

Effects of Organisational Commitment and Work Engagement on Employee Performance in The Uganda Public Service

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the impact of organizational commitment and work engagement on employee performance within the Uganda Public Service. The study was underpinned by two theories namely; Herzberg's Two-Factor theory and Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of needs theory. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design and adopted quantitative method approach where quantitative data was collected through a validated questionnaire. The study used simple random sampling. The researcher used the Slovene formula to determine the sample size. A sample size of 358 employees was drawn from a target population of 3429 civil servants who were deployed by Ministry of Public Service in six ministries. The study used Pragmatism Philosophy because it supports empirical orientation and encourages researchers to use quantitative data to develop actionable insights. Regression Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) were used to examine the interplay between organizational commitment, work engagement, and employee performance in the Uganda Public Service. The study findings showed a positive and significant effect between employee work engagement and employee performance. The study also showed a positive effect between organisational commitment and employee performance. The study recommended the implementation of comprehensive and targeted human resource management strategies and initiatives within the Uganda Public Service. These initiatives should aim to cultivate a culture of commitment and engagement among employees, ultimately leading to significant improvements in employee performance. For further studies, the study recommends investigation of the role of leadership styles and their impact on organizational commitment, work engagement, and employee performance within the Uganda Public Service.

Keywords: employee performance, organisational commitment, work engagement.

INTRODUCTION

Employee performance is a crucial factor for the success and growth of any organization, including the public sector. In the context of the Uganda Public Service, understanding the determinants of employee performance is of utmost importance. Ghalem *et al.* (2016), asserted that scholars and management practitioners define employee performance differently without agreeing on one single definition. For example, Jakada *et al.* (2020) stated that employee performance is about an employee achieving the expected performance standards of an organization. According to Anitha, (2014), employee performance is described as outcomes achieved and accomplishments made at work by an employee.

It has been observed that different scholars and management practitioners define employee performance differently without agreeing on one single definition (Ghalem *et al.*, 2016). For example, Jakada *et al.* (2020) assert that employee performance is about an employee achieving the expected performance standards of an organization. Pradhan and Jena, (2017), assert that employee performance is about an individual employee or group of employees, exerting the required effort on the job, to enable their organisation to attain results that contribute towards the fulfilment of the organization's vision. Furthermore, employee performance was looked at as outcomes achieved and accomplishments made at work by an employee (Anitha, 2014). According to Lipuku *et al.* (2022), employee performance is defined as how employees fulfil their duties and complete the tasks assigned to them at their workplace on time. Otoo and Mishra, (2018) looked at employee performance as being associated with doing work that is measured by looking at quantity, quality, efficiency, effectiveness and timeliness of output of the completed work, together with the employee's attendance on the job. In this study, employee performance in the Uganda Public Service was considered to be what a civil servant is paid to do in the Uganda Public Service. Employee performance was assessed based on task completion, work quality, quantity, effort, planning, creativity, efficiency, and effectiveness in achieving job responsibilities.

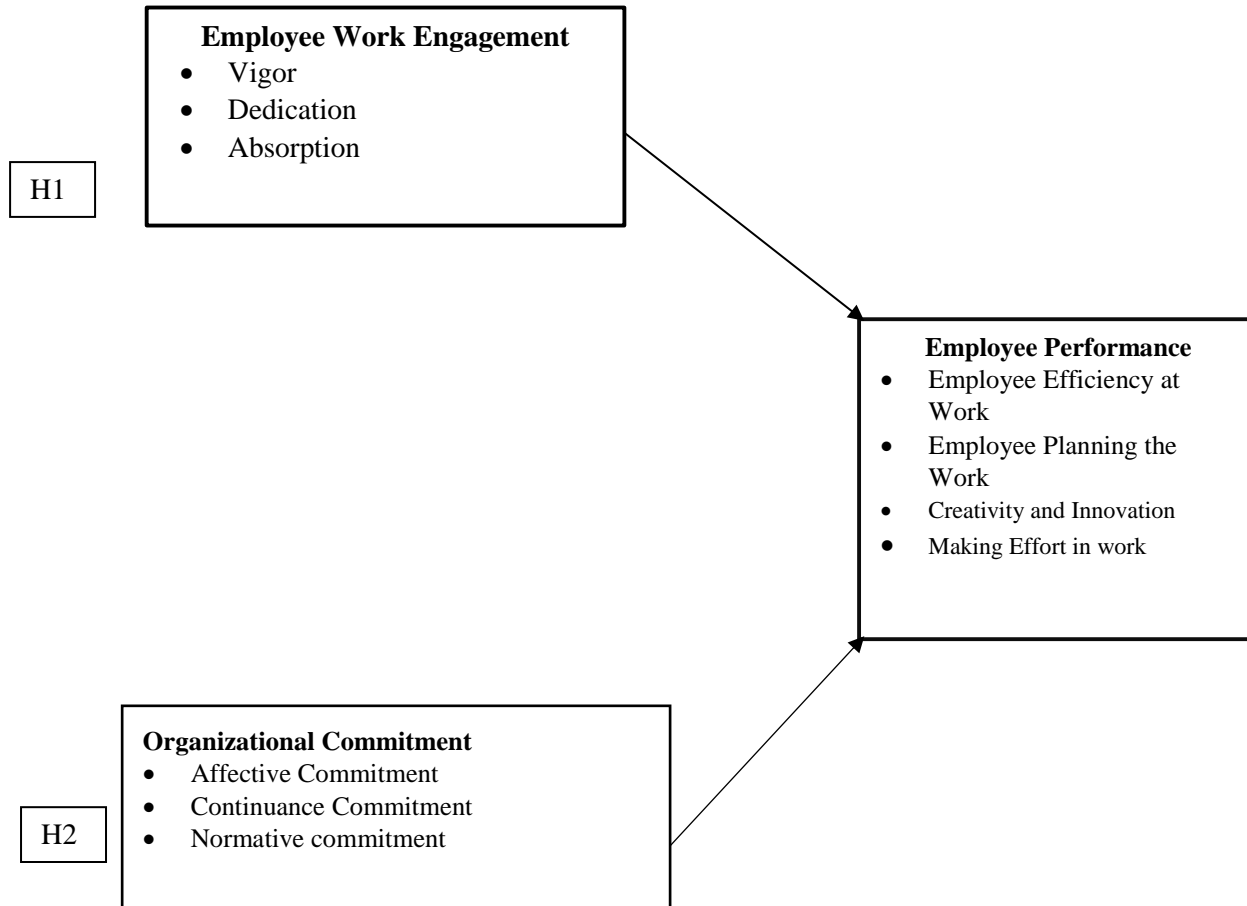
The factors that have gained significant attention in recent years about influencing employee performance include organizational commitment and work engagement (Nabhan&Munajat2023), although not much has been studied about the Uganda situation. The relationship between organizational commitment, work engagement and employee performance has been widely studied across various industries and sectors worldwide although not many studies have been carried out in Uganda. According to Qaisar *et al.* (2012), organizational commitment was defined as a psychological means that motivates and encourages employees to work hard for their organization by adopting the values of the organization that lead to effective organisational productivity. On the other hand, Aktar and Pangil, (2018) described employee work engagement as the extent to which an employee is physically involved in the work, cognitively attentive and emotionally connected towards one's work. Schaufeli *et al.* (2002) identified the fundamental elements of employee engagement and characterized it as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption.

