

BUILDING LOCAL COUNCIL WORKERS' COMMITMENT; LEVERAGING ON WORKPLACE MANAGEMENT TOOLS

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Abstract: Commitment has been of critical concern to local government employees as searches had consistently failed to address, to a greater degree, its causes. This study therefore is driven to explore the workplace management index with a view to identifying and resolve the persistent lacklustre manifestation amongst the local government employees in Rivers State. The Krejcie and Morgan sample determination table was used to derive a sample of 355 employees from the target population of 4,905 employees gathered from a conveniently selected 13 local government councils in Rivers State. These councils are: Obio-Okpor, Okrika, Ogu-Bolo, Opobo-Nkoro, Abua-Odual, Degema, Bonny, Etche, Eleme, Emohua, Ikwerre, Port Harcourt and Khana local government councils. The close-ended structured questionnaire was used to gather data and further presentation and analyses were done using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results derived from the analysis of tests of hypotheses using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient showed that ergonomics, workplace automation, communication and organizational structure have significant relationships with employee commitment. Findings also revealed a strong moderating effect of leadership on workplace management strategies and employee commitment. It became necessary to conclude that workplace management strategies have significant relationship with employees' commitment in the local government councils in Rivers State. This study therefore recommended that, local government administrators should take serious cognizance of ergonomics, healthy workplace communication, process automation and complimentary organisational structure in the resolving the concerns of employee commitment in the local government councils in Rivers State.

Keywords: Ergonomics, Automation, Organisational Structure, workplace Communication, Employee Commitment.

I. Introduction

One of the major challenges faced by local government councils in Rivers State is low employee commitment. The increasing cases of high rate of stress and tension, poor job fit, absenteeism, poor morale, and poor job satisfaction amongst local government council employees in Rivers State points to the fact that there is absence of commitment. Local government councils invest little or nothing providing enabling workplace for their employees. Poor ergonomics that should provide comfort during work time is ignored, automation of the workplace is not given considerable attention, communication amongst employees and management is not healthy and effective, tasks and responsibilities are not assigned according to ability and decisions are made that affect the lives of employees without consulting them, this and many more affect the loyalty and innovativeness of employees in local government councils in Rivers State. Proper management of the workplace is critical for expected commitment on the part of employees. Workplace management is one of the efficient ways to minimize organizational loss. It could also mean those series of efforts that are directed towards efficient planning, designing and organization of work activities to enhance conformity to rules, team spirit and the optimization of organization resources with the aim of achieving administrative efficiency. Employee commitment has been a major problem faced by local government councils in Rivers State because employees complain of the stress associated with the workplace, which manifest in poor tasks assignment and inaccessible leadership which affect their morale to work and their commitment level. [1]. Employee commitment in the workplace means employees become attached to the goals of the organization by following schedules, making communications, and collaborating with colleagues and the management. When the workplace is not properly managed, it reduces an employee's commitment level to task accomplishment and to the goals of the organization. No employee would want to give maximum attention to tasks in a workplace that constantly triggers office hazard, stress and tension, poor communication and spending the whole day on a single task that is not supposed to take much time. It can also show where there is no clear-cut direction of who does what. However, a well managed workplace would increase the likelihood of employee becoming committed and employees. Local government has been in

existence in Nigerian since the 1972. It is often referred to as the third- tier level of government charged with the responsibilities of providing basic amenities and social infrastructures for the people within that geographical environment. [2] stated that the concept, local government, has been given many definitions by various scholars. However, no matter how the concept is explained, it still focuses on the transfer of political powers to local areas by involving the inhabitants in the provision of basic needs in their respective communities. But our focus in this study was on employees of the councils in the various local government areas in Rivers state, Nigeria. The problems these employees face within their respective local government councils is of grave concern and the consistent complaints from the councils of their employee commitment level are getting worse and without a possible solution. Identifying the problems that employees face in their respective workplaces would lead us to proffering possible means of managing the workplace. Therefore, this study is focused on addressing the commitment problems of employees in the Local Governments Councils in Rivers State, Nigeria. Employee commitment from the perspective of the psychological attachment which employees have towards their jobs. They went further to identify commitment to be affective, continuance, and normative. When employees are committed, there is every tendency that, they will be loyal and innovative in the accomplishment of their tasks which in turn lead to productivity and growth. [3] assert that, commitment is a force that binds an individual to a course of action. However, uncommitted employee is one who sees nothing beneficial in the work that are to be done. In the light of this, the study explored four strategies for managing the workplace. These include but not limited to ergonomics, automation, communication and organizational structure. Other researchers have done studies showing several tools of managing the workplace that could improve employee commitment. Some have used salary as a motivation to improving employee commitment, others used training and development as a tool for improving employees' commitment yet not many have tested ergonomics, structure, communication and automation for improved employee commitment. This is the gap that this study intends to fill.

