www.ijarp.com ISSN 2456-9992 Page: 01-25

International Journal Advanced Research Publications

Research Article

Volume: 02
Issue: 11

DECISION-MAKING PARTICIPATION AND ORGANISATIONAL PRODUCTIVITY IN THE DELTA STATE PUBLIC SERVICE, NIGERIA

***Agoke Chizebe Ifeoma, Isonah Teddy Ionagbe**

Delta State University, Business School Asaba, Delta State.

Article Received: 10 October 2026, Article Revised: 30 October 2026, Published on: 18 November 2026

***Corresponding Author: Agoke Chizebe Ifeoma**
Delta State University, Business School Asaba, Delta State.
Doi: https://doi-doi.org/101555/ijarp.2318

ABSTRACT

This article examined the relationship between decision-making participation and organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service, Nigeria. It is focused on four dimensions identified in the underlying study: employee involvement, employee commitment, employee consultation and communication effectiveness. The study responds to the concern that centralised administrative decision-making can distance public employees from decisions affecting their duties, welfare and service-delivery responsibilities. A descriptive survey design was adopted. The study reports a population of 1,200 employees in selected ministries, departments and agencies, from which a sample of 300 was determined using the Taro Yamane formula and selected through stratified random sampling. Of the 300 questionnaires distributed, 285 were returned and analysed, representing a 95 per cent response rate. Descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used. The reported correlations were positive and statistically significant for employee involvement ($r = .721$), employee commitment ($r = .756$), employee consultation ($r = .688$) and communication effectiveness ($r = .781$), with each reported significance value of .000, appropriately expressed as $p < .001$. Communication effectiveness recorded the largest bivariate correlation, followed by employee commitment, involvement and consultation. The findings support the practical value of participatory management in strengthening coordination, employee ownership and public service delivery.

KEYWORDS: employee participation; decision-making; organisational productivity; employee involvement; employee commitment; employee consultation; Delta State Public Service.

1. INTRODUCTION

Organisational productivity is a central concern in public administration because government institutions are expected to convert human, financial and material resources into services and outcomes that meet public needs. Unlike private enterprises, whose performance is often discussed in relation to profitability and market position, public organisations are assessed through the quality, accessibility, timeliness and reliability of services, the implementation of public policies, accountability, and the responsible use of public resources. Productivity in this setting therefore involves more than the volume of administrative tasks completed; it concerns whether public employees can perform their responsibilities efficiently and whether the institution achieves the objectives for which it was established. Robbins and Coulter (2018) and Daft (2016) provide a broad organisational perspective in which productivity is connected to the relationship between inputs and outputs, while public-sector productivity can be understood in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, employee performance and service delivery. This understanding is especially relevant to the Delta State Public Service, whose ministries, departments and agencies perform administrative, professional and technical functions through which state policies are implemented and services are delivered to citizens. The productivity of these institutions is influenced by resources and formal procedures, but also by the ways in which employees are managed, informed, motivated and involved in organisational affairs. A public organisation may possess formal structures and clearly stated objectives yet struggle to translate them into effective service delivery when communication is weak, staff morale is low, or decisions are disconnected from operational realities. Consequently, understanding the organisational conditions that support employee contribution is important to public-sector management. This article examines one such condition, employee participation in decision-making, and considers its relationship with organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service.

Decision-making is a core managerial activity because organisational planning, staffing, budgeting, resource allocation, policy implementation and service delivery all require choices among alternatives. Koontz and Weihrich (2010) describe management decision-making as the selection of a course of action from available alternatives, while Simon views decision-making as the selection of a satisfactory alternative. In a hierarchical administrative system,

decision authority may be concentrated among senior officers, with employees expected primarily to implement instructions. Such arrangements can provide clear lines of responsibility and may be appropriate when decisions are urgent, confidential or governed by statutory requirements. Nevertheless, exclusive reliance on top-down decisions can mean that the practical knowledge of employees who perform routine operational tasks is not sufficiently considered. Employees may understand workflow delays, resource shortages, citizen complaints and procedural obstacles that are not fully visible to senior management. When their experience is excluded, management risks adopting decisions that are formally sound but difficult to implement in practice. Participatory decision-making offers an alternative by creating structured opportunities for employees to contribute information, ideas and recommendations before decisions are finalised. Participation can range from consultation, where management seeks views but retains final authority, to joint or team-based decision-making in which employees share a more direct role. This article defines decision-making participation as employee involvement in the formulation, discussion and implementation of organisational decisions affecting their work and organisational goals. This definition accommodates both consultative and collaborative forms of participation without implying that every management decision must be made collectively. A key question for public administration is therefore not whether management should surrender all authority, but how it can use employee knowledge and feedback to improve decision quality, acceptance and implementation.

The case for employee participation is also grounded in the human dimensions of organisational life. Employees are not simply interchangeable units of labour; they bring knowledge, professional judgement, experience, expectations and social relationships to the workplace. The Human Relations perspective associated with Elton Mayo emphasises that social conditions, recognition and employees' sense of belonging can influence work attitudes and performance. McGregor's Theory Y similarly assumes that employees can exercise self-direction, accept responsibility and contribute creatively when organisational conditions allow them to do so. These perspectives challenge the assumption that effective administration depends only on close supervision and compliance. Amah and Ahiauzu (2013) support the view that employee involvement can strengthen empowerment, creativity, innovation, job satisfaction, commitment and motivation, while Barinua and Obah (2022) associate participation with improved managerial decisions, employee welfare and organisational performance. Osazevbaru and Amawhe (2022) also explain how employee knowledge and expertise can be mobilised to support productivity. These arguments suggest

several pathways through which participation may be associated with organisational outcomes. Employees who are heard may develop a stronger sense of ownership over decisions; employees who receive relevant information may coordinate their tasks more effectively; and employees who are consulted may be more willing to support decisions they understand. Such pathways are plausible in public institutions where implementation depends on cooperation across departments and occupational groups. However, participation should not be treated as automatically beneficial in every circumstance. Its contribution depends on the relevance of the issue, the quality of information available, the genuineness of consultation, the capacity of employees to contribute, and management's willingness to explain how staff input is used. Participation that is merely symbolic may generate cynicism rather than commitment.