Both organizational commitment and work engagement have been found to have a profound impact on employee attitudes, behaviours, and ultimately, their performance (Tarmizi & Anggian, 2022). It is therefore crucial to investigate the relationship between those factors and employee performance within the specific context of the Uganda Public Service. This study explored and analysed the existing literature with empirical evidence on organizational commitment, work engagement, and employee performance within the Uganda Public Service context. By reviewing previous research findings and conducting a comprehensive analysis, this study provided a clearer understanding of the relationships between organizational commitment, work engagement, and employee performance within the Uganda Public Service.

Objective

The study was set out to establish the effect of employee work engagement and examine the influence of organisational commitment on employees' performance in the Uganda public service.

The Conceptual Framework for employee work engagement, Organisational commitment, and employee's performance



Source: Constructed by the researcher with some adaptations from; (Krishnaveni & Monica, 2018; Sattar *et al.*, 2015; Tabouli *et al.*, 2016; Otoo & Mishra, 2018).

The conceptual framework illustrates that both employee work engagement and employee organizational commitment have the potential to directly impact employee performance. This implies that employee work engagement and organizational commitment serve as positive factors influencing employee performance, as indicated by arrows H1 and H2. Consequently, enhancing employee work engagement and bolstering employee organizational commitment is likely to result in improved employee performance and vice versa.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Theoretical Perspective

This literature review provides an overview of the theories that guided the present study and the relevant literature in connection with it. The study was primarily grounded in two theories: Herzberg's Two-Factor theory and Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory.

Herzberg's Two-Factor theory, originally developed by Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman in 1959 as mentioned by House and Wigdor in 1967, posits that there are two distinct sets of factors influencing people's motivation to work. These factors are categorized into motivators and hygiene factors. According to this theory, motivators enhance job satisfaction, while hygiene factors mitigate job dissatisfaction. The motivators encompass elements such as recognition, responsibility, achievement, advancement, growth opportunities, and the nature of the work itself. Conversely, hygiene factors include aspects like working conditions, company policies, supervision, relationships with supervisors, subordinates, and peers, salary, personal life, social status, and job security, as indicated by Ruthankoon and Ogunlana in 2003. According

to the Two-Factor theory, effective management of these motivators and hygiene factors can motivate individuals in their work.

Another theory that underpinned the study was Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, which was formulated by Abraham Maslow in 1954. Maslow's framework suggests that human needs are organized into a hierarchy of five categories, progressing from physiological, security, social, self-esteem, to self-actualization needs. Maslow contended that as lower-level needs are satisfied, they cease to be primary motivators, and the higher-level needs take their place as motivating factors. It's worth noting that some scholars, such as Armstrong in 2009 and Maicibi in 2003, have argued that human needs may exist but might not strictly adhere to the hierarchical order proposed by Maslow.

Employee Performance

It has been observed that different scholars and management practitioners define employee performance differently without agreeing on one single definition (Ghalem *et al.*, 2016). For example, Jakada *et al.* (2020) assert that employee performance is about an employee achieving the expected performance standards of an organization. Pradhan and Jena, (2017), assert that employee performance is about an individual employee or group of employees, exerting the required effort on the job, to enable their organisation to attain results that contribute towards the fulfilment of the organization's vision. Furthermore, employee performance was looked at as outcomes achieved and accomplishments made at work by an employee (Anitha, 2014). According to Lipuku *et al.* (2022), employee performance is defined as how employees fulfil their duties and complete the tasks assigned to them at their workplace on time. Otoo and Mishra, (2018) looked at employee performance as being associated with doing work that is measured by looking at quantity, quality, efficiency, effectiveness and timeliness of output of the completed work, together with the employee's attendance on the job.