Certain philosophical foundation needs to be explored to provide a empirical buttress to this study. The social exchange theory is of relevance to this research. [4], whose view is frequently cited in discussions about social exchanges, defines social exchanges as "voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and typically do in fact bring from others". In essence, social exchange theory is among the most influential conceptual paradigms for understanding workplace. For decades, the concept of social exchange has been used by organizational researchers to explain the motivational basis behind employee behaviours and the formation of positive employee attitudes. One of the basic tenets of the social exchange theory is that relationships evolve over time into trusting, loyalty, and mutual commitment and to do so, rules or norms of exchange which serve as the guidelines of exchange processes must be obeyed by exchanging parties. The foregoing definitions show that Social exchange theory is a sequence of positive interactions which over a period of time generate openness, obligation and friendship between people in the social network [5]. Previous literatures have shown that, high perceived organizational support and its influence on employee wellbeing will lead to employee commitment and innovativeness. It is believed that high-quality social exchange relationships can engender beneficial consequence for the organization. This is in accordance with Employees who perceive a high level of organizational support or have a high-quality exchange with their supervisor will feel a sense of indebtedness and reciprocate the exchange partner by demonstrating affective commitment and supportive attitudes towards using new information systems [6]. This is to say, when employees perceive that organizations are being committed to them by ensuring the right workplace ergonomics are provided to reduce hazards, stress and tension, encourage workplace automation, effectively communicate with employees by using the appropriate medium and channels to avoid communication gap, ensuring clear-cut responsibilities and ensuring employee are being motivated both psychologically and financially, there is the likelihood that such commitment from the organization will be reciprocated by employees in increasing their commitment level. [7] state that, a well-managed workplace usually sees average workers as the root sources of quality and productivity gains. Organizations such as this do not have maximum focus on capital investment, but rather on human investment, as such; employees become the fundamental source of improvement and to achieve such improvement, there is need to make employees committed to their jobs in the workplace. Extensive search has been made covering the effects of employee commitment and majority of these research found out that, there are several factors capable of contributing positively to the commitment of employees. Factors such as, ergonomics, automation, structure and communication are not entirely left out. Employees are a salient aspect of every organization as such, how their workplace is managed has a huge influence on their commitment level. Thus, a sufficient satisfying workplace which will enable workers carry out their daily task effectively and efficiently without complaints is a welcome attribute for enhanced performance. Subsequently, when employees work in a situation that agrees with their psychological and physical fits, the possibility of employees achieving organizational goals would be on the high side without stress and tension. The study explores work condition index of workplace management which include but not limited to ergonomics, process automation, organisational structure and workplace communication as result driven attributes for the attraction of employees' commitment.

