



## **Personnel Management Practices and Employee Performance in Emohua Local Government Council, Rivers State**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research investigates the connection between personnel management practices and employee performance within the Emohua Local Government Council in Rivers State. Key elements of personnel management, including recruitment, training and development, performance evaluation, compensation, and employee motivation, play a crucial role in shaping employee behavior and productivity. The study utilizes a descriptive survey design and gathers data from a sample of employees within the local government council via structured questionnaires. A judgmental sampling technique was employed to select a sample size consisting of one hundred and eight (108) local government employees. Statistical tools were used for data analysis to evaluate the relationship between effective personnel management practices and employee performance. The results indicate that personnel management practices have a positive influence on employee performance, with training and development, motivation, and performance evaluation being notably significant. Additionally, the study identifies challenges such as insufficient resources, ineffective policy implementation, and the absence of a thorough performance appraisal system. In light of the findings, the research recommends enhancements in personnel management approaches, focusing on transparent communication, ongoing training, and improved reward systems to boost employee productivity and organizational efficiency.

**Key words:** Personnel Management, Employee Performance, Local Government, Training, Motivation, Performance Evaluation.

### **Introduction**

Employers worldwide strive to recruit and retain individuals who possess strong qualifications and significant potential for high performance (Taras et al., 2021). The incentives provided to employees in the workplace affect their level of performance. When the work environment is positive, employees tend to engage with greater enthusiasm and concern for their well-being; however, when challenges arise, employees may become disheartened, leading to a decrease in their commitment and making their performance appear less authentic (Nikolova & Cnossen, 2020). There remains a need for enhancements in the working conditions faced by civil servants in the Emohua Local Government Area on a daily basis (Hermogeno & Dulos, 2022). Many civil servants struggle to perform their roles satisfactorily due to insufficient stationery, inadequate or malfunctioning equipment, and management systems that lack support (Martin, 2021). Various factors have been recognized as influencing the performance of civil servants in the Emohua Local Government Area, such as professional isolation, administrative challenges, substandard housing, insufficient healthcare facilities, lack of pharmaceuticals (for civil servants in state-run medical facilities), low salaries, and limited leisure options. According to Unachukwu et al. (2020), employees often experience poor working conditions, unhealthy environments and facilities, delays and refusals in promotions, and ineffective reward systems. Common challenges in the Civil Service of the Emohua Local Government Area also include inadequate office space, terrible lighting, an unstable power supply, poor ventilation, insufficient working equipment, a consistent refusal to provide overtime compensation, unappealing welfare packages, and low-quality health insurance plans that compel most employees to bear their own medical expenses (Salmon, 2021).

Unfortunately, due to the neglect of the public sector by the government, industrialized countries are attracting the experienced and skilled public workforce that Africa, including Nigeria, is losing (Atunde et al., 2021). In River State, factors affecting the efficiency of civil servants in the civil service include inadequate staffing, a heavy workload, insufficient supervision or support, and extended working hours. Additional issues identified as hindering the productivity of civil servants in River State include a lack of essential working tools, insufficient or absent staff training, an ineffective reward system, delays and refusals in promotions, and a scarcity of supplies (Jacob et al., 2020). Employees in public institutions' departments and agencies within the civil service are a vital resource with immense potential for success (Schuster et al., 2020). Thus, human resources hold the capability to transform government agencies and their management by ensuring that employee performance is optimized through effective human resource strategies and processes. The internal and external organizational conditions and cultures differ from one organization to another and from person to person within various entities (Roszkowska & Melé, 2021).

All aspects and frameworks of an organization can be affected by this situation. Civil service public servants are dedicated to enhancing the well-being of individuals in society and are accountable to the government via the civil service commission's personnel (Vasylieva et al., 2020). It aims to elevate service quality through community engagement, research, the execution of government legislation and policies, and by prioritizing competitiveness to meet global industry and societal needs.