The practical problem addressed in this article is the persistence of concerns about employee motivation, commitment, administrative efficiency and service delivery in public organisations, alongside perceptions that decision-making can remain highly centralised. The Delta State Public Service faces challenges including low employee commitment, poor motivation, lateness, inadequate personnel development and declining productivity. Limited opportunities for employees to contribute to decisions may be one factor associated with these conditions. This proposition is important because public employees are not only recipients of management decisions; they are also the personnel responsible for translating those decisions into administrative action and services for citizens. When workers have little opportunity to communicate operational constraints or offer suggestions, management may receive an incomplete picture of organisational needs. Exclusion can also weaken employees' sense of influence over workplace arrangements, potentially reducing their willingness to take responsibility for organisational objectives. Ojokuku and Sajuyigbe (2014) connect exclusion from decision-making with frustration and alienation, while Oyebamiji (2018) relates dissatisfaction, conflict, absenteeism and low productivity to centralised structures. These arguments do not establish that all productivity difficulties in the public service originate in management participation practices; funding, staffing, technology, bureaucracy, leadership and wider institutional conditions may also matter. Rather, they identify participation as a relevant organisational variable that warrants empirical examination alongside other determinants. The issue is particularly significant in public administration because inefficiencies may affect not only internal employee performance but also the speed and quality of services received by citizens. A context-specific study can therefore help

clarify whether employee involvement, commitment, consultation and communication are associated with productivity perceptions among employees in Delta State.

Although the relationship between participation and organisational outcomes has received attention in management research, there remains a contextual and conceptual gap concerning the Delta State Public Service. Several studies have focused on private enterprises, manufacturing organisations, banks or other settings whose objectives and operational environments may differ from those of public institutions. Public service organisations operate within statutory mandates, bureaucratic procedures, political and administrative accountability arrangements, and service obligations that cannot be reduced to commercial performance. Findings from private organisations may offer useful theoretical insights, but they cannot automatically be generalised to civil service institutions. Participation is also multidimensional, and treating it as a single undifferentiated variable can obscure the specific roles of employee involvement, employee commitment, employee consultation and communication effectiveness. This article therefore retains these four dimensions and examines each in relation to organisational productivity.

The overall objective of the article is to assess the relationship between decision-making participation and organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service, with particular attention to employee involvement, employee commitment, employee consultation and communication effectiveness. The analysis is guided by four corresponding questions: whether employee involvement, employee commitment, employee consultation and communication effectiveness are each related to organisational productivity. The contribution is contextual and empirical rather than a claim to establish a universal causal model. By reporting survey evidence from a state public service setting, the article provides a basis for discussion among public administrators and researchers concerned with participatory management. The article is organised into four sections: the introduction; literature review and theoretical framework; methodology, results and discussion; and conclusion with implications.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of this study is to examine the relationship between decision-making participation and organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service, Nigeria. While the specific objectives are to:

1. To examine the relationship between employee involvement in decision-making and organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service.

2. To assess the relationship between employee commitment and organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service.
3. To determine the relationship between employee consultation and organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service.
4. To investigate the relationship between communication effectiveness and organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Conceptual Review

3.1.1 Concept of Decision-Making Participation

Decision-making participation refers to the formal and informal arrangements through which employees contribute information, express opinions, suggest alternatives or take part in decisions concerning their work and the organisation. Participation may occur through discussions with supervisors, staff meetings, departmental committees, consultation exercises, representative forums, team problem-solving and joint-management structures. These arrangements differ in the degree of influence granted to employees: management may simply communicate a decision, seek employee views before deciding, or involve employees more directly in evaluating alternatives and determining a course of action. Participation should therefore be understood as a continuum rather than as a single uniform practice. Vroom and Yetton (1973) argue that the appropriate decision-making style depends on the decision context and the value of employee input, while Vroom and Jago (1988) further develop the relationship between leadership, participation and decision processes.

In organisational settings, participation does not necessarily mean that employees assume the final authority traditionally assigned to managers. Rather, it provides a mechanism for incorporating relevant employee knowledge into decisions while preserving the responsibilities attached to formal positions. This distinction is particularly important in public administration, where statutory duties, accountability requirements, confidentiality and urgent operational needs may limit the extent of collective decision-making. Nevertheless, employees who implement policies and deliver services often possess practical knowledge about workflow, resource constraints and service-user needs. Their contributions may help management assess the feasibility of proposed decisions and anticipate implementation difficulties. Simon (1997) emphasises the importance of decision processes in administrative organisations, while Koontz and Weihrich (2010) describe decision-making as the selection of a course of action from available alternatives.

3.1.2 Concept of Organisational Productivity

Organisational productivity concerns the relationship between the resources an organisation uses and the outputs or outcomes it achieves. In the broad management literature, productivity is associated with the effective conversion of human, financial, material and technological inputs into organisational results. Robbins and Coulter (2018) and Daft (2016) provide general organisational perspectives in which productivity is linked to the relationship between inputs and outputs, efficiency and the achievement of organisational objectives. Robbins and Judge (2019) also offer an organisational-behaviour perspective relevant to the contribution of employee attitudes and performance to organisational outcomes.

In public institutions, productivity requires interpretation beyond profit or market share because government organisations are principally expected to implement public policies and provide services in accordance with public responsibilities. Public-sector productivity may therefore be assessed through efficiency, effectiveness, service quality, timeliness, responsiveness, accountability, citizen satisfaction and prudent resource utilisation. Efficiency concerns the extent to which resources are used economically and waste is minimised, whereas effectiveness concerns the extent to which organisational objectives are achieved. The two dimensions are complementary: rapid processing does not necessarily represent effective performance if decisions are inaccurate or services do not meet public needs. For this study, productivity is considered through employees' reported assessments of work efficiency, service delivery and organisational performance; it is not treated as an independently audited output-to-input ratio (Daft, 2016; Robbins & Coulter, 2018; Robbins & Judge, 2019).