Ergonomics: This is derived from the Greek words ergo (work) and nomos (natural laws), ergonomics literally means the laws of work. International Ergonomics Association (IEA), defined Ergonomics as the scientific discipline concerned with the understanding of interactions among humans and other elements of a system, and the profession that applies theory, principles, data and methods to design in order to optimize human well-being and overall system performance. [8] studied the impact of office ergonomics on employee performance with 98 employees of Ghana National Petroleum Corporation. Ergonomic elements such as office design, décor, illumination and noise levels and furniture were found to be negatively affecting the performance of employees by between 20 - 80 percent. Also, few employees were found to have suffered musculoskeletal disorders which they attributed to their furniture. The researcher, therefore, asserted that Ghana National Petroleum Corporation was yet to leverage on its workplace environment as a means of motivating and enhancing the performance of its employees as the study identified substantial office ergonomic lapses. [9], investigated the influence of workstation and work posture ergonomics on the job satisfaction of librarians in the Federal and State University libraries in Southern Nigeria. The findings revealed that there was a positive relationship between ergonomics (suitability of workstation and equipment and work posture designs) and job satisfaction. thus, the key ergonomics factors that affect employee productivity and performance are office furniture, workspace design, noise/vibration, light intensity, and ventilation/humidity. [10], also showed other benefits which include, increased productivity, increased work quality, reduced turnover, reduced absenteeism, and increased morale. From a safety perspective, [11] (2006) emphasizes that environmental conditions affect employee safety perceptions which impacts upon employee commitment. This field of ergonomics takes into account how critical workplace elements such as workstations, computers, chairs, lighting, noise level could be tailored to fit and enhance employee health, safety and commitment. [12], the single largest class of injury claims in the office is Work-related and recently, there is an observed rise in the reported cases of work-related injuries mostly in the developing countries. Ergonomics is a tool which business owners and managers use to help prevent these injuries in the office in the developed nations [13];[14]. It reduces the risk of injury by adapting the work to fit the person instead of forcing the person to adapt to the work. In recent years, the use of workplace automation systems has been present in our country as such, many organizations are willing to optimize the use of these systems without minding the cost of installation but with deep focus on the possible benefits an automated workplace can bring to an employee and the organization. Automation is understood as the replacement of (human) labour input by digitally-enabled machine input for some types of tasks within production and distribution processes.

Workplace automation is a mechanism for the purpose of improving employee commitment in local government councils in Rivers State, the leadership of councils should invest in technological advances suitable in the workplace which would facilitate work process, rapid and timely response to clients, paperless office, improve communication flow and promote remote work life balance of employees in the local government councils. Automated information system can support employees to achieve their goals. Workplace automation cannot actually be talked about without the infiltration of technological advance. As such, automation of work refers to any or a combination of the technologies geared towards managing the workplace which could take the form of advanced robotics and modern internet technological tools. It also indicated that all factors such as quick and easy access to data, establishing uniformity in all matters, speed in doing works, accuracy and precision of operation have influenced on employee performance. As a result, Workplace automation leads to increase employee performance. It can be said that having automated workplace can trigger employees' commitment because an automated workplace make work flexible, easy and in turn promotes remote working. It is no longer news that an automated workplace will reshape the way work is done by providing modern technological tools that enable employees within and outside the workplace to collaborating with each other seamlessly and this is sometimes done in real time bases. Workplace technology is not just a facilitator; it is also a major factor for an automated workplace compared to the traditional workplace. Information and communication technology (ICT) ensures continuous interaction between managers and their subordinates.[15] in their study posited that, office technology is correlated with positive change in management performance. The findings of the study conducted by [16], stated that there is a statistically significant association between Technology and employee performance. Empirical studies show that some organizations will struggle with the adoption of the latest trends. However, firms that can successfully assess how to incorporate the latest strategic technology advancements will benefit a lot from their employees in terms of commitment. There are really not much empirical studies on technology and employee commitment and that's what this research work is out to find.

Communication could be defined as the exchange of information from one person to another through the use of mutually understood signs and symbols. Communication is an invaluable aspect of every organization. The functions and importance of communication for organizations have been examined by researchers in various ways. This study explores the role of communication, types and channels in enhancing employees' commitment to their respective organizations. Communication is the creation or exchange of thoughts, ideas, emotions, and understanding between senders and receivers. It is essential to building and