Despite this, it is believed that one of the key factors influencing organizational effectiveness is employee performance. High levels of performance in work practices form the basis for concerns regarding disparities in human resources (HR) for civil officials (Jumady & Lilla, 2021). The HR department within the civil service primarily depends on the overall compensation framework of the organization to foster exceptional performance among civil servants (Burns, 2022). Salary serves as a major incentive that can continuously motivate public employees to enhance their performance. Egbe (2022) posits that the purpose of employee rewards is to align the benefits received by employees with their roles in the workplace and their contributions to the organization. However, this focus encompasses both financial and non-financial incentives. As a result, it is crucial for organizations to consider non-financial aspects in addition to financial ones when evaluating employee job satisfaction (Amadi & Nworgu, 2023). The State Civil Service Commission notes that promotions and job levels closely correlate. However, factors such as ethnicity, nepotism, corruption, bribery, favoritism, and collusion significantly influence civil servants' career advancement, rather than merit alone (Seran et al., 2022). In the Nigerian public service commission, particularly in Rivers state, a lack of reform has led to the widespread prevalence of corruption, collusion, nepotism, and ethnicity within the system. Furthermore, since the civil service management system relies on the statutory budget, it appears to be ineffective. Adhikari (2021) contends that the personnel management approach of the civil service commission still causes some confusion in its implementation and does not align with the achievement of optimal outcomes. Promotion refers to the process of moving an individual from a lower to a higher position, taking into account their status. Alongside rank, factors considered for promotion include tenure, job proficiency, and any other criteria established by the organization for elevating someone to a higher position. In the civil service, an employee is expected to receive a higher salary upon being promoted to a new rank. This compensation should be commensurate with the new position and is generally provided by the government (Onochie, 2020). For state benefits to civil servants, in the form of promotions, to enhance job satisfaction and motivation, the civil service promotion procedure must be fair, timely, and transparent.

## Material and Method

The research was carried out in the Emuoha Local Government Area located in Rivers State, Nigeria, with its headquarters situated in the town of Emuoha. This area covers a total of 831 km<sup>2</sup> and has a population of 201,901, according to the 2006 census. The postal code for this region is 511. Emuoha Local Government Area is divided into 14 political wards. The population for this study is made up of all individuals residing in Emohua Local Government Area, which includes 106,943 males and 94,958 females, totaling 201,901 people based on the 2006 population census data. This total number 201,901 represents the population pertinent to this research. However, a non-probability technique for sampling was utilized for this study. The non-probability approach does not adhere to any mathematical criteria, meaning that individuals within the population do not have an equal opportunity for selection. This method mainly relies on availability rather than established guidelines or formulas (Pace, 2021). The non-probability sampling technique was selected for this research due to the inability to ascertain the total number of employees in Emohua LGA at the time the study was conducted. The study employed a judgmental sampling method to choose a sample size of one hundred and eight (108) employees. Data collection for this study was achieved through the use of a structured, closed-ended questionnaire. The questions within the questionnaire focused on strategies for handling complaints, customer retention, and customer satisfaction. The questionnaire was constructed utilizing a 5-point Likert scale. Copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents personally. The questionnaire was organized into two sections: Part "A" and Part "B." Part A included questions concerning personal information, while Part B concentrated on the dimensions of complaint handling strategies, metrics for customer retention, and customer satisfaction as a moderating variable. The research instrument designed for this study was reviewed by experts in the relevant field. Additionally, the researcher conducted a pilot study to identify any weaknesses in the instrument's design and to revise it appropriately. The reliability of the instrument was assessed through the Cronbach Alpha test to evaluate the study variables, with a focus on achieving a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.70. Regression analysis was employed to explore the relationship between civil service practices and employee performance, utilizing the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 24.0.

## Results and Discussions

The study included a sample of 108 staff members and employees from the Emohua LGA. Questionnaires were hand-delivered to the chosen participants and later retrieved by the researcher. Out of the 108 questionnaires distributed, 104 were returned completed, resulting in a response rate of 96%. The distribution of the response rate is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1 shows the number of questionnaires administered.**

Response rate Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Responded	104	96
Not responded	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>100</b>

### Demographic Analysis

### Gender Distribution

The gender frequency distribution of the participants is illustrated in Figure 1. The research indicates that out of 104 participants, 59, which accounts for approximately 56.73%, are male, while 45, representing about 43.27%, are female.