3.1.3 Employee Involvement in Decision-Making

Employee involvement refers to the extent to which staff are given opportunities to contribute ideas, opinions, information and recommendations to organisational activities and decisions. It includes participation in problem-solving, the identification of work-related challenges and the consideration of suggestions before management reaches a decision. Employees who perform operational duties may have detailed knowledge of administrative processes, service-delivery bottlenecks and practical constraints that are not always visible to senior officers. Involving such employees can broaden the information available to management and make decisions more responsive to workplace realities. Amah and Ahiauzu (2013) associate employee involvement with organisational effectiveness, while Osazevbaru and Amawhe (2022) examine employee involvement in decision-making in relation to organisational effectiveness in Nigerian manufacturing firms.

The potential value of involvement also lies in the sense of ownership that may develop when employees believe their views are considered. Employees who understand the rationale for a decision and recognise their contribution to it may be more willing to support its implementation. However, involvement is unlikely to be meaningful where management solicits suggestions but provides no response or explanation about how contributions are treated. It is therefore important to distinguish genuine involvement from symbolic consultation. The present study operationalises involvement through employees' views about participation in important decisions, encouragement to contribute ideas, consideration of suggestions and the perceived relationship between involvement, motivation and productivity (Amah & Ahiauzu, 2013; Abba, 2021; Asokk et al., 2021).

3.1.4 Employee Commitment and Organisational Productivity

Employee commitment refers to an employee's attachment, loyalty and dedication to the organisation and its objectives. It may be reflected in willingness to exert effort, responsibility in performing assigned duties, cooperation with colleagues and sustained concern for organisational goals. In public service organisations, commitment is relevant to the continuity and reliability of administrative work because the delivery of public services depends on employees carrying out responsibilities consistently. Organisational-behaviour literature recognises employee attitudes as relevant to workplace behaviour and performance, while the study's cited literature connects employee participation and commitment with organisational outcomes (Robbins & Judge, 2019; Kamau & Chege, 2016; Osazevbaru & Amawhe, 2022).

An important conceptual distinction is that commitment is not identical to participation. Involvement, consultation and communication describe practices through which employees may contribute to organisational decisions, whereas commitment is more appropriately treated as an employee attitude or behavioural orientation. Participation may create conditions in which employees feel recognised and develop a stronger attachment to organisational objectives; commitment may, in turn, be associated with the effort employees bring to their work. The present article retains commitment as one of the four dimensions because that is how the underlying study operationalised it, but the distinction should be borne in mind when interpreting the results. Accordingly, the relationship examined is an association between reported commitment and perceived productivity, not proof that participation necessarily causes commitment or that commitment alone produces productivity (Robbins & Judge, 2019; Osazevbaru & Amawhe, 2022).

3.1.5 Employee Consultation and Organisational Productivity

Employee consultation is a process through which management seeks employees' views, information and suggestions before making decisions that may affect their duties, working conditions or organisational responsibilities. Consultation may take place through staff meetings, departmental discussions, representative committees or direct engagement between supervisors and employees. Unlike joint decision-making, consultation does not necessarily transfer final authority from management to employees; its central purpose is to ensure that relevant perspectives are considered before a decision is finalised. The value of consultation is especially apparent where employees possess practical knowledge about the likely consequences of proposed administrative changes. The study's literature identifies employee participation as relevant to organisational commitment and outcomes, including the work of Kamau and Chege (2016) and Shaed et al. (2018).

Consultation may be associated with productivity when it helps management identify implementation problems, consider alternative approaches and explain the reasons for decisions. It may also support acceptance by giving employees an opportunity to understand proposed changes and communicate concerns. For consultation to be useful, however, it should occur early enough to influence the decision, include employees whose work is affected and provide feedback on the views received. Consultation that takes place only after management has made an irreversible decision may be experienced as a procedural formality rather than a genuine opportunity to contribute. In this study, consultation is examined through employees' perceptions of consultation before major decisions and its perceived contribution to acceptance, workplace relations, morale and productivity (Kamau & Chege, 2016; Shaed et al., 2018).

3.1.6 Communication Effectiveness and Organisational Productivity

Communication effectiveness concerns the extent to which information is transmitted accurately, clearly and promptly, understood by its intended recipients and used to coordinate organisational activities. Within public institutions, communication occurs between management and employees, among departments, and between supervisors and operational personnel. Effective communication helps clarify organisational goals, responsibilities, procedures, deadlines and policy changes. It can also reduce misunderstanding, duplication and avoidable errors by ensuring that employees work with consistent information. Organisational management and behaviour literature identifies communication and coordination as important elements of organisational functioning and employee performance (Daft, 2016; Robbins & Coulter, 2018; Robbins & Judge, 2019).

Communication is closely related to consultation, but the two concepts are not interchangeable. Communication may involve the dissemination of instructions and information, whereas consultation requires management to invite and consider employee responses before decisions are made. Communication becomes more supportive of participation when it operates in two directions: employees receive information and also have accessible channels through which to ask questions, report operational difficulties and provide feedback. In public service organisations, these processes can support coordination across units whose tasks are interdependent. The present study examines communication effectiveness through the adequacy and clarity of information, its contribution to cooperation and decision-making, and employees' perceptions of its relationship with productivity (Daft, 2016; Robbins & Judge, 2019; Shaed et al., 2018).

3.2 Empirical Review

3.2.1 Studies on Employee Involvement and Organisational Outcomes

Amah and Ahiauzu (2013) examined employee involvement in relation to organisational effectiveness. Their work is relevant to the present study because it provides a basis for considering how employees' contribution to organisational processes may be associated with broader organisational outcomes. Abba (2021) focused specifically on the effects of employee participation in decision-making on organisational productivity in Tonimas Nigeria Limited, while Asokk et al. (2021) addressed the impact of employee involvement in decision-making on organisational performance. These studies establish that employee involvement and participation have been investigated in relation to effectiveness, performance and productivity; however, the bibliographic information available in the present article does not provide sufficient methodological and statistical details to make a reliable comparison of their sample sizes, instruments or effect estimates.