maintaining commitment in the workplace. Accordingly, for organizations and humans as social beings, communication has a vital importance and its impact on organization and employees cannot be overemphasized. Research has also shown that communication improves employee job performance [17]. The importance of communication in the workplace cannot be overlooked, knowing that, organisations are made up of people from different social and professional backgrounds who come together to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization. Below are some of the importance of communication in the workplace to both the organization and their employees: *Increase commitment*: when communication is effective and the right channels and medium is used, there is every tendency that there will be no redundancy as such commitment will also increase on the side of the employee. *Creates job satisfaction*: Job satisfaction is seen from the eyes of an employee, that is what Employee A sees as satisfying might not be what employee sees as satisfaction. However, organisations which encourage an open and easy communication between seniors and subordinates ends up reducing employee absenteeism and turnover thereby, making employee satisfied with their job. *Reduced conflicts*: when communication is effective, it prevents and resolve many conflicts within and outside the organization. *Increases productivity*: Effective communication at work is the most important issue for how productive an organization becomes. Every organisation has a set of clearly defined goals, and vision and how these are communicated across to various departments defines the productivity level of the organization. [18] observed that, "the perception of people in the communication process must be considered, for what they think or feel affects considerably how they interact with the organizational environment, the importance of communication may appear intuitively obvious, but does research support this assumed importance; the short answer is yes. [19], the following forms of communication are unarguably present in the workplace - including Intrapersonal, Interpersonal groups, public, and mass communication. While Intrapersonal communication refers to the discourse within the individual, Interpersonal communication occurs between two persons either through face-to-face or mediated settings. Though, it is argued that the benefits of Interpersonal communication have not been adequately explored [20]. Its importance in management decision-making process cannot be overemphasized [21]. In contrast to interpersonal communication, Group communication is the exchange of information among three to eight individuals who have a common cultural, linguistic, and/or geographical identity. [22] conducted a study on "The Effect of Communication on Workers' Performance in Selected Organizations. The outcome of the research revealed the relationship between effective communication and workers' performance, productivity and commitment. Per the outcome showed in the study, a recommendation was made for managers to communicate with employees consistently and regularly to improve workers commitment and performance.

Structure This directly impacts the company's capability to attract, engage and retain employees. An organizational structure is a logical framework of the department. It lays out and defines priorities through design of positions with generalist and specialist roles, indicates reporting relationships and the fit of each person in the big picture, and establishes decision making as centralized or decentralized. Effective implementation of organization structure entails clarity of task responsibilities to enable employees to work well together and jointly manage overlapping duties and hand-offs with each other [23]. [24] conducted a study on Organizational Structure and Employee Performance: A Study of Brewing Firms in Nigeria. The study sought to assess the effect of organizational structure on employee performance in brewing firms in Nigeria. The result of the study revealed that nature of hierarchical layers has significant positive effect on the employee performance of brewing firms; that technology has significant positive effect on the employee performance of brewing firms; that internal and external boundaries has significant positive effect on the employee performance of brewing firms; and that formalization significantly affect employee performance positively. In view of the above findings, the study concludes that adopting appropriate structure is the fulcrum on which employees' performance of brewing firms revolves. [25], also carried out a study on the effects of organizational structure on the entrepreneurial orientation of the employees in metal industries of Kaveh industrial city of Iran. The analysis revealed that organizational structure has a positive significant effect on entrepreneurial orientation of the employees of the organization. The findings further revealed that the study can help the managers of the metal industry identify the weaknesses and the strengths of their organizational structure. [26], also opined that the level of job satisfaction and effectiveness of every human depends upon an appropriate organization structure; as organization structure is the prescribed pattern of work-related behavior that are deliberately established for the accomplishment of organizational goals. During the last decade quite a lot of discussions have taken place in the corporate world about organizational structure, and a lot of organizational success and job satisfaction by the employee are attached to the structure that is in place. However, there is a lack of empirical studies examining the relationship of structure and employee commitment. [27].

II. Research Methods

This study is a descriptive study and as such, it adopted a cross-sectional survey design because it allows for the collection of a sample from a large population because of the homogenous characteristics of the respondents

studied. the targeted population comprised of all Employees of 23 Local Government Councils in Rivers State. Because of the infinite nature of respondents in the sector, the study used convenient sampling technique to derive thirteen (13) Local Government Councils because of the ease with which data was gathered. They are; Port Harcourt, Obio/Akpor, Degema, Etche, Okrika, Opobo/Nkoro, Bonny, Ikwerre, Eleme, Abua/Odual, Ogu/Bolo, Emohaa and Khana Local Government Councils. From the registry of the Rivers State Local Government Service Commission, data gathered showed to a total of 4,905 permanent employees excluding casual staffs. However, the Krejcie and Morgan sample determination table was used to derive the target sample size of 355. A total of 355copies of questionnaires were distributed across 13 selected Local Government Council in Rivers State from which 320 were retrieved successfully. The study data were gathered from the respondents through the use of self-constructed questionnaire which was designed in four sections. The first section was designed to generate the demographic data of the respondents, the second section was structured to obtain data on the dimensions of workplace management strategies, third was to elicit response and generate data on the measures of employee commitment and the last section was to generate data on the moderating variable. The questionnaire was the structured closed-ended that allows for easy interpretation of data and designed in the four points Likert scale format in the order of SA = Strongly Agreed; A = Agreed; DA = Disagree and SD = Strongly. Disagreed.Content and face validity were done to ensure the instrument is structured to attract the necessary data for the subject being investigated. The reliability test of the structured questionnaires was ascertained through Test-re-test in which a pilot administration of the questionnaire was made on a portion of the chosen sample and administered after two months and relationship between the two results determined by correlation coefficient, through SPSS version 20. Our reliability test was also anchored on the Cronbach Alpha at 0.7.