To circumvent any ambiguity, this study established a clear definition of employee performance as a comprehensive evaluation of employees' fulfilment of their job responsibilities. This encompasses the successful completion of tasks, the quality and quantity of work produced, the level of effort exerted in performing tasks, the presence of effective planning, evidence of creativity and innovation in task execution, and the overall efficiency and effectiveness demonstrated in the workplace. Employee performance was assessed based on task completion, work quality, quantity, effort, planning, creativity, efficiency, and effectiveness in achieving job responsibilities.

Effects of Organisational Commitment on Employees' Performance

The study conducted in Tehran revealed a positive and significant connection between organizational commitment and academic performance among secondary school teachers and students (Haftkhavani *et al.*, 2012). Another study found that employees' commitment to supervisors, rather than the entire organization, positively influenced employee performance (Sutanto, 1992). In Sri Lanka's Batticaloa district, a study demonstrated a positive link between organizational commitment and organizational performance (Anthony, 2017). This suggests that employees' organisational commitment can enhance employees' performance, subsequently benefiting the organization. Similarly, research in India's Tamil Nadu manufacturing industry established a positive association between organizational commitment and performance (Princy & Rebeka, 2019).

However, a study in Onu state, Nigeria, examining organizational commitment's influence on job performance in the hospitality industry found mixed results, with continuance and affective commitment showing positive but insignificant associations, and normative commitment displaying a negative and insignificant link to job performance (Oyeniya *et al.*, 2017). On the other hand, a study in Portugal involving 274 workers revealed a positive relationship between employee performance and affective and normative

commitment, among other findings (Cesário & Chambel, 2017). Furthermore, a study in Bahrain's cement industry indicated that Human Resource Management practices and organizational commitment significantly and positively affected employee performance (Al-Aali, 2021). Another study conducted on nurses in Kaduna State, Nigeria, found that organizational commitment significantly and positively influenced nurses' job performance (Raji et al., 2022).

Likewise, a study at the Rakyat Bank of Indonesia demonstrated the positive effects of human resource management practices and organizational commitment on employee performance (Labetubun & Dewi, 2022). These findings were supported by research in Wimarion Hotel Semarang, Indonesia, which highlighted the positive and significant impact of organizational commitment on performance (Nurluviyana & Ketut, 2020). Lastly, a study at the Head offices of Indomarco PrismaTama company in Indonesia also revealed a positive and significant effect of organizational commitment on employee performance (Suharno et al., 2022).

It is notable that while there is a wealth of literature suggesting a positive and significant effect of organizational commitment on employee performance, none of the reviewed studies were conducted in Uganda. Most of the studies were carried out in contexts far removed from Uganda, such as Tehran, Sri Lanka, India, Nigeria, Portugal, and Bahrain. This gap in research leaves a knowledge deficit regarding the effect of organizational commitment on employee performance in the Uganda Public Service, underscoring the relevance and importance of this study in addressing this gap.

Effects of Employees' Work Engagement on Employees' Performance

It was noted that several reviewed studies which were carried out outside Uganda on employee work engagement and employee performance showed that employee work engagement was positively associated with employee performance. For example, the results of the study by Amjed *et al.* (2021), which was carried out on a sample of 300 employees, serving in four major banks operating in Rawalpindi and Islamabad in Pakistan, showed that work engagement had a positive and significant effect on employees' job performance. The results of another study by Yongxing *et al.*, (2017), which was carried out among 1094 customer service employees, in a state-owned telecom company located in South China, showed that work engagement was positively related to task performance. The results of the study by Yao *et al.*, (2022), showed that there is a relationship between work engagement and job performance. The study was also carried out in China, using a sample of 399 IT Programmers as respondents.

Furthermore, the research by Motyka, (2018), who reviewed publications about the association between employee engagement and employee performance, showed that there is, a statistically significant relationship between employee engagement and employee performance. The study by Motyka further highlighted that the low level of employee engagement at work is one of the most alarming global economic problems since it leads to declining work performance. The review of the literature on employee engagement and performance, by Sun, & Bunchapattanasakda, (2019), showed that there was a positive relationship between employee engagement and organisational performance. Furthermore, another body of literature which was reviewed by Lakshmi *et al.*, (2022), also showed a clear association between employee engagement and organizational performance. The researchers emphasised that employee work engagement perform an important role in any organization, since it was connected with job satisfaction and performance output.

According to the study by Kim *et al.*, (2019), which was conducted using 571 respondents from full-time employees working in Korean organizations, showed that there was a direct and significant effect of work engagement on job performance and turnover intention. The study which was carried out by Dajani, (2015) among 245 bank employees working in public and private banks operating in Cairo-Egypt, established that employee work engagement had a significant impact on job performance but less impact on organisational

commitment. The study by Cesário and Chambel, (2017), which was conducted using 274 Portuguese workers as respondents, showed a strong positive relationship, between work engagement and performance. Cesário and Chambel asserted that high work engagement and strong organizational commitment lead to higher employee performance and organizational success. The study by Sekhar *et al.*, (2018), in the IT industries in India, where a sample of 244 respondents was selected from the categories of Human Resource managers, IT executives, senior managers, general managers and chief executive officers, showed that work engagement and Human Resource Management practices contributed to job performance. Another study which was carried out by Pombo and Gomes, (2018) in 32 organizations in Portugal, four organizations in Norway and four organizations in Denmark supported a path model, whereby work engagement strengthens the Human Resource management systems' association with improved organisational performance.