3.2.2 Studies on Participation, Commitment and Organisational Outcomes

Kamau and Chege (2016) examined employee participation in decision-making in relation to organisational commitment in the context of Savannah Cement Limited. This study is relevant because it draws attention to commitment as an employee attitude that may be associated with opportunities to participate in organisational decisions. Osazevbaru and Amawhe (2022) examined employee involvement in decision-making and organisational effectiveness in Nigerian manufacturing firms, providing a Nigerian organisational context for considering the relationship between employee contribution and organisational outcomes. The present article extends this discussion to a state public service setting, while recognising that manufacturing organisations and government institutions operate under different

mandates and accountability arrangements (Kamau & Chege, 2016; Osazevbaru & Amawhe, 2022).

3.2.3 Studies on Participation in Small and Medium-Sized and Public-Sector Settings

Ojokuku and Sajuyigbe (2014) investigated the effect of employee participation in decision-making on the performance of selected small and medium-scale enterprises in Lagos, Nigeria. Oyebamiji (2018) examined employee participation in decision-making and organisational performance in Ladoke Akintola University of Technology Teaching Hospital, Ogbomoso, while Shaed et al. (2018) considered types of employee participation in decision-making among middle management in the Malaysian public sector. These studies are relevant because they address participation across different organisational settings, including Nigerian enterprises, a public health institution and a public-sector context outside Nigeria. The present study focuses specifically on the Delta State Public Service and considers four dimensions identified in its research framework (Ojokuku & Sajuyigbe, 2014; Oyebamiji, 2018; Shaed et al., 2018).

3.3 Theoretical Framework

3.3.1 Human Relations Theory

Human Relations Theory, associated with Elton Mayo and the Hawthorne studies, emphasises the social and psychological dimensions of organisational life. The perspective challenges explanations of productivity that rely exclusively on formal structures, technical arrangements and financial incentives. It draws attention to social relationships, recognition, group interaction and employees' sense of belonging as factors relevant to workplace attitudes and behaviour. Applied to the Delta State Public Service, the theory suggests that employees may be more willing to contribute to organisational objectives when management recognises their experience and provides opportunities for meaningful participation. The theory is relevant to the present study because employee involvement and consultation may communicate recognition and respect, although the theory does not imply that participation alone can overcome resource or institutional constraints (Mayo, 1933; Amah & Ahiauzu, 2013).

3.3.2 Participative Decision-Making Theory

Participative Decision-Making Theory, associated with Vroom and Yetton (1973) and further developed by Vroom and Jago (1988), explains how managers may select among decision-making styles, including autocratic, consultative and group-based approaches. A central proposition is that the suitability of participation depends on the nature of the decision, the importance of decision quality, the distribution of relevant information and the need for

employee acceptance. Participation is therefore not presented as universally appropriate for every decision. Rather, managers should consider whether employees possess knowledge that can improve the decision and whether their involvement is likely to support implementation. This framework directly informs the present study's focus on employee involvement and consultation, and it provides a basis for considering how communication can enable employees to contribute relevant information (Vroom & Yetton, 1973; Vroom & Jago, 1988).

3.3.3 McGregor's Theory Y

McGregor's Theory Y assumes that employees can exercise self-direction, accept responsibility and apply creativity to organisational tasks when workplace conditions support these capacities. It contrasts with managerial assumptions that employees must invariably be controlled through close supervision. In the context of the present study, Theory Y provides an explanation for why managers may benefit from inviting employees to contribute ideas, participate in problem-solving and accept responsibility for agreed organisational objectives. It is relevant to employee involvement and commitment because it treats employees as potential contributors to organisational performance rather than merely as recipients of instructions. The theory should not be interpreted as suggesting that every employee will always be motivated or that supervision is unnecessary; instead, it highlights the importance of organisational conditions that permit responsible contribution (McGregor, 1960; Robbins & Judge, 2019).

3.3.4 Relevance of the Theories to the Study

The three perspectives provide complementary explanations for the relationship examined in this article. Human Relations Theory highlights recognition, social interaction and morale; Participative Decision-Making Theory explains when and why employee input may be incorporated into managerial choices; and Theory Y emphasises employees' capacity for self-direction and responsibility. Together, they provide a conceptual basis for examining involvement, consultation, communication and commitment in relation to organisational productivity. They also indicate that participation should be appropriate to the decision and supported by clear communication, competent leadership and workable administrative arrangements. The theories explain plausible relationships, but the cross-sectional survey design used in this study can establish associations in the sampled organisations rather than prove causal effects (Mayo, 1933; McGregor, 1960; Vroom & Yetton, 1973; Vroom & Jago, 1988).

3.4 Gap in the Literature

The literature reviewed identifies a contextual gap because several of the cited studies concern private enterprises, manufacturing organisations, a teaching hospital or the Malaysian public sector, whereas the present study is situated in the Delta State Public Service. Differences in statutory responsibilities, bureaucratic procedures, accountability arrangements and service-delivery obligations mean that findings from other organisational settings cannot automatically be generalised to state civil service institutions. The present study addresses this contextual concern by examining employees in selected Delta State public-service organisations (Ojokuku & Sajuyigbe, 2014; Oyebamiji, 2018; Shaed et al., 2018; Osazevbaru & Amawhe, 2022).

A further conceptual gap concerns the tendency to treat employee participation as a single broad construct. The present study examines employee involvement, employee consultation and communication effectiveness as distinct practices or processes, while retaining employee commitment as one of the dimensions specified in the underlying research framework. Because commitment is conceptually an employee attitude rather than a participation mechanism, this distinction is important for interpretation and for future research. An additional empirical contribution is the provision of survey evidence from the Delta State Public Service on the separate associations between each of these four dimensions and perceived organisational productivity. The study consequently contributes a context-specific analysis without claiming to establish causation or a universal model of public-sector productivity (Robbins & Judge, 2019; Vroom & Yetton, 1973; Vroom & Jago, 1988).

4. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine the relationship between decision-making participation and organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service. A descriptive survey is suitable for collecting standardised information from a group of respondents about their perceptions, attitudes and experiences at a particular point in time. The design enabled us to obtain quantitative responses from employees working in selected ministries, departments and agencies and to analyse patterns across the study variables. The study area was Delta State, located in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria, with Asaba as the state capital. The public service was selected because it performs administrative, professional and technical functions connected with policy formulation, implementation and public service delivery. The dissertation reports a target population of 1,200 employees drawn from selected ministries and departments. The population included employees from

different cadres and professional backgrounds, including administrative staff, senior officers, middle-level managers and other personnel involved in organisational operations. This population definition is relevant because employees across levels may experience decision-making processes differently: senior staff may have more routine access to management forums, while operational employees may have detailed knowledge of service-delivery processes but fewer formal opportunities to influence policy. The survey approach allowed these experiences to be captured through a common instrument. It should be emphasised, however, that a cross-sectional descriptive survey provides a snapshot of reported views rather than a longitudinal account of how participation and productivity change over time. It is also dependent on respondents' perceptions and willingness to provide candid answers. This study acknowledges possible reluctance among some employees because of confidentiality concerns or fear of victimisation.

The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula, with a population of 1,200 and a 0.05 level of precision. The resulting sample was 300 respondents. A stratified random sampling technique was adopted: the population was divided into strata based on ministries, departments and agencies, the sample was proportionately distributed across the identified strata, and simple random selection was then used within the strata. This procedure was intended to provide representation across different parts of the public service and reduce the risk that the sample would be dominated by a single department or staff category. A structured questionnaire developed by the researcher served as the principal instrument. It contained demographic questions and statements measuring employee involvement, employee commitment, employee consultation, communication effectiveness and organisational productivity. Responses were recorded on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1), with an undecided midpoint (3). The questionnaire was subjected to face and content validation by experts in management and social sciences, who considered its clarity, relevance, comprehensiveness and coverage of the research objectives. The study's reliability was assessed through a test-retest procedure involving twenty respondents outside the study area, with the same instrument administered again after two weeks and the two sets of responses analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. A coefficient of 0.70 or above was considered acceptable. Primary data were collected through questionnaires, while secondary information was drawn from books, journals, government publications and other relevant documents.

300 questionnaires were distributed and 285 were correctly completed and returned, leaving 15 unreturned questionnaires. This represents a response rate of 95 per cent, which provides a

substantial proportion of the sample for analysis. The returned questionnaires formed the basis for the descriptive and correlational analyses. The demographic summary indicates that 160 respondents were male (56.1 per cent) and 125 were female (43.9 per cent). In the age distribution, 45 respondents (15.8 per cent) were between 20 and 30 years, 90 (31.6 per cent) were between 31 and 40 years, 95 (33.3 per cent) were between 41 and 50 years, and 55 (19.3 per cent) were aged 51 years and above. With respect to educational qualification, 40 respondents (14.0 per cent) held OND/NCE qualifications, 155 (54.4 per cent) held HND/B.Sc. qualifications, 70 (24.6 per cent) held master's degrees and 20 (7.0 per cent) held PhDs. These characteristics suggest that the respondents included a range of ages and educational backgrounds, with the largest reported age group being 41–50 years and the largest educational category being HND/B.Sc. holders.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis proceeds objective by objective, beginning with the descriptive results and followed by the Pearson Product Moment Correlation used to determine the relationship between each dimension of decision-making participation and organisational productivity. The discussion of each finding is related to the relevant literature and theoretical perspectives underpinning the study. Since the study adopted a cross-sectional survey design, the findings are interpreted as relationships or associations rather than evidence of causal effects.

5.1 Employee Involvement in Decision-Making and Organisational Productivity

The first objective was to examine the relationship between employee involvement in decision-making and organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service.

The descriptive results indicate a generally positive perception of employee involvement. The item means ranged from 3.96 to 4.28, with a grand mean of 4.12. Respondents generally agreed that employees were involved in important organisational decisions, management encouraged employees to contribute ideas, employee suggestions were considered before decisions were made, and employee involvement enhanced motivation and productivity. The lowest mean of 3.96 was recorded for the statement concerning whether employee suggestions were considered before decisions were made, while the highest mean of 4.28 was recorded for the statement that employee involvement enhances productivity. The relatively lower score for consideration of suggestions is noteworthy because it suggests that although employees perceive opportunities for involvement, the extent to which their contributions are actually incorporated into decisions may be less consistent.

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis produced a correlation coefficient of r = .721, with N = 285 and p < .001. The result indicates a strong, positive and statistically significant relationship between employee involvement in decision-making and organisational productivity. Accordingly, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between employee involvement in decision-making and organisational productivity was rejected at the 0.05 level of significance.

The finding suggests that higher levels of employee involvement tend to occur alongside higher levels of perceived organisational productivity among employees in the sampled Delta State Public Service organisations. A possible explanation is that employees who are directly involved in decisions can contribute operational knowledge that may not be readily available to senior management. Employees who perform day-to-day administrative and service-delivery tasks are often familiar with workflow difficulties, resource constraints, procedural delays and opportunities for improvement. Their involvement can therefore make organisational decisions more responsive to operational realities. In addition, participation may strengthen employees' sense of ownership and responsibility towards decisions that affect their work.

This finding is consistent with Amah and Ahiauzu (2013), who associated employee involvement with organisational effectiveness. It is also consistent with the Human Relations perspective, which emphasises recognition, social interaction and employees' sense of being valued, and with Participative Decision-Making Theory, which proposes that employee knowledge can improve decision-making when such knowledge is relevant to the decision being made. The finding therefore provides empirical support for the proposition that employee involvement is relevant to organisational productivity in the study setting.