Table 1: Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficients Of The Variable Measures

Nos of items	Dimensions/Measures/moderating Variable	Numbers of items	Numbers of Case	Cronbach Alpha (α)
1.	Ergonomics	4	320	.970
2.	Automation	4	320	.989
3.	Communication	4	320	.969
4.	Structure	4	320	.971
5.	Innovativeness	4	320	.970
6.	Loyalty	4	320	.969
7.	Leadership	4	320	.970

Source: SPSS Result (Version 20)

Basically, there are two major sources of data collection which are primary and secondary data; the primary sources consist of structure of copies of questionnaires. The secondary sources are obtained from textbooks, journal, magazines and seminar. In this research, the study employed the use of questionnaire to aid data collection. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools namely: Tables, Frequencies, Simple Percentage and Mean Score. The formulated hypothesis will be analyzed using Pearson Correlation statistic.

Below is the Pearson's product moment correlation co-efficient formula.

$$r = \frac{n \sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{\left(n \sum x^2 - \sum x^2 \right) \left(n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2 \right)}}$$

Where:

r = Pearson product moment correlation coefficient,

X and Y = individual observations of the two variables,

\bar{X} and \bar{Y} = arithmetic means of the two sets of observations.

n = number of bivariate observations.

In determining the statistical technique to suit our purpose, we considered Kothari and Garg, (2004), who argued that when there exists association or correlation between two variables, correlation technique should be used and when there exists cause and effect relationship between two variables in the case of bivariate population or between one variable on one side and two or more variable on the other side in case of multivariate population, partial correlation technique is appropriate. This was the basis for our choice of the Pearson Moment Correlation Coefficient to test our hypothesized relationship in our study stated in chapter one.

Scatter plot of the relationship between workplace management strategies and employee commitment of Local Government Council in Rivers State.

Scatter graph is one of the techniques used in deciding whether a bivariate relationship does exist between interval scaled variables. In a bid to determine the existence and trend of this relationship, we plotted a scatter diagram as presented in the figure below workplace management as a predictor variable is plotted on the X axis whereas employee commitment as the criterion variable is on the Y axis.

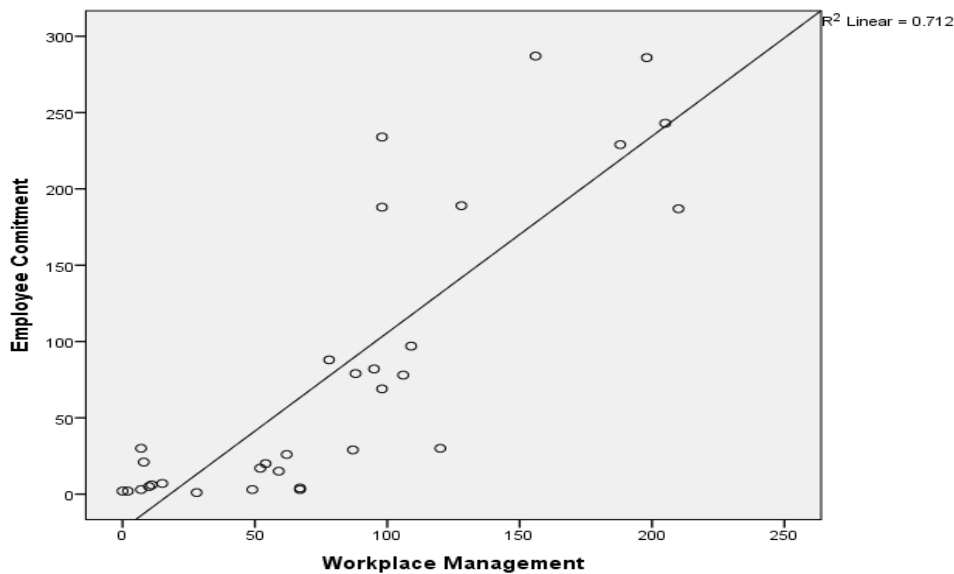


Figure 1 scatter plot showing influence of workplace management strategies on employee commitment

The figure 1 above shows a strong relationship between workplace management strategies (independent variable) and employee commitment (dependent variable). The scatter plot graph shows at R² linear value of (0.712) depicting a strong viable and positive relationship between the two constructs. The implication is that an increase in workplace management strategies simultaneously brings about an increase in the level of employee commitment.