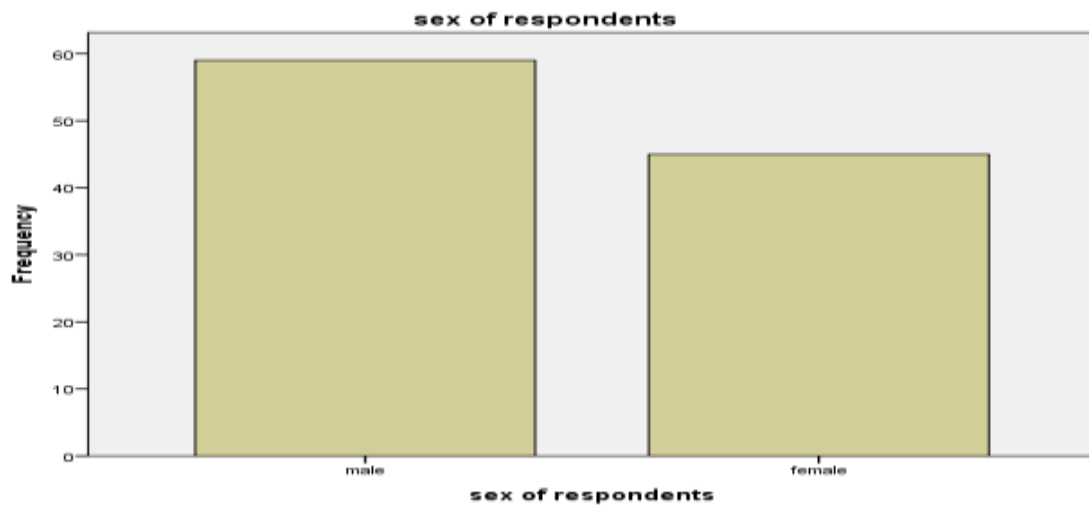


Figure 1: Gender distribution of respondents.

### Marital Status

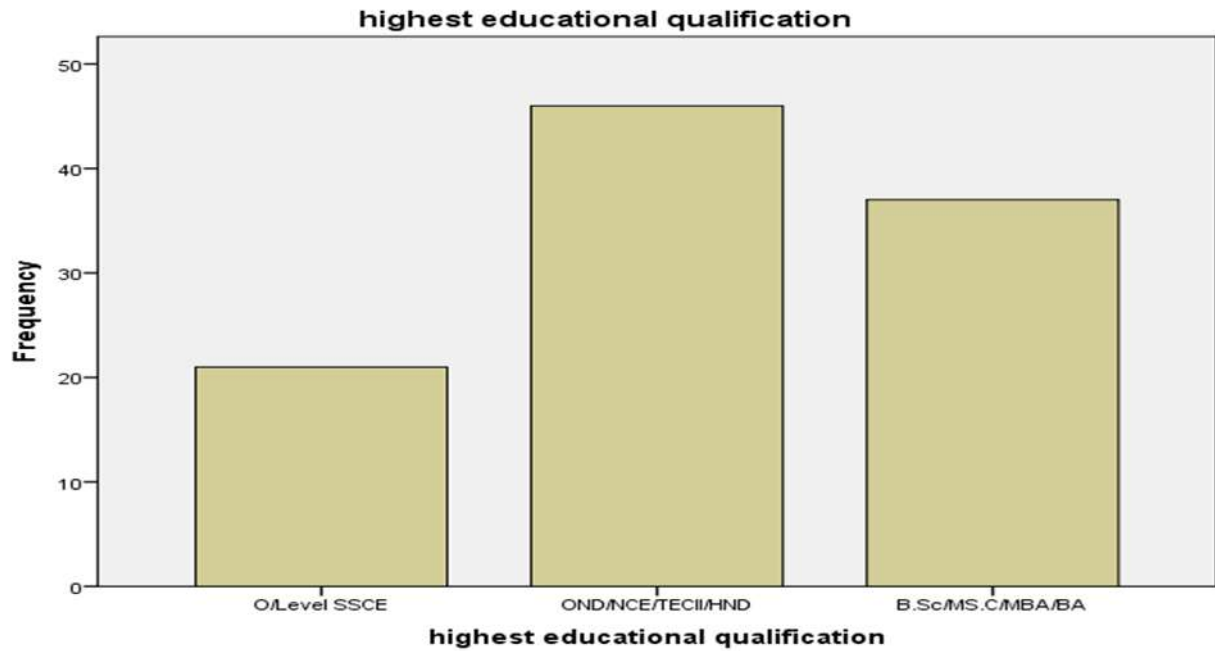
The frequency distribution of the marital status of the respondents is presented in table 2. The study found that among the 104 participants, 17, or approximately 16%, are single, 54, which is about 51.9%, are married, 23, equating to roughly 22.1%, are divorced, and 10, representing about 9.6%, are widowed.