However, the result should not be interpreted to mean that employee involvement alone causes higher productivity. The correlation establishes association, not causation. Other factors, including leadership, resources, staffing, technology, organisational culture and administrative procedures, may also influence productivity. Nevertheless, the relatively high correlation indicates that employee involvement is an important organisational variable that warrants managerial attention.

5.2 Employee Commitment and Organisational Productivity

The second objective was to assess the relationship between employee commitment and organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service.

The descriptive findings show a positive perception of employee commitment. The five commitment-related items produced a grand mean of 4.19. Respondents generally agreed that

committed employees perform better, commitment improves efficiency, participation increases employee commitment, committed employees support organisational goals and commitment improves service delivery. The highest item mean was 4.31 for the statement that committed workers support organisational goals, while the lowest was 4.09 for the statement that participation increases commitment. These results indicate that respondents generally regarded employee commitment as relevant to performance, efficiency and the achievement of organisational objectives.

The Pearson correlation analysis yielded $r = .756$, $N = 285$, $p < .001$. This represents a strong, positive and statistically significant relationship between employee commitment and organisational productivity. The null hypothesis of no significant relationship between employee commitment and organisational productivity was therefore rejected at the 0.05 level of significance.

The finding indicates that stronger employee commitment is associated with stronger perceptions of organisational productivity. This relationship can be understood in terms of employees' willingness to devote effort to organisational objectives, maintain responsibility for assigned duties, cooperate with colleagues and persist in completing tasks. In a public service environment, such commitment is particularly relevant because the quality and continuity of public services depend on employees' willingness to carry out administrative responsibilities consistently.

The finding is in line with the discussion of Osazevbaru and Amawhe (2022), which associates participation, commitment and productivity. It is also broadly consistent with organisational-behaviour perspectives that recognise employee attitudes as relevant to work performance and organisational outcomes.

An important conceptual issue, however, should be recognised. Employee commitment is not identical to employee participation. Commitment is more appropriately viewed as an employee attitude or behavioural orientation, whereas involvement, consultation and communication describe organisational practices through which participation can occur. The present study retains employee commitment as one of its four dimensions because this reflects the operational structure of the original study. Nevertheless, the finding suggests that future research could examine whether employee involvement, consultation and communication contribute to commitment and whether commitment subsequently relates to productivity. Such an approach would provide a clearer explanation of the mechanisms linking participatory management to organisational outcomes.

Thus, while the present finding establishes a significant positive association between commitment and productivity, it does not establish that commitment independently causes productivity or that commitment is necessarily more important than the other dimensions examined.

5.3 Employee Consultation and Organisational Productivity

The third objective was to determine the relationship between employee consultation and organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service.

The descriptive results produced a grand mean of 4.05 for employee consultation, with item means ranging from 3.88 to 4.13. Respondents generally agreed that consultation improves acceptance of decisions, reduces workplace conflict, improves employee morale and enhances productivity. However, the item concerning whether management consults employees before major decisions recorded the lowest mean of 3.88. The highest mean of 4.13 was recorded for the statement that consultation enhances productivity.

This pattern is important because it distinguishes employees' recognition of the value of consultation from their experience of consultation as a regular management practice. Employees appear to recognise that consultation can contribute positively to organisational outcomes, but the lower score concerning consultation before major decisions suggests that such consultation may not always occur consistently.

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation produced $r = .688$, $N = 285$, $p < .001$. The result indicates a positive and statistically significant relationship between employee consultation and organisational productivity. Consequently, the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between employee consultation and organisational productivity was rejected at the 0.05 level of significance.

The finding suggests that organisations in which employees report greater opportunities for consultation also tend to record higher perceptions of organisational productivity. Consultation may contribute to productivity by providing management with information about operational realities before decisions are implemented. It may also enable employees to identify possible difficulties, suggest alternatives and anticipate the effects of proposed changes. In addition, consultation can improve acceptance of decisions because employees have an opportunity to understand the reasons for decisions and communicate concerns before implementation.

The finding is consistent with the literature reviewed in the study, particularly the work of Kamau and Chege (2014), which is cited in relation to consultation and organisational outcomes. It also reflects the logic of Participative Decision-Making Theory, which

recognises that consultation may be appropriate where employees possess relevant information that can improve decision quality or implementation.

The comparatively lower correlation coefficient of .688 does not mean that consultation is unimportant. Rather, it was the smallest of the four bivariate correlations reported in the study while remaining statistically significant and substantively positive. The lower descriptive score for consultation before major decisions may indicate an area in which public service managers can strengthen participatory practices. Regular departmental consultations, staff meetings, representative committees and documented feedback mechanisms could provide employees with clearer opportunities to contribute before decisions are finalised.

However, consultation should not be interpreted as requiring management to achieve consensus on every organisational matter. Certain decisions may be constrained by legislation, confidentiality, urgency or formal administrative authority. The practical objective should therefore be to provide meaningful opportunities for employee input where such input is relevant while retaining clearly defined managerial responsibility for final decisions.

5.4 Communication Effectiveness and Organisational Productivity

The fourth objective was to investigate the relationship between communication effectiveness and organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service.

Communication effectiveness recorded the highest grand mean of the four dimensions, at 4.23. The individual item means were 4.25 for the view that effective communication improves work performance, 4.08 for the adequacy of information received by employees, 4.18 for communication promoting cooperation, 4.29 for communication supporting decision-making and 4.33 for communication enhancing productivity. These results indicate that respondents generally perceived communication as an important component of effective organisational functioning.

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation produced $r = .781$, $N = 285$, $p < .001$. This was the strongest of the four reported correlations and indicates a strong, positive and statistically significant relationship between communication effectiveness and organisational productivity. The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between communication effectiveness and organisational productivity was therefore rejected at the 0.05 level of significance.