Despite a lot of literature on the relationship between employee work engagement and employee performance being available and showing that there was a positive and significant relationship between employee work engagement and employee performance, it was noted that none of the reviewed studies was carried out in Uganda. It was observed that most of the reviewed studies were carried out in countries that included; Somalia, Australia, India, Thailand, Egypt, Jordan, Pakistan, China and Ghana. It implies that the results of the reviewed studies were contextually distant from the Uganda situation. Therefore, the reviewed studies left knowledge gaps about the Uganda situation that required to be filled by this study, which made this study relevant.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a cross-sectional research design with a sample size of 358 drawn from a target population of 3429 civil servants who were deployed by the Ministry of Public Service in the six ministries of Local Government, Public Service, Education and Sports, Works and Transport, Presidency, and Tourism.

Research Philosophy

The research philosophy for investigating the effects of organizational commitment and work engagement on employee performance in the Uganda Public Service is rooted in the belief that an understanding of these factors is essential for improving public sector productivity and overall organizational effectiveness. To conduct a comprehensive and insightful study in this context, a pragmatic research philosophy was adopted, which aligns with the practical and applied nature of this research topic.

Pragmatism: Pragmatism is a research philosophy that emphasizes the practical relevance and applicability of research findings (Brierley, 2017). It recognizes that the study's outcomes should not only contribute to academic knowledge but also have real-world implications and benefits. In the context of this research, the pragmatic approach is justified for several reasons:

Real-World Relevance: The Uganda Public Service faces unique challenges and demands, and the findings of this research should directly inform policy decisions, management practices, and human resource development strategies.

Problem-Solving Orientation: The aim of this research is to address practical issues related to organizational commitment, work engagement, and employee performance in the public sector. A pragmatic philosophy emphasizes finding solutions to real problems (Elkjaer, & Simpson, 2011).

Interdisciplinary Approach: To comprehensively understand the interactions between organizational commitment, work engagement, and employee performance, this research will draw on multiple disciplines,

such as psychology, management, and public administration.

The choice of a pragmatic research philosophy aligns with the practical nature of the research topic, recognizing the importance of addressing the real challenges faced by the Uganda Public Service. By adopting a pragmatic approach, this research aims to generate insights and recommendations that can facilitate positive changes in organizational commitment, work engagement, and ultimately, employee performance within the public service sector (Brierley, 2017).

Sample Size

A sample is a subset of the overall target population, and it is essential that a well-constructed population sample possesses certain key attributes, as highlighted by Kisilu and Tromp in 2006. An ideal sample should be diverse, representative, readily accessible, and equipped with knowledge pertaining to the subject under investigation.

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) emphasize the significance of sample size, emphasizing that it should be sufficiently large. Smaller samples tend to exhibit higher sampling errors and may fail to accurately reflect the significant characteristics of the broader accessible population. To determine the appropriate sample size, the researcher employed the Slovene formula, a mathematical tool designed for this purpose. The Slovene formula provides a methodical approach to calculating the required sample size, ensuring that the sample is both reliable and effective in its representation.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = the required sample size, N = target population and e = significance level, given by 0.05. In this study $N = 3429$. Therefore, the study sample will consist of 358 Civil servants.

$$n = \frac{3429}{1 + 3429(0.05 \times 0.05)} = 358$$

Table 1: Sample Size Proportions, Sampling Techniques and Data Collection Methods

Employee Category	Target population	Sample	Sampling Technique	Data collection method
$711/3429 \times 358 = 74$ U1 – U2	711	74	Simple random sampling	Questionnaires and Interview Guide
$1707/3429 \times 358 = 178$ U3– U5	1707	178	Simple random sampling	Questionnaires
$293/3429 \times 358 = 31$ U6 – U7	293	31	Simple random sampling	Questionnaires
$718/3429 \times 358 = 75$ U8	718	75	Simple random sampling	Questionnaires
TOTAL	3429	358		

Source: Computed by the Researcher from Primary data (2021)

The research utilized a quantitative approach, employing a validated questionnaire for data collection and testing the hypothesis through hierarchical multiple regression analysis. To test the hypothesis, hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted (Creswell, 2014).

Data Analysis

The quantitative data collected via a questionnaire were coded and subjected to rigorous statistical analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). To test the research hypothesis, a robust approach was adopted, employing Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) and Bootstrap analysis within both SPSS and AMOS. This methodological choice was driven by SEM's exceptional capability to explore intricate relationships among latent variables. By harnessing SEM, the researcher assessed both direct and indirect variable effects, thereby getting a comprehensive insight into the data's underlying structural dynamics.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher placed priority on ethical considerations, which encompassed the well-being and rights of the respondents. The questions were thoughtfully designed to prevent any harm to participants. The research assistants were thoroughly briefed about the study's voluntary nature. Strict confidentiality measures were implemented to ensure that respondent identities remained confidential both during and after the study. Participants were well-informed about their right to withdraw from the study if they felt uncomfortable and safeguarding their data through unique identification codes. The ethical principles of informed consent, anonymity, privacy, and confidentiality, as advocated by Oso and Onen (2009), were meticulously followed to uphold human dignity. Proper referencing and citation practices were upheld to maintain academic integrity and acknowledgement of the contributions of other scholars.