2.1 Presentation of Results on the Test of Hypotheses

The study had proposed nine research hypotheses in chapter one of this studied to seek explanation to the relationship between workplace management strategies and employee commitment as well as the moderating influence of leadership in such relationship. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient statistics was calculated using the SPSS version 20 to establish the relationship among the empirical referents of the predictor variable and the measures of the criterion variable. Correlation coefficients can range from -1.00 to +1.00. The value of -1.00 represents a perfect negative correlation while +1.00 represents a perfect positive correlation. A value 0.00 represents a lack of correlation. In testing hypothesis 1 – 9, the following rules were upheld in accepting or rejecting the null hypotheses. All the coefficient values that indicate levels of significance (* or **) as calculated using SPSS were accepted and therefore, our null hypotheses rejected; when no significance is indicated in the coefficient (r) value, we accept our null hypotheses. Our confidence interval was set at the 0.05 (two tailed) level of significance to test the statistical significance of the data in this study.

Table 2: Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficients of the variable measures

Nos of items	Dimensions/Measures/moderating Variable	Numbers of items	Numbers of Case	Cronbach Alpha (α)
1.	Ergonomics	4	320	.970

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2.	Automation	4	320	.989
3.	Communication	4	320	.969
4.	Structure	4	320	.971
5.	Innovativeness	4	320	.970
6.	Loyalty	4	320	.969
7.	Leadership	4	320	.970

Source: SPSS Result (Version 20)

Table 3: Correlation Matrix for ergonomics and employee commitment

		Ergonomics	Innovativeness	Loyalty
Ergonomics	Pearson Correlation	1	.919**	.925**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	320	320	320
Innovativeness	Pearson Correlation	.919**	1	.986**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	320	320	320
Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.925**	.986**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	320	320	320

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

The table 3 shows the correlation of hypotheses one and two; the hypothesis one show a significant correlation at $r = .919^{**}$ where P-value = .000 ($P < 0.001$). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis ($H_{0:1}$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significant relationship between ergonomics and innovativeness in Local Government Councils, Rivers State, Nigeria. The hypothesis two show a significant correlation at $r = .925^{**}$ where P-value = .000 ($P < 0.001$). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis ($H_{0:2}$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significant relationship between ergonomics and employee loyalty in Local Government Councils in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 4. Correlation Matrix for technology and employee commitment

		Automation	Innovativeness	Loyalty
Automation	Pearson Correlation	1	.873**	.835**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	320	320	320
Innovativeness	Pearson Correlation	.873**	1	.986**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	320	320	320
Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.835**	.986**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	320	320	320

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

The table 4 above shows the correlation of hypotheses three and four; the hypothesis three show a significant correlation at $r = .873^{**}$ where P-value = .000 ($P < 0.001$). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis ($H_{0:3}$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significant relationship between automation and employee innovativeness of Local Government Council, Rivers State, Nigeria. The hypothesis four show a significant correlation at $r = .835^{**}$ where P-value = .000 ($P < 0.001$). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis ($H_{0:4}$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significant relationship between automation and employee loyalty in Local Government Councils, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix for communication and employee commitment

		Communication	Innovativeness	Loyalty
Communication	Pearson Correlation	1	.950**	.981**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	320	320	320
Innovativeness	Pearson Correlation	.950**	1	.986**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	320	320	320
Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.981**	.986**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	320	320	320

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

The table 5 shows the correlation of hypotheses five and six; the hypothesis five shows a significant correlation at $r = .950^{**}$ where $P\text{-value} = .000$ ($P < 0.001$). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis ($H_{0:5}$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significant relationship between communication and employee innovativeness of Local Government Councils, Rivers State, Nigeria.