The finding indicates that employees who reported more effective communication also tended to report higher levels of organisational productivity. This relationship can be explained by the coordinating function of communication in organisations. Employees

require timely, accurate and understandable information concerning organisational objectives, procedures, responsibilities and changes in policy. Where such information is communicated effectively, employees are more likely to understand what is expected of them, coordinate activities with other employees and departments, and reduce avoidable errors and duplication. Communication is also particularly important to participatory decision-making. Employees cannot make meaningful contributions to organisational decisions if they do not have access to relevant information. Similarly, consultation cannot be effective where communication operates only in one direction. Effective participation therefore requires communication that allows information to move from management to employees and from employees back to management.

The finding is consistent with the broader theoretical position of Participative Decision-Making Theory, which emphasises the importance of relevant information in selecting an appropriate decision-making approach. It is also consistent with the study's discussion of participation and service quality, including the literature cited from Shaed et al. (2018).

The strong correlation of .781 and the highest descriptive grand mean of 4.23 suggest that communication effectiveness may be an especially important area for management attention. Nevertheless, this coefficient should not be interpreted as proof that communication alone determines productivity. The study used self-reported questionnaire measures, and communication and productivity were measured through the same instrument. Consequently, conceptual overlap and common-method effects may contribute to the observed strength of the association. Future research could strengthen the evidence by combining employee perceptions with independent indicators such as processing time, service backlogs, error rates, supervisor assessments or citizen-service measures.

6. CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study examined the relationship between decision-making participation and organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service, focusing on employee involvement, employee commitment, employee consultation and communication effectiveness. Based on the survey evidence reported in the dissertation, all four dimensions were positively and significantly associated with organisational productivity. Employee involvement recorded a correlation of .721, employee commitment .756, employee consultation .688 and communication effectiveness .781, with each relationship reported as statistically significant at $p < .001$. The descriptive grand means also indicated general agreement with the positive statements: 4.12 for involvement, 4.19 for commitment, 4.05 for

consultation and 4.23 for communication effectiveness. The strongest bivariate association was observed for communication effectiveness, suggesting that the clarity, timeliness and usefulness of information may be especially important to employees' perceptions of productivity. The results support the central argument that employees' knowledge and experience should be recognised as resources that can contribute to organisational decision-making and service delivery. They also suggest that participation may be relevant not only because it gives staff a voice, but because it can strengthen understanding, cooperation, acceptance and responsibility in the implementation of decisions. Since the research used a descriptive cross-sectional survey and Pearson correlations, it establishes statistically significant associations within the sample but does not demonstrate causal effects. The study they provide empirical support for the view that participatory practices and positive productivity perceptions tend to occur together in the surveyed Delta State public service setting. The results offer a reasonable basis for managerial action and for more rigorous future research using longitudinal and objective performance measures.

The first implication for public administration is that employee involvement should be treated as a practical management resource rather than a symbolic gesture. Ministries, departments and agencies can create structured opportunities for employees to identify operational problems, propose improvements and contribute to decisions that directly affect their work. Departmental meetings, task teams, staff committees and documented suggestion systems can provide channels for such involvement. To ensure that these mechanisms are meaningful, management should communicate the purpose of consultation, identify which decisions are open to employee input, specify the period for submitting views and explain how contributions were considered. Where a suggestion cannot be adopted because of legal, financial or policy constraints, management should provide a reasoned explanation. This feedback loop is important because employees may become discouraged if their contributions disappear without acknowledgement or response. The reported positive association between involvement and productivity ($r = .721$) provides a rationale for strengthening these practices, while the item-level result showing a comparatively lower mean for whether suggestions are considered before decisions are made points to an area requiring attention. Employee involvement should also be proportionate to the nature of the decision. Strategic decisions involving statutory authority or confidential matters may remain the responsibility of designated officials, but operational decisions about workflow, internal coordination, service bottlenecks and implementation arrangements may benefit from staff knowledge. Participatory management is therefore compatible with administrative accountability when

roles and decision rights are clearly defined. Managers remain responsible for final decisions where required, but can improve the quality and implementability of those decisions by ensuring that relevant employees have a genuine opportunity to contribute. This approach may strengthen ownership and reduce the gap between policy formulation and day-to-day execution.

A second implication concerns employee commitment and consultation. The correlation between commitment and productivity (r = .756) suggests that dedication to organisational objectives is closely associated with employees' perceptions of effective work and service delivery. Public service managers should therefore consider employee welfare, recognition, fair treatment, professional development and transparent performance expectations as part of a broader productivity strategy. Commitment cannot be demanded solely through rules or supervision; it is more likely to be sustained where employees understand organisational goals, perceive that management treats them fairly and believe that their work is valued. At the same time, the positive relationship between consultation and productivity (r = .688) indicates the relevance of seeking employee views before implementing decisions that affect their responsibilities. The comparatively lower consultation grand mean of 4.05 and the lowest item mean of 3.88 for consultation before major decisions suggest that regular consultation may be less consistently experienced than the other practices measured. Management could address this through scheduled staff consultations, departmental forums, representative committees and pre-implementation discussions on proposed changes. Such processes should be designed to include employees at different levels and across relevant professional groups, rather than relying exclusively on the views of senior officers. Consultation can improve the information available to decision-makers, identify implementation risks and reduce avoidable resistance. However, it should not become an indefinite process that prevents timely administrative action. Clear procedures can specify when consultation is required, who should be consulted, how feedback is recorded and who retains final decision authority. By combining employee commitment initiatives with transparent consultation practices, public service organisations can strengthen cooperation while maintaining the formal responsibilities required for accountable administration.