RESULTS

The Effects of Employees' Organisational Commitment and Work Engagement on Employees' Performance in The Uganda Public Service

The objective was to investigate the effect of organisational commitment and work engagement on employee performance in the Uganda public service. The corresponding hypothesis was that the two variables (organisational commitment and work engagement) do not significantly affect employee performance. To do this, the computed numerical indices on the constructs of organisational commitment and work engagement were correlated with the employee performance index. To find out if employee organisational commitment and work engagement are significantly correlated with employee performance, the three variables of employee performance, organisational commitment and work engagement, were correlated using Pearson's Linear Correlation coefficient, and the results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Pearson's Correlation for organisational commitment and work engagement on employees' performance in the Ugandan Public Service

Variables correlated	r-value	Sig.	Interpretation
Commitment Vs Performance	.407**	.000	Significant correlation
Engagement Vs Performance	.530**	.000	Significant correlation

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings in Table 2 revealed that both indices (employee organisational commitment and work engagement) are significantly correlated with employee performance, since all the sig. values are less than 0.05. Based on this, the null hypothesis was rejected and a conclusion was taken that both employee organisational commitment and employee work engagement are significantly correlated with employees' performance in the Uganda public service. Since the two coefficients are positive, the researcher concluded that higher levels of employee commitment and engagement are likely to increase employee performance and vice versa. To measure the strength of the effect of employee commitment and engagement on employee performance, a multiple linear regression model was run and the results are presented in Table3.

The findings presented in Table 2 indicate a significant correlation between employee organizational commitment, work engagement, and employee performance within the Uganda public service. The study employed a correlation analysis to explore these relationships, with all significance values falling below the common threshold of 0.05, suggesting statistical significance. The rejection of the null hypothesis underscores the robustness of these relationships. It was concluded that higher levels of employee commitment and engagement are likely to enhance employee performance, with both coefficients showing a positive direction. The subsequent step involved employing a multiple linear regression model, as detailed in Table 3, to measure the strength of the effect of employee commitment and engagement on employee performance. It is crucial to check if the statistical assumptions, like linearity, independence, and multicollinearity, have been properly met. Additionally, we need to evaluate how much these coefficients practically affect employee performance to fully understand the findings. To check the finding, the study tested the hypothesis to clearly get an understanding of the relationships.

Testing Hypothesis

The researcher tested a null hypothesis that employees' commitment and work engagement have no significant effect on employee performance in the Uganda Public Service. To test this null hypothesis a multiple linear regression model, was run with organisational commitment and work engagement as the predictors while employee performance was used as the predicted variable. The results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Multiple Linear Regression for the effects of organisational commitment and work Engagement on employees' performance in the Uganda Public service

Variables Regressed	Adjusted R ²	F	Sig.	Interpretation	Decision on Ho
Commitment and Engagement Vs Performance	.289	65.772	.000	Significant effect	Rejected
Coefficients	Beta	T			
(Constant)	7.797	8.348	.000	Significant effect	Rejected
Commitment	.445	7.556	.000	Significant effect	Rejected
Engagement	.141	2.387	.018	Significant effect	Rejected

The results in Table 3 indicate that both employee commitment and engagement are significant determinants of employee performance (F=65.772, sig. = 0.000). The two model predictors (employee commitment and engagement) account for only 28.9% of variations in employee performance (adjusted R² = 0.289). The remaining percentage (71.1%) shows the contribution of other factors towards employee performance which are not included in this model. This finding suggests that many factors influence the performance of employees in the Uganda public service, other than employee commitment and engagement.

Despite the regression coefficient indicating that both organisational commitment and work Engagement variables have a significant effect on employees' performance, employee commitment had more predictive strength than employee work engagement. Thus, commitment ($\beta = 0.445$, $p = 0.000$) is a more powerful

determinant of employee performance than work engagement ($\beta = 0.141, p = 0.018$). The magnitudes of the respective betas indicate that a one-unit increase in employee organisational commitment increases employee performance by 0.445 and vice versa. On the other hand, a one-unit increase in employee work engagement increases employee performance by 0.141 and vice versa.

Structural Equation Modelling

Before the final SEM was run, four measurement models were tested to test for the fitness of the data collected. The three measurement models include; i) the employee performance measurement model; ii) the employee work engagement measurement model; and iii) the organisational commitment measurement model.

The measurement models were used to establish the constructs of the respective three study variables and then confirm the items used to measure them. The SEM assumptions were then tested using Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for convergent validity and composite reliability. The researcher then tested for discriminant validity. At each step, the relevant rules of thumb were considered before confirming the data for the model.

The results are presented and interpreted in the subsequent figures.