**Table 2: showing the Marital status of respondents.**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Single	17	16.3	16.3	16.3
Married	53	51.0	51.0	67.3
Divorced	24	23.1	23.1	90.4
Widowed	10	9.6	9.6	100.0
Total	104	100.0	100.0	

### Age of respondents

The age frequency distribution of the study participants is illustrated in figure 2. Among the 104 individuals who took part in the research, 24, or approximately 23%, are in the age group of 18 to 25 years, 28, which is about 26.9%, belong to the 26 to 35 age range, 27, roughly 25.9%, fall within the 36 to 45 category, and 25, making up around 24%, are aged 46 and older.



### Questionnaire Variable Analysis

#### Promotion

Table 3 presents the evaluation of the views and perceptions of the respondents regarding organizational promotion as a component of civil service practices. Each item assesses the respondents' opinions on a particular facet of promotion, while together the items provide an overall measure of the respondents' perception of promotion at a broader level. As illustrated in this table, for the first three items, the percentage of respondents who expressed agreement or strong agreement amounts to roughly 32%, 74%, and 53%, respectively, whereas those who chose a neutral stance (neither agree nor disagree) represent about 50%, 13%, and 31%, respectively. The overall mean (Grand) is 3.5750, accompanied by low variability (standard deviation = 0.6860), suggesting that, in general, the respondents largely agree that the promotion of an organization is an essential aspect of promotion.

**Table 3: Promotion**

Variable: Promotion No of Items = 3		Percent of Respondents					Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation/Decision
Valid Response = 104		SD	D	N	A	SA			
Cronbach's Alpha = 0.715									
RQ1	I perform better when I get promoted	-	10	30	60	4	3.63	0.644	Agree
RQ2	Promotion is a huge motivation for employees.	9	11	31	32	21	3.85	1.032	Agree
RQ3	No employee will perform well without assurance of promotion	2	11	13	46	28	3.53	1.103	Agree
<b>EXPECT: Variable (Grand) Mean and Standard deviation</b>							<b>3.5750</b>	<b>0.6860</b>	<b>Agree</b>

### Compensation

Table 4 presents an analysis of the respondents' views and perceptions regarding compensation within civil service practices. Each item focuses on a specific component of an organization's compensation, and together, they assess the respondents' overall perception of compensation on a broader scale. According to the table, the proportion of respondents who either agreed or strongly agreed with the first three items is approximately 60%, 61%, and 69%, respectively, while those who chose neither agree nor disagree (neutral) represent around 24%, 29%, 19%, and 15% in that order. The overall (Grand) mean is 3.892, accompanied by low variability (standard deviation = 0.6832), suggesting that, generally, the respondents concur that compensation is a significant element of civil service practices.

**Table 4: Compensation**

Variable: compensation No of Items = 3		Percent of Respondents					Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation/ Decision
		SD	D	N	A	SA			
<b>Valid Response = 104</b>									
<b>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.699</b>									
RQ1	Financial compensation makes employees perform better.	6	14	24	31	29	3.75	1.097	Agree
RQ2	Employees are motivated by the promise of compensation	4	10	29	20.0	41	3.90	1.109	Agree
RQ3	Every civil servant deserves compensation	7	10	19	43	25	3.91	1.185	Agree
<b>EXPECT: Variable (Grand) Mean and Standard deviation</b>							<b>3.8925</b>	<b>0.6832</b>	<b>Agree</b>

### Employee Welfare

Table 5 presents the analysis of respondents' views and perceptions regarding employee welfare as a component of civil service practices. Each item assesses a specific aspect of employee welfare, while collectively they reflect the respondents' perceptions of employee welfare overall. According to the table, for the first, second, and third items, approximately 60%, 66%, and 66% of respondents chose either agree or strongly agree. In contrast, the neutral responses accounted for roughly 21%, 29%, and 16% respectively. The overall mean is 3.6375 with low variability (standard deviation = 0.7962), suggesting that, in general, the respondents concurred that employee welfare is a significant element of civil service practices.