The hypothesis six show a significant correlation at $r = .981^{**}$ where $P\text{-value} = .000$ ($P < 0.001$). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis ($H_{0:6}$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significant relationship between communication and employee loyalty in Local Government Councils, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 6. Correlation Matrix for structure and employee commitment

		Structure	Innovativeness	Loyalty
Structure	Pearson Correlation	1	.871**	.908**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	16	16	16
Innovativeness	Pearson Correlation	.871**	1	.986**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	16	16	16
Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.908**	.986**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	16	16	16

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

The table 6 shows the correlation of hypotheses seven and eight; the hypothesis seven shows a significant correlation at $r = .871^{**}$ where $P\text{-value} = .000$ ($P < 0.001$). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis ($H_{0:7}$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significant relationship between structure and employee innovativeness of Local Government Councils, Rivers State, Nigeria. The hypothesis eight show a significant correlation at $r = .908^{**}$ where $P\text{-value} = .000$ ($P < 0.001$). This implies a strong and significant relationship between both variables at 95% level of confidence. We therefore reject the null hypothesis ($H_{0:8}$), and upheld the alternate and restated, thus, there is a significant relationship between structure and employee loyalty in Local Government Councils, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 7: Showing Partial Correlation of the moderating effect of leadership between workplace management strategies and employee commitment

Control Variables		Workplace Management Strategies	Employee Commitment	Leadership
-none ^a	Workplace Management Strategies	Correlation	1.000	.925
		Significance (2-tailed)	.000	.000
		Df	0	318

	Correlation	.925	1.000	.949
Employee Commitment	Significance tailed)	(2-.000	.	.000
	Df	318	0	318
	Correlation	.935	.949	1.000
Leadership	Significance tailed)	(2-.000	.000	.
	Df	318	318	0
	Correlation	1.000	.333	
Workplace Management	Significance tailed)	(2-.000	.226	
	Df	0	317	
Leadership	Correlation	.333	1.000	
Employee Commitment	Significance tailed)	(2-.226	.	
	Df	317	0	

a. Cells contain zero-order (Pearson) correlations.

In table 7 above, the zero-order partial correlation between workplace management strategies and employee commitment shows the correlation coefficient where leadership is moderating the relationship; and this is indeed, both very high (0.935) and statistically significant (p-value (=0.000) < 0.05). The partial correlation controlling for leadership however is (0.333) and statistically significant (p-value (= 0.000) < 0.05.). The observed positive "relationship" between workplace management strategies and employee commitment is due to underlying relationships between each of those variables and leadership. Looking at the zero correlation, we find that both workplace management strategies and employee commitment are positively correlated with leadership, the control variable. Removing the effect of this control variable reduces the correlation between the other two variables to be 0.333 and it is significant at $\alpha = 0.05$, therefore we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that: leadership significantly moderates the relationship between workplace management strategies and employee commitment of Local Government Council employees in Rivers State, Nigeria.

2.2 Discussion of findings

This is a cross sectional survey that adopted the micro level study for individual employees to investigate the relationship between workplace management strategies and commitment of the local government council employees in Rivers State. The empirical findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between workplace management strategies and employee commitment of local government councils using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at 95% confidence interval. This empirical finding supports the study conducted by Tella et al., (2007), when they concluded that well-managed workplace usually sees average workers as the root sources of quality and productivity gains. It further revealed a strong positive relationship between ergonomics and measure of employee commitment, innovativeness $r=0.919$; $p= 0.000 < 0.05$, and $r=0.925$; $p= 0.000 < 0.05$., both at 95% confidence interval leading to the rejection of the null hypotheses ($H_{0.1}$) and ($H_{0.2}$). This study findings support the empirical findings of Ikonne, (2014), who investigated the influence of workstation and work posture ergonomics on the job satisfaction of librarians in the Federal and State University libraries in Southern Nigeria.