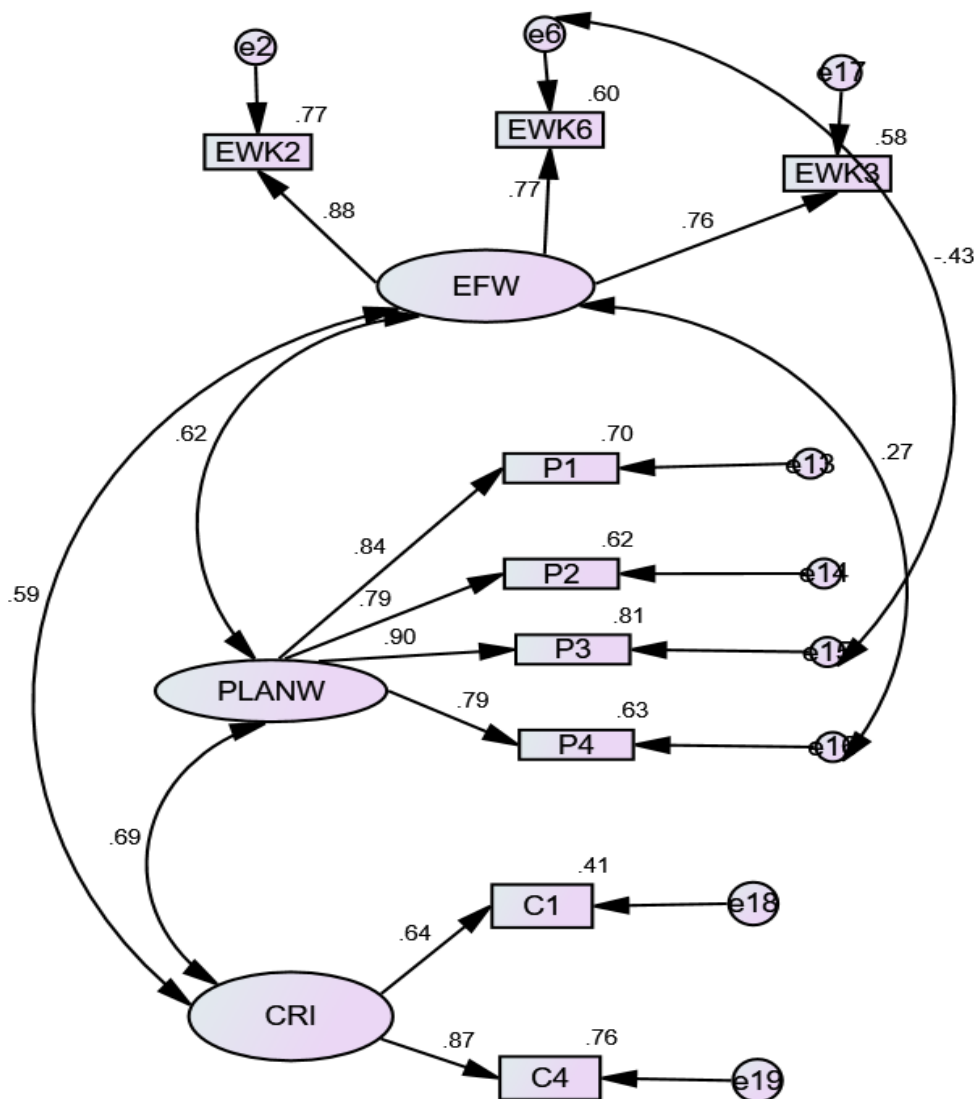


Figure 1: Employees' performance measurement model

Three constructs Efficiency at Work (EFW) Planning the Work (PLANW) and Creativity and Innovation (CRI) are confirmed to be measuring employee performance with respective dimensions/ items as shown in Fig. 1.

The second test was to confirm the fitness of the data for the employee work engagement. The results are shown in Fig. 2