**Table 5: Employee Welfare**

Variable: compensation No of Items = 3		Percent of Respondents					Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation/ Decision
		SD	D	N	A	SA			
<b>Valid Response = 104</b>									
<b>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.689</b>									
RQ1	Civil servants deserve medical welfare	6	3	21	54	20	3.59	1.092	Agree
RQ2	The Government should provide housing welfare for employees	4	5.0	29	44	22	3.61	1.080	Agree
RQ3	Poor welfare discourages employees	4	14	16	46	20	3.55	1.101	Agree
<b>EXPECT: Variable (Grand) Mean and Standard deviation</b>							<b>3.6375</b>	<b>0.7962</b>	<b>Agree</b>

### Work Environment

Table 6 presents the examination of the opinions and perceptions of respondents regarding the work environment as a factor influencing sales performance. Each item evaluates the respondents' views on a particular element of the work environment, but collectively they reflect the respondents' overall perception of the work environment on a larger scale. As indicated by the table, for the first, second, and third items, respondents who expressed agreement or strong agreement made up about 6%, 42%, and 54%, respectively, while those who responded neutrally accounted for approximately 40%, 30%, and 18% in that sequence. The overall mean (Grand) is 3.6875 with minimal variability (standard deviation = 0.6638), suggesting that, in general, respondents concurred that the work environment is an essential component of civil service practices.

**Table 6: Work Environment**

Variable: compensation No of Items = 3		Percent of Respondents					Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation/ Decision
		SD	D	N	A	SA			
<b>Valid Response = 104</b>									
<b>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.725</b>									
RQ1	Civil servants deserve good working environment	37.5	16.3	40	3.5	2.8	3.86	0.853	Agree
RQ2	The civil service work environment is poor	6.3	21.3	30.0	30.0	12.3	3.74	0.868	Agree
RQ3	Government should provide good amenities and equipment	7.5	21.3	17.5	46.3	7.5	3.35	1.159	Agree
<b>EXPECT: Variable (Grand) Mean and Standard deviation</b>							<b>3.6375</b>	<b>0.7962</b>	<b>Agree</b>

### Job Satisfaction

Table 7 presents an analysis of the respondents' opinions and perceptions regarding job satisfaction within an organization as a component of sales performance. Each item assesses the respondents' views on a specific facet of job satisfaction, while all items together evaluate the overall perception of job satisfaction at a broader scale. According to the table, for the first four items, the percentage of respondents who expressed agreement or strong agreement is approximately 32%, 74%, 53%, and 54%, respectively. On the other hand, those who chose neither agree nor disagree (neutral) represent roughly 50%, 13%, 31%, and 37% in that order. The overall (Grand) mean is 3.5750, showing low variability (standard deviation = 0.6860), which suggests that, overall, the respondents tend to agree significantly that organizational communication is a vital aspect of employee performance.

**Table 7: Job Satisfaction**

Variable: compensation No of Items = 3		Percent of Respondents					Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation/ Decision
		SD	D	N	A	SA			
<b>Valid Response = 104</b>									
<b>Cronbach's Alpha = 0.715</b>									
RQ1	I am satisfied with the level of employee welfare	-	10	30	60	4	3.63	0.644	Agree
RQ2	I have job satisfaction because I am well compensated	9	11	31	32	21	3.85	1.032	Agree
RQ3	I perform better when I am satisfied in my Job	2	11	13	46	28	3.53	1.103	Agree
RQ4	The work environment brings job satisfaction	2	6	38	34	20.0	3.63	0.960	Agree
RQ5	Employees become dissatisfied in their job when they don't get promoted	7	5	31	36	25	3.53	0.876	Agree
<b>EXPECT: Variable (Grand) Mean and Standard deviation</b>							<b>3.5750</b>	<b>0.6860</b>	<b>Agree</b>

### Hypotheses Testing

Decision regarding Hypothesis One: Given that the significant value (P-value) of 0.000 is lower than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis one (H01) and accept the alternative hypothesis one (HA1). This indicates that there is a significant relationship between promotion and job satisfaction in Emohua Local Government Area, Rivers State.

Decision regarding Hypothesis Two: Since the significant value (P-value) of 0.020 is below 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis two (H02) and accept the alternative hypothesis two (HA2). The conclusion is that there is a significant relationship between compensation and job satisfaction in Emohua Local Government Area, Rivers State.

Decision regarding Hypothesis Three: With a significant value (P-value) of 0.006 being less than 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis three (H03) and accept the alternative hypothesis three (HA3). This suggests that there is a significant relationship between Employee Welfare and job satisfaction in Emohua Local Government Area, Rivers State.

Decision regarding Hypothesis Four: Since the significant value (P-value) of 0.011 is under 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis four (H04) and accept the alternative hypothesis four (HA4). The conclusion is that there is a significant relationship between work environment and job satisfaction in Emohua Local Government Area, Rivers State.

**Table 8: Summary of Hypotheses findings