In the test of the automation, the study showed a strong positive relationship between workplace automation and measures of innovativeness and loyalty $r=0.873$; $p= 0.000 < 0.05$., and $r=0.835$; $p= 0.000 < 0.05$., both at 95% confidence interval leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis ($H_{0.3}$) and ($H_{0.4}$). This study findings support the empirical findings of Pfano & Beharry, (2016) who examined the effects of office automation on the efficiency in their research and results indicated that office automation has impacts on the efficient use of time response to the customers and accuracy in doing things and resulted to increasing efficiency. The findings also showed a strong positive relationship between communication and measure of innovativeness and loyalty at $r=0.950$; $p= 0.000 < 0.05$., and $r=0.981$; $p= 0.000 < 0.05$., both at 95% confidence interval leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis ($H_{0.5}$) and ($H_{0.6}$). The study also showed a strong positive relationship between structure and measure of loyalty and innovativeness at $r=0.871$; $p= 0.000 < 0.05$., and $r=0.908$; $p= 0.000 < 0.05$., both at 95% confidence interval leading to the rejection of the null hypotheses ($H_{0.7}$) and ($H_{0.8}$). This study findings support the empirical findings of previous studies. Behzad and

Aboufazel, (2013), carried out a study on the effects of organizational structure on the entrepreneurial orientation of the employees in metal industries of Kaveh industrial city of Iran.

The hypothesis nine show that, there is a strong positive moderating effects between workplace management and employee commitment $\beta=0.935$; $p=0.000 < 0.05$., at 95% confidence interval. Looking at the zero correlation, we find that both workplace management strategies and employee commitment are highly positively correlated with leadership, the control variable. Removing the effect of this control variable reduces the correlation between the other two variables to be 0.333 and it is significant at $\alpha = 0.05$, therefore we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that: leadership significantly moderates the relationship between workplace management strategies and employee commitment of local government in Rivers State, Nigeria.

III. Conclusions

A happy employee is a committed employee. Because commitments require an investment of time as well as mental and emotional energy, employee make them with the expectation of reciprocation. That is, people assume that in exchange for their commitment, they will get something of value in return such as favours, affection, gifts, attention, goods, money and property. In the world of work, employees and employers have traditionally made a tacit agreement: In exchange for workers' commitment, organizations would provide forms of value for employees, such as secure jobs, good environment, and fair compensation. Reciprocity affects the intensity of a commitment. When an individual to whom someone has made a commitment fails to come through with the expected exchange, the commitment breakdown. Therefore, management of local government councils owe the employee the duty of providing the enabling workplace that attracts employee commitment. In this study, the relationships between ergonomics, automation, communication and structure have been investigated. A survey seeking for the relationships has been conducted on a sample of 355 employees of selected local government councils in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study results shows significant relationships between the variables hypothesized in the research conceptual framework. Accordingly, the study strategies and methodology was designed in a way that points towards the achievement of the study objectives. The study concluded that workplace management strategies through the use of ergonomics, automation, communication and structure significantly influence employee innovativeness and loyalty. A scattered plot diagram was also plot to see the relationship between the predictor variable (workplace management strategies) and the criterion variable (Employee Commitment). The scatter plot graph shows at R^2 linear value of (0.712) depicting a strong viable and positive relationship between the two constructs. The implication is that an increase in workplace management strategies simultaneously brings about an increase in the level of employee commitment.

IV. Recommendations

The recommendations of this study are derived from the empirical findings and conclusions drawn. Therefore, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. There is partial presence of ergonomics in the Local Government Councils. The study therefore recommended that, local government administrators should pay more attention to critical factors of workplace ergonomics such as, workplace furniture, workspace design and ventilation/humidity and also encourage the maintenance of these tools to avoid undue breakdown as it has been found to have a strong positive relationship with employee commitment. It was found that Automation is a critical element of the workplace. The study therefore recommended that local government administrators should automate the workplace by procuring modern workplace technologies and also retrain their employees on how to fit into the trend of current technological advance. This will improve the flow of communication, task execution and also promote remote work-life balance.
2. Communication between employees and management of Local Government Councils were not excellent as some employee didn't talk much to each other or to management. The study recommended that, local government administrators should maintain good and effective communication amongst employees and management by being thorough and understandable in the process. They should also explore other channels of communication and not just the formal lines of communication as it has been found to increase employees' commitment. Again, communication should not just be downwards but also upward to encourage seamless flow of information.
3. The study recommended that, local government administrators should maximize a decentralized system of control that allows employees contribute to the decision making process of the organization. This will give employee a sense of belongingness and a sense of support; in return will trigger high level of employee commitment.
4. Local government administrators should adopt people oriented leadership style which gives employee a sense of belonging and support as it will allow for the adoption of the elements of this study in managing the workplace.

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