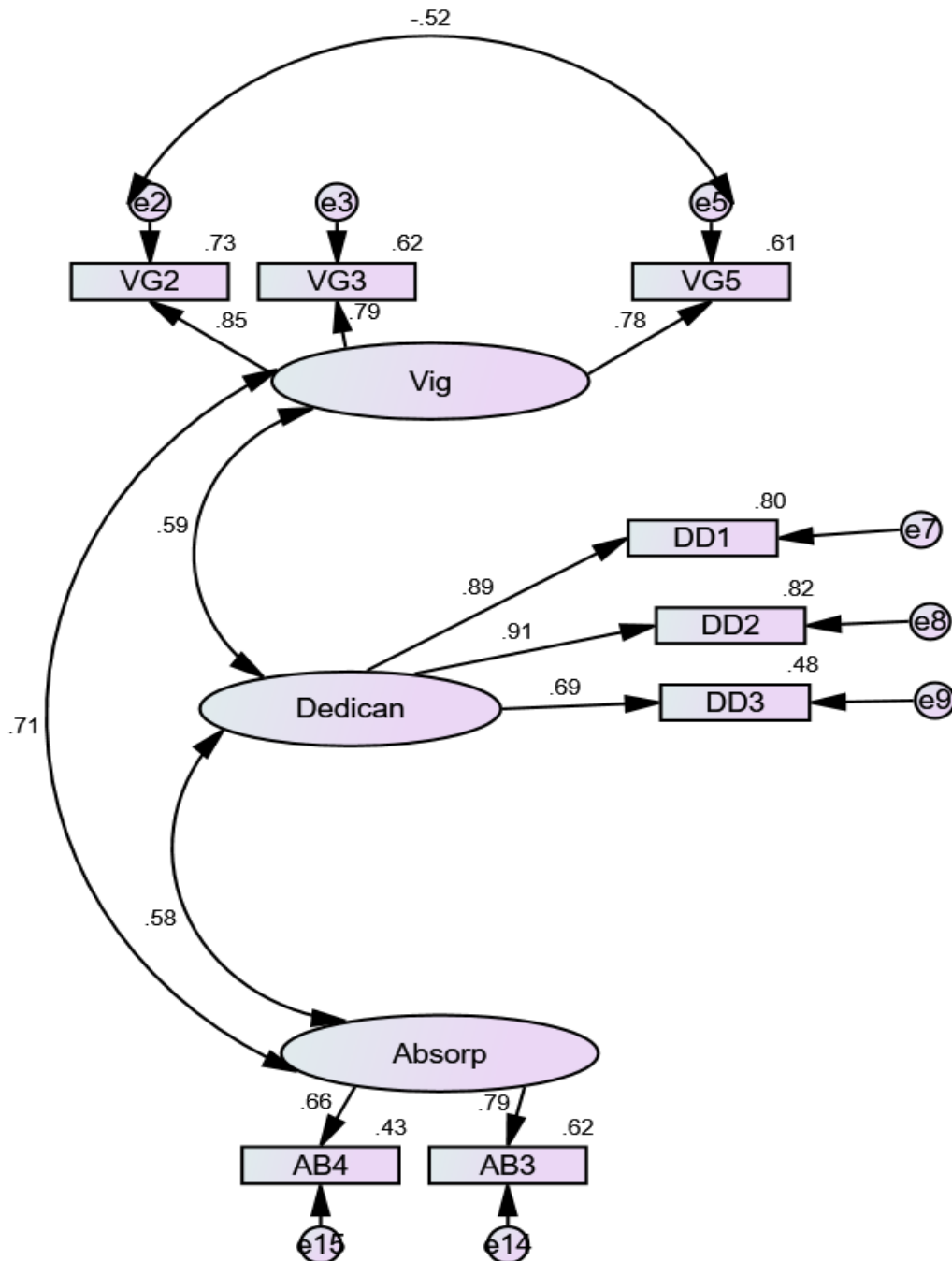
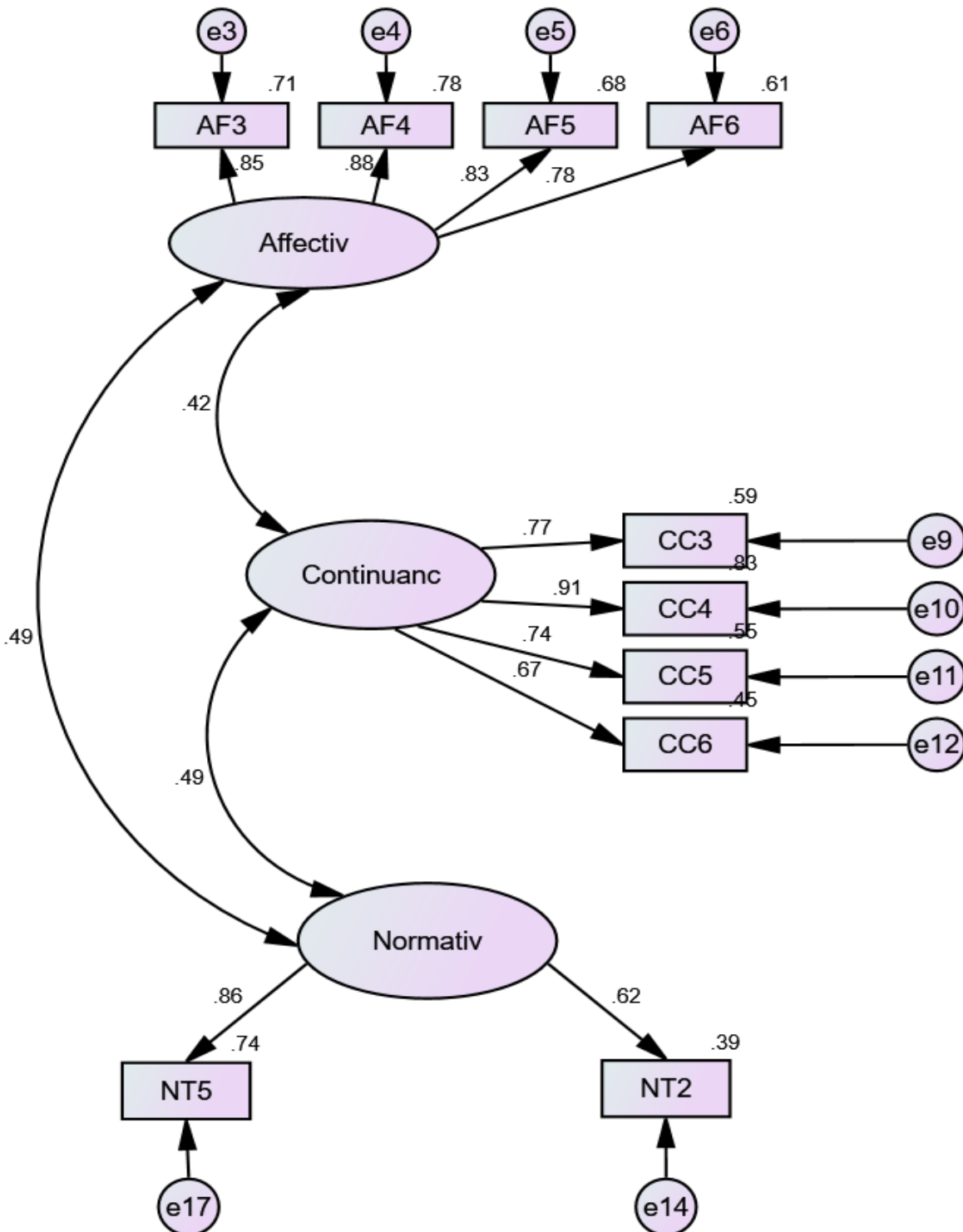


Figure 2: Employees' work engagement measurement model

From Fig. 2, three constructs Vigour (Vig), Dedication (Dedican) and Absorption (Absorp) are confirmed to be measuring employee work engagement with respective dimensions/ items as also supported by results in Figure2.

Having confirmed data fitness for the employee performance, and employee work engagement measurement models, the researcher went ahead to confirm the fitness of the data for organisational commitment. The results are shown in **Figure3**.



Source: Primary data, 2023

Figure 3: Organisation commitment measurement model

As indicated in Fig. 2, three constructs of organisation commitment; Affective (Affectiv), Continuance (Continuanc) and Normative (Normativ) are confirmed to be measuring organization commitment with respective dimensions or items as also confirmed by the results in fig. 3.