A third implication arises from the comparatively strong association between communication effectiveness and organisational productivity (r = .781). Public institutions depend on information moving accurately and promptly between senior management, departments, supervisors and frontline employees. Unclear instructions, delayed circulars, incomplete feedback and inconsistent interpretations of policy can create avoidable errors and slow

service delivery. The study's results support the need to strengthen communication as both an operational function and a foundation for participation. Management should ensure that organisational goals, policies, procedures and changes are communicated in language that employees can understand and through channels that are accessible to the relevant staff. Communication should also be two-way: employees need opportunities to ask questions, report implementation difficulties and receive feedback on issues raised. Regular briefings, departmental meetings, internal digital platforms, written guidance and clear escalation channels may support this process, provided that staff have the resources and training needed to use them. Communication systems should also recognise the diversity of public service roles; a message designed for senior administrative staff may need to be translated into practical instructions for operational personnel. Since communication had the highest reported grand mean (4.23) and correlation coefficient, it is a logical priority for management attention. A sound policy response would therefore integrate communication improvements with staff development, performance management, resource planning and process review. Communication can help employees understand and coordinate work, but it cannot substitute for adequate resources or remove structural obstacles that require policy and administrative action.

The study contributes to the literature by providing survey evidence from a specific Nigerian public service context and by examining four dimensions rather than treating participation as a single undifferentiated construct. Its contextual focus is relevant because public service institutions operate under conditions that differ from those of private manufacturing and commercial organisations. The results add to the discussion represented in the dissertation by Amah and Ahiauzu (2013), Barinua and Obah (2022), Osazevbaru and Amawhe (2022) and other cited works concerning employee participation, commitment and organisational outcomes.

Based on the findings, public service management should institutionalise employee involvement in appropriate organisational decisions, strengthen employee commitment through fair and supportive human-resource practices, make consultation a regular part of decision preparation and implementation, and improve communication channels between management and staff. These recommendations are consistent with the dissertation's proposals for participatory leadership, regular staff meetings, suggestion schemes, training and development, team-based decision-making and periodic evaluation of participation practices. Implementation should be monitored rather than assumed to be effective simply because a committee or communication platform has been established. Agencies can evaluate

participation by recording the number and range of employees consulted, the issues raised, management responses, suggestions adopted and the operational changes that follow. Productivity evaluation should combine employee perceptions with administrative indicators such as processing times, service backlogs, error rates, completion of assigned tasks, citizen complaints and service-user feedback, where such information is available and appropriate. Future research should extend the geographical coverage to other states and public institutions, use longitudinal designs to assess changes over time, and employ multivariate analyses to estimate the independent relationships among involvement, commitment, consultation, communication and productivity. Researchers should also distinguish participation practices from employee attitudes and outcomes, particularly by modelling commitment as a possible mediator rather than automatically treating it as a component of participation. In conclusion, the study indicates that employee involvement, commitment, consultation and communication effectiveness are all positively associated with organisational productivity in the Delta State Public Service. The practical message is not that management authority should be abandoned, but that public institutions can make more informed and implementable decisions when they draw on the knowledge of employees, communicate clearly and provide meaningful opportunities for staff input. Such practices offer a credible route for strengthening organisational coordination and the quality of public service delivery.

REFERENCE

1. Abba, S. (2021). Effects of employee participation in decision making on organizational productivity: A study of Tonimas Nigeria Limited, Abia State. International Journal of Business and Management Research, 9(2), 45–58.
2. Amah, E., & Ahiauzu, A. (2013). Employee involvement and organizational effectiveness. Journal of Management Development, 32(7), 661–674.
3. Asokk, D., Gudda, A., Bhati, P., & Vanishree, C. T. (2021). The impact of employee involvement in decision making on an organisational performance. *European Journal of Molecular & Clinical Medicine, 8*(1), 1200–1212.
4. Barinua, V., & Obah, A. C. (2022). Employee participation and organizational productivity. International Journal of Advanced Academic Research, 8(4), 1–20.
5. Daft, R. L. (2016). Organization theory and design (12th ed.). Cengage Learning.

6. Kamau, S. W., & Chege, A. N. (2016). Employee participation in decision making influences organizational commitment: A case study of Savannah Cement Limited. *Management and Administrative Sciences Review, 5*(5), 260–268
7. Koontz, H., & Weihrich, H. (2010). Essentials of management: An international perspective (8th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.
8. Mayo, E. (1933). The human problems of an industrial civilization. Macmillan.
9. McGregor, D. (1960). The human side of enterprise. McGraw-Hill.
10. **Ojokuku, R. M., & Sajuyigbe, A. S. (2014).** Effect of employee participation in decision making on performance of selected small and medium scale enterprises in Lagos, Nigeria. *European Journal of Business and Management, 6*(10), 93–97.
11. **Osazevbaru, H. O., & Amawhe, P. E. (2022).** Emerging paradigm of employees' involvement in decision making and organizational effectiveness: Further evidence from Nigerian manufacturing firms. *American Journal of Economics and Business Innovation, 1*(3), 14–23. https://doi.org/10.54536/ajebi.v1i3.374
12. **Oyebamiji, F. F. (2018).** Influence of employees' participation in decision making on organization performance: A study of Ladoke Akintola University of Technology Teaching Hospital, Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovative Social Sciences & Humanities Research, 6*(3), 8–17.
13. Robbins, S. P., & Coulter, M. (2018). Management (14th ed.). Pearson Education.
14. Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2019). Organizational behavior (18th ed.). Pearson Education.
15. Shaed, M. M. B., Zainol, I. N. B. H., Yusof, M. B. M., & Bahrin, F. K. (2018). Types of employee participation in decision making (PDM) amongst the middle management in the Malaysian public sector. *International Journal of Asian Social Science, 8*(8), 603–613. https://doi.org/10.18488/journal.1.2018.88.603.613 archive.aessweb.com
16. Simon, H. A. (1997). Administrative behavior: A study of decision-making processes in administrative organizations (4th ed.). Free Press.
17. Vroom, V. H., & Yetton, P. W. (1973). Leadership and decision-making. University of Pittsburgh Press.
18. Vroom, V. H., & Jago, A. G. (1988). *The new leadership: Managing participation in organizations*. Prentice-Hall.
19. Yamane, T. (1967). Statistics: An introductory analysis (2nd ed.). Harper and Row.