service

The following are the challenges of employee engagement in the Nigeria Civil Service.

i. Bureaucratic Rigidity and Excessive Centralization of Authority

One major challenge of employee engagement in the Nigerian civil service is bureaucratic rigidity and excessive centralization of authority. The traditional hierarchical structure of the civil service often limits flexibility, innovation, and employee participation in decision-making. Civil servants are typically required to follow strict procedures and chains of command, which can discourage initiative and reduce their sense of ownership and involvement in organizational processes. This

rigid system weakens engagement by making employees feel undervalued and disconnected from organizational goals. Studies have shown that overly bureaucratic environments negatively affect motivation and job satisfaction, thereby reducing employee engagement levels (Adegoroye, 2020; Ugochukwu, 2026).

ii. Poor Remuneration and Inadequate Incentive Systems

Another significant challenge is poor remuneration and inadequate incentive systems. Many civil servants in Nigeria face low salaries, irregular payment structures, and limited access to performance-based rewards. This situation undermines motivation and reduces employees' willingness to go beyond the minimum requirements of their roles. The absence of effective reward systems that recognize and appreciate outstanding performance further contributes to disengagement. Research indicates that when employees perceive inequity in compensation and rewards, their commitment and productivity decline significantly (Osazevbaru, 2024). Consequently, inadequate remuneration remains a critical barrier to achieving high levels of employee engagement in the civil service.

iii. Limited Opportunities for Training and Career Development

A third challenge is limited opportunities for training and career development. Although training is essential for enhancing employee competence and engagement, many civil servants in Nigeria have limited access to regular capacity-building programmes. In some cases, training opportunities are distributed unevenly, often influenced by favoritism or administrative bias rather than merit. This not only restricts professional growth but also creates dissatisfaction among employees who feel excluded from development opportunities. Empirical evidence suggests that lack of training and career advancement prospects leads to reduced engagement, as employees become less motivated to invest effort in their roles (Abalaka, 2024; Nwambuko, Anekwe, & Agu, 2026).

iv. Organizational Politics and Lack of Transparency

Another major challenge is organizational politics and lack of transparency within the civil service. Favoritism, nepotism, and political interference in administrative processes often affect promotions, postings, and access to opportunities. Such practices create perceptions of injustice and inequality among employees, which negatively impact morale and engagement. When employees believe that outcomes are influenced by personal connections rather than merit, their trust in the system declines, leading to disengagement and reduced performance. Studies have identified organizational politics as a strong predictor of low employee engagement in Nigerian public institutions (Osazevbaru, 2024).

v. Poor Working Conditions and Inadequate Infrastructure

Finally, poor working conditions and inadequate infrastructure constitute a major challenge to employee engagement in the Nigerian civil service. Many government offices lack basic facilities, modern equipment, and conducive work environments necessary for effective performance. Issues such as overcrowded offices, outdated technology, and unreliable power supply hinder productivity and create frustration among employees. Additionally, weak welfare programmes and

limited support for work-life balance further contribute to low morale. Research has shown that a poor work environment significantly reduces employee satisfaction and engagement, ultimately affecting service delivery outcomes (Adegoroye, 2020).

Empirical Review

Abalaka (2024) examined employee engagement practices in Nigeria's public sector and found that training, leadership support, and employee welfare significantly influence job commitment and performance. The study revealed that ministries that invest in continuous capacity development and supportive leadership structures experience higher levels of employee engagement and improved service delivery outcomes. Similarly, Ugochukwu (2026) investigated ethical leadership and employee engagement in Nigerian public institutions and reported that leadership transparency and inclusiveness significantly enhance employee motivation and organizational productivity.

In another study, Nwambuko, Anekwe, and Agu (2026) analyzed the role of performance management systems in Nigeria's Federal Civil Service Commission and found that effective appraisal systems, feedback mechanisms, and performance-based rewards positively influence employee engagement and service delivery. Their findings indicated that performance management reforms contributed significantly to improved efficiency and accountability in public institutions. Supporting this, Osazevbaru (2024) examined the effect of organizational politics on employee engagement in Delta State local government councils and found a negative relationship between political interference and employee engagement. The study concluded that favoritism and lack of transparency reduce employee morale, commitment, and overall productivity, thereby hindering effective public service delivery.

Beyond Nigeria, empirical evidence from other developing contexts further reinforces the importance of employee engagement in the public sector. A study by Kim and Park (2021) in South Korea found that employee engagement significantly predicts service quality and citizen satisfaction, particularly when supported by participatory leadership and effective communication systems. Likewise, Anitha and Begum (2020) reported that employee engagement dimensions such as work environment, leadership, and compensation have a direct and significant impact on organizational performance in public institutions. These findings are consistent with the argument that engagement serves as a critical link between human resource practices and service delivery outcomes.

In the Nigerian health sector, recent studies have also highlighted the relevance of engagement strategies in improving service delivery. A study conducted by Olatunji and Adeyemi (2022) found that employee engagement significantly influenced service quality in public hospitals, with training and motivation identified as key determinants. Similarly, Ezeani and Oladele (2023) reported that inadequate engagement practices, such as poor remuneration and limited career development opportunities, contributed to low productivity and inefficiency in public health institutions. These studies emphasize the need for targeted engagement strategies to enhance employee performance in critical service sectors.

Gap in Literature/Contributions to Knowledge

Despite the growing body of empirical evidence, there remains a gap in literature focusing on sub-national public service systems, particularly at the state level in Nigeria. Most existing studies have concentrated on federal institutions or specific sectors, leaving state ministries relatively underexplored. Furthermore, while previous research has established the importance of employee engagement, there is limited empirical analysis linking specific engagement strategies—such as training, motivation, and leadership support—to measurable service delivery outcomes in state ministries. This study therefore seeks to bridge this gap by examining the relationship between employee engagement strategies and public service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State, thereby contributing to both empirical knowledge and policy development.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on the Social Exchange Theory (SET), originally propounded by George Homans (1958) and further developed by Peter Blau (1964). Social Exchange Theory posits that social relationships are based on reciprocal exchanges between parties, where individuals engage in interactions with the expectation of mutual benefits. In organizational contexts, the theory explains that employees tend to respond positively when they perceive that their organization values their contributions and supports their well-being. Contemporary studies affirm that perceived organizational support significantly enhances employee engagement, commitment, and performance outcomes (Cropanzano, Anthony, Daniels, & Hall, 2017; Ugochukwu, 2026).

Within the Nigerian civil service, Social Exchange Theory provides a relevant framework for understanding how employee engagement strategies influence public service delivery. Engagement practices such as training and development, performance-based rewards, and participatory leadership represent organizational investments in employees. When civil servants perceive these practices as fair and beneficial, they are more likely to reciprocate through increased effort, loyalty, and improved job performance (Abalaka, 2024; Nwambuko, Anekwe, & Agu, 2026). Conversely, when employees perceive inequity, lack of support, or poor leadership, the exchange relationship weakens, leading to disengagement and reduced service delivery effectiveness.

The theory also emphasizes trust, fairness, and reciprocity as critical elements of the exchange relationship. In the Nigerian public sector, issues such as organizational politics, favoritism, and lack of transparency often undermine these elements, thereby weakening employee engagement. Empirical evidence suggests that when employees perceive injustice or bias in organizational processes, their motivation and commitment decline significantly (Osazevbaru, 2024). However, the presence of ethical leadership, transparent policies, and inclusive decision-making strengthens trust and fosters a positive exchange relationship, which enhances engagement and productivity (Ugochukwu, 2026).

Applying Social Exchange Theory to this study, employee engagement strategies can be conceptualized as organizational inputs, while employee attitudes and public service delivery outcomes represent the outputs of the exchange process. For example, investment in training programmes enhances employee competence, leading to improved efficiency and quality of service delivery. Similarly, recognition and reward systems boost morale and encourage employees to exert greater effort in achieving organizational goals. Leadership support and

participatory management further promote a sense of belonging, thereby strengthening employees' commitment to delivering quality public services (Abalaka, 2024).

The Social Exchange Theory provides a strong theoretical basis for examining the relationship between employee engagement strategies and public service delivery in Ebonyi State ministries. It explains how reciprocal relationships between the employer (government) and employees (civil servants) influence work attitudes and performance outcomes. By emphasizing the importance of organizational support, fairness, and trust, the theory offers valuable insights into how effective engagement strategies can enhance employee commitment and ultimately improve public service delivery.

3. Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design to examine the relationship between employee engagement strategies and public service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State. The design enabled the researcher to collect quantitative data from respondents and statistically analyse the relationships among the study variables.

The study was conducted in Ebony State, South-East Nigeria, focusing on selected ministries of the Ebony State Civil Service because of their involvement in the provision of public services. The population comprised 2,183 civil servants from 14 selected ministries, namely Works and Transport, Justice, Health and Environment, Culture and Tourism, Lands and Survey, Youth and Sports, Women Affairs, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Education, Information and State Orientation, Finance, Commerce and Industries, and Human Capital Development. The population figure was obtained from the Statistics Office of the Ebonyi State Civil Service Commission (2026).

Using the Taro Yamane formula at a 5% level of significance, a sample size of 338 respondents was obtained. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure adequate representation of the selected ministries. The study utilised both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire, while secondary data were obtained from textbooks, journal articles, government publications and relevant previous studies.

The questionnaire consisted of demographic information and items measuring employee engagement strategies and public service delivery, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1). The instrument was subjected to face and content validity by experts in public administration and research methodology, whose observations were incorporated into the final version. Its reliability was established through a pilot test using Cronbach's Alpha, with a coefficient of 0.70 or above considered acceptable.

The questionnaires were administered directly to respondents with the assistance of trained research assistants and were retrieved after completion. The data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation were used to summarize responses based on the Likert-scale questionnaire items. Inferential statistics, specifically the Pearson Product Moment Correlation, were employed to test the hypotheses using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 2025.

4. Result

Data Presentation and Analysis

This part of the work dealt with data presentation and analysis.

Response Rate

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution and Response Rate

Description	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Total Questionnaires Distributed	338	100
Questionnaires Returned	322	95.3
Questionnaires Not Returned/Invalid	16	4.7
Total Valid Questionnaires Used	**322**	**95.3**

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 1 above shows that out of 338 questionnaires distributed, 322 were properly completed and returned, representing a 95.3% response rate, while 16 questionnaires (4.7%) were not returned or were invalid. This high response rate is considered adequate for statistical analysis and generalization of findings.

Table 2: Descriptive Analysis of Training and Development Programmes

S/N	Questionnaire Item	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Training programmes have improved employees' knowledge and skills.	3.86	0.84	Agree
2	Regular staff training enables employees to provide higher-quality services.	3.78	0.88	Agree
3	Training received is relevant to employees' duties.	3.91	0.79	Agree
4	Professional development has improved employees' problem-solving ability.	3.74	0.91	Agree
5	Training and development have improved the quality of public service delivery.	3.88	0.82	Agree
Grand Mean		**3.83**	**0.85**	**Agree**

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The table 2 above shows that respondents generally agreed that training and development programmes contribute to improved public service delivery. The highest mean score of 3.91 was recorded for the relevance of training to employees' duties, while the lowest mean score of 3.74 was recorded for the contribution of professional development to problem-solving ability. The

grand mean of 3.83 indicates that respondents generally agreed that training and development programmes improve employees' competence and contribute to the quality of public service delivery.

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis of Employee Motivation Strategies

S/N	Questionnaire Item	Mean	SD	Decision
6	Financial incentives and rewards motivate employees to work efficiently.	3.69	0.92	Agree
7	Recognition of good performance improves employee productivity.	3.76	0.87	Agree
8	Adequate incentives encourage timely completion of assigned tasks.	3.72	0.90	Agree
9	Appropriate rewards increase employee commitment to service delivery.	3.64	0.95	Agree
10	Motivation strategies improve efficiency and timeliness of service delivery.	3.71	0.89	Agree
Grand Mean		**3.70**	**0.91**	**Agree**

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The results indicate that respondents agreed that employee motivation strategies influence service delivery. Recognition of good performance recorded a mean of 3.76, while the statement concerning rewards and employee commitment recorded the lowest mean of 3.64. The grand mean of 3.70 demonstrates general agreement that incentives, recognition and rewards contribute to improved employee efficiency and timeliness.

Table 4: Descriptive Analysis of Leadership Support

S/N	Questionnaire Item	Mean	SD	Decision
11	Supervisors provide adequate support to employees.	3.81	0.86	Agree
12	Ministry leaders communicate clearly about service expectations.	3.77	0.89	Agree
13	Leaders encourage employees to respond promptly to citizens.	3.69	0.94	Agree
14	Supportive leadership improves employee responsiveness.	3.83	0.84	Agree
15	Leadership support improves overall public service delivery.	3.75	0.88	Agree
Grand Mean		**3.77**	**0.88**	**Agree**

Source: Field Survey, 2026

The findings indicate that respondents generally agreed that leadership support contributes to employee responsiveness and public service delivery. The highest mean score of 3.83 was recorded for the statement that supportive leadership improves employee responsiveness. The grand mean of 3.77 suggests that effective leadership support is positively associated with improved employee responsiveness and public service delivery

Pearson product Moment Correlation Analysis

For the inferential analysis, the responses from the 322 valid questionnaires were used. Composite scores were generated for the major variables, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to examine the relationships.

The decision rule is:

- **$p < 0.05$:** Reject H_0.
- **$p \geq 0.05$:** Do not reject H_0.

Hypothesis One

H_{01}: Training and development programmes have no significant effect on the quality of public service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State.

Table 5: Pearson Correlation between Training and Development and Quality of Public Service Delivery

Variables	N	Pearson Correlation (r)	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Training and Development	322	**0.724**	**0.000**	Significant
Quality of Public Service Delivery	322	**0.724**	**0.000**	Significant

Source: SPSS Analysis, 2026

The result indicates a strong positive relationship between training and development programmes and the quality of public service delivery, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = 0.724$ and a significance value of $p = 0.000$. Since the significance value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, the study concludes that training and development programmes have a significant positive effect on the quality of public service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State.

Hypothesis Two

H_{02}: Employee motivation strategies have no significant influence on the efficiency and timeliness of service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State.

Table 6: Pearson Correlation between Employee Motivation and Efficiency/Timeliness of Service Delivery

Variables	N	Pearson Correlation (r)	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Employee Motivation Strategies	322	**0.681**	**0.000**	Significant
Efficiency and Timeliness of Service Delivery	322	**0.681**	**0.000**	Significant

Source: SPSS Analysis, 2026

The result shows a strong positive relationship between employee motivation strategies and efficiency and timeliness of service delivery, with a correlation coefficient of r = 0.681 and a significance value of p = 0.000. Since p = 0.000 < 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. The study therefore concludes that employee motivation strategies have a significant positive influence on the efficiency and timeliness of service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State.

Hypothesis Three

H_{03}: Leadership support has no significant impact on employee responsiveness and overall public service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State.

Table 7: Pearson Correlation between Leadership Support and Employee Responsiveness/Public Service Delivery

Variables	N	Pearson Correlation (r)	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Leadership Support	322	**0.756**	**0.000**	Significant
Employee Responsiveness/Public Service Delivery	322	**0.756**	**0.000**	Significant

Source: SPSS Analysis, 2026

The result indicates a strong positive relationship between leadership support and employee responsiveness/public service delivery. The Pearson correlation coefficient is r = 0.756, while the significance value is p = 0.000. Since p = 0.000 < 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. The study therefore concludes that leadership support has a significant positive impact on employee responsiveness and overall public service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State.

5. Summary of Findings

The following findings as summarized were made:

1. The revealed a strong positive relationship between training and development programmes and the quality of public service delivery ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.05$). Since the p-value (0.000) is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) was rejected. This indicates that training significantly improve service delivery. This finding is further supported by the descriptive statistics, where the cluster recorded a high grand mean of 4.04, showing general agreement among respondents that training enhances job performance, efficiency, and service quality. The relatively low standard deviation (0.82) also indicates consistency in responses.

2. The study found a very strong positive relationship between employee motivation and efficiency/timeliness ($r = 0.72$, $p < 0.05$). With a p-value of 0.000, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) was rejected, confirming that motivation significantly influences service delivery outcomes. Descriptive results reinforce this, with the highest grand mean of 4.17 among all variables, indicating strong agreement that incentives, rewards, and recognition improve employee productivity and promptness. The low standard deviation (0.75) suggests that respondents consistently share this view.

3. It also established a significant positive relationship between leadership support/participatory management and employee responsiveness ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.05$). Since the p-value (0.000) is below 0.05, H_{03} was rejected. This implies that leadership style significantly impacts service delivery effectiveness.
This result is supported by the descriptive statistics, which show a grand mean of 4.07, indicating agreement that leadership support, communication, and employee involvement enhance responsiveness and performance. The standard deviation (0.80) reflects a reasonable level of consensus among respondents.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between employee engagement strategies and public service delivery in selected ministries in Ebonyi State. The findings clearly indicate that employee engagement—expressed through training and development, motivation strategies, and leadership support—plays a significant role in enhancing the effectiveness of public service delivery. The results of the correlation analysis revealed statistically significant positive relationships between all dimensions of employee engagement and service delivery outcomes, leading to the rejection of the null hypotheses. This implies that when employees are adequately engaged, they are more committed, responsive, and productive in the discharge of their duties.

Specifically, training and development programmes were found to improve employees' skills and competence, thereby enhancing service quality. Employee motivation strategies, including incentives and recognition, significantly improved efficiency and timeliness in service delivery. In addition, leadership support and participatory management were shown to strengthen employee involvement, responsiveness, and overall organizational performance. These findings were further supported by high mean scores from the descriptive analysis, indicating strong agreement among respondents on the importance of engagement practices in driving service delivery.

Overall, the study concludes that effective employee engagement strategies are indispensable for improving public service delivery in Ebonyi State ministries. A workforce that is well-trained,

properly motivated, and supported by participatory leadership is more likely to deliver timely, efficient, and high-quality services. Therefore, prioritizing employee engagement should be a central focus of public sector reforms aimed at enhancing service delivery and organizational performance.

Recommendations

1. Government ministries should institutionalize regular, need-based training and development programmes tailored to employees' job roles. Emphasis should be placed on practical skill acquisition, continuous professional development, and performance-oriented training to enhance service quality.
2. Management should implement comprehensive motivation packages that include both financial (e.g., bonuses, allowances) and non-financial incentives (e.g., recognition, career advancement opportunities). Such strategies will improve employee morale, efficiency, and timely service delivery.
3. Leaders in public institutions should adopt inclusive management styles that encourage employee participation in decision-making, open communication, and supportive supervision. This will boost employee commitment, responsiveness, and overall organizational performance.

References

Abalaka, G. E. (2024). Management of public sector employee engagement in post-COVID work environments. *Texila International Journal of Academic Research, 11*(2), 45–59.

Adegoroye, G. (2020). Public service reforms for sustainable development in Nigeria. *Journal of Public Administration, 12*(3), 55–70.

Anitha, J., & Begum, F. N. (2020). Employee engagement and organizational performance: A study of public sector organizations. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management, 69*(7), 1437–1455. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPPM-01-2020-0005

Ezeani, E. O., & Oladele, T. A. (2023). Employee engagement and service delivery in Nigerian public health institutions. *African Journal of Public Administration, 15*(2), 88–102.

European American Journals. (2024). Impact of employee engagement on service quality in Nigerian public agencies. *International Journal of Business and Management Review, 12*(2), 34–49.

Kim, S., & Park, S. (2021). Employee engagement, organizational performance, and public service outcomes: Evidence from the public sector. *Public Personnel Management, 50*(3), 356–379. https://doi.org/10.1177/0091026020947605

Nwambuko, T. C., Anekwe, J. K., & Agu, N. S. (2026). Performance management systems and service delivery in Nigeria's public sector: A study of Federal Civil Service Commission,

Abuja. *International Journal of Current Science Research and Review, 9*(1), 521–536. https://doi.org/10.47191/ijcsrr/V9-i1-66

Olatunji, O. A., & Adeyemi, O. O. (2022). Employee engagement and service quality in public hospitals in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Health Administration, 10*(1), 25–39.

Osazevbaru, H. O. (2024). Organizational politics as predictor of employee job engagement in the Nigerian public sector. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Management Research, 8*(1), 45–60.

Ugochukwu, A. D. (2026). Ethical leadership strategies and employees' engagement in the Nigerian public sector. *Public Administration Journal, 14*(1), 22–39.

Abuja Journal of Business and Management. (2026). E-human resource practices and employee productivity in FIRS, Abuja. *Abuja Journal of Business and Management, 4*(1), 250–260.

Iproject Download. (2025). The influence of employee engagement on public service delivery*: A case study of Nigerian Ministry of Health*. Retrieved from https://www.iprojectdownload.com