The findings of this study revealed that organisational commitment and work engagement are significant predictors of employee performance. Organisational commitment has more predictive strength compared to employee work engagement, although both are significant predictors. The findings confirm that highly committed and engaged staff perform better than those who are less engaged and less committed. This also implies that enhancing employees' commitment and work engagement can help in boosting employees' performance. Therefore, some practices are important in increasing employees' commitment and can act as indirect boosters of employee performance. For example, the practices that increase the emotional attachment of workers to their organisation, workers' desire to stay and to talk well about their organisation, and feeling obliged to serve it well usually lead to enhanced productivity.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The Effects of Employee Organisational Commitment and Work Engagement on Employees Performance in The Uganda Public Service

The findings of this study underscored the significant and positive relationship between employee organizational commitment, work engagement, and employee performance within the unique context of the Uganda Public Service. Both organizational commitment and work engagement emerged as strong predictors of employee performance, with organizational commitment demonstrating a stronger predictive influence. The results from this study suggest that enhancing employees' levels of work engagement and organizational commitment can lead to a substantial improvement in employee performance within the Uganda public service.

The findings from this study are consistent with many previous findings but also, they differ from some previous findings of some scholars. For example, previous research conducted by various scholars, including (Al-Aali, 2021; Andrew, 2017; Cesário & Chambel, 2017; Princy & Rebeka, 2019) among others, consistently demonstrated that organizational commitment serves as a significant and positive predictor of employee performance. This consistency across diverse contexts and industries bolsters the reliability and generalizability of the findings from this study.

However, it is important to acknowledge that our results do not align with those of Oyeniya et al. (2017), whose study within the Nigerian hospitality industry reported mixed results. Specifically, research by Oyeniya et al. found that continuance commitment and affective commitment were not significant predictors of employee performance, while normative commitment exhibited a negative and insignificant relationship with employee performance. These deviations from the broader body of research underscore the need for further exploration and validation across various sectors and contexts before generalizing the applicability of results from the study by Oyeniya et al. (2017).

On the other hand, the pivotal role played by employee work engagement in enhancing employee performance has been underscored by several authors in the existing body of research (Anitha, 2014; Kim et al., 2019; Reijseger et al., 2017; Yongxing et al., 2017), consistently emphasized the positive association between work engagement and employee performance. These authors provided strong evidence across various industries and settings, reinforcing the notion that high levels of employee work engagement contribute significantly to improved employee performance. This study aligns with this wealth of research, further stressing the significance of work engagement within the unique context of the Uganda Public Service.

The results from this study reinforce the idea that engaged employees, characterized by their enthusiasm, vigour, absorption, dedication, and sense of purpose, are more likely to excel in their roles, ultimately benefiting both the employees and the organization (Anitha, 2014; Kim et al., 2019; Reijseger et al., 2017; Yongxing et al., 2017).

In essence, this study has contributed to the existing literature by reaffirming the positive impact of organizational commitment and work engagement on employee performance, specifically within the Uganda Public Service situation. Further research across different regions and sectors can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationship between employee work engagement, organisational commitment and employee performance in various organizational settings.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research has provided valuable insights into the dynamics of employee performance within the Uganda Public Service. Through meticulous data analysis and a thorough review of existing literature, the findings of the study highlighted the undeniable influence of organizational commitment and work engagement on the performance of employees in this specific context.

This study unequivocally demonstrated that heightened organizational commitment significantly bolsters employee performance. When employees harbour a profound sense of loyalty and attachment to their organization, it ignites a powerful motivation that drives them to exceed their job descriptions. The outcomes are tangible and impactful which include: heightened productivity, increased efficiency, and an overall elevation in employee performance. The findings of this study align with previous research findings, but importantly, they emphasize the significance of this relationship within the unique situation of the Uganda Public Service.

Furthermore, this study underscores the pivotal role of work engagement in shaping employee performance. When individuals are fully immersed in their work, fuelled by enthusiasm, and driven by a strong sense of purpose, their contributions surge. Engaged employees consistently exhibit higher levels of initiative, creativity, and unwavering dedication, which inevitably translate into superior outcomes for both the workforce and the entire Uganda Public Service at large.

Armed with these findings, the Uganda Public Service now possesses the knowledge required to proactively cultivate and nurture organizational commitment and work engagement among its employees. This, in turn, will usher in a new era of improved employee performance, heightened job satisfaction, and ultimately, enhanced service delivery to the Ugandan public. Therefore, these findings should guide strategic decisions and interventions aimed at optimizing the performance of the invaluable employees serving in the Uganda Public Service.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the observations and findings in the study, it is evident that enhancing employee engagement and organisational commitment lead to improved employee performance. Therefore, it was recommended that the Uganda government should take the following actions to foster engagement and commitment among civil servants, ultimately leading to enhanced performance in the Uganda Public Service:

The government of Uganda should review and revise the compensation structures to ensure they are competitive and fair in the market because once employees feel that they are fairly compensated, they tend to be motivated, engaged in their work and committed to their roles, which leads to improved employee performance.

The Uganda Public Service should implement robust training and development programs to upskill and empower civil servants because well-trained employees are more likely to feel engaged and committed to their work which leads to enhanced employee performance.

The Uganda Public Service should establish a system for recognizing and rewarding outstanding performance because recognition usually boosts morale and encourages employees to be engaged and committed and go the extra mile on their jobs.

The Uganda Public Service should encourage employees to participate in decision-making processes that affect their work because when employees have a say in decisions that impact them, they are more likely to feel engaged and committed to achieving organizational objectives.

The Uganda Public Service should establish a regular performance feedback system that includes constructive feedback and development plans because when employees receive feedback on their performance and have opportunities for improvement, they are more likely to be engaged and committed to their roles.

By implementing these recommendations, the Uganda Public Service can create a work environment where civil servants feel engaged, committed, and valued. This, in turn, will lead to improved employee performance, better service delivery, and ultimately, greater success for the Uganda Public Service and Uganda government as a whole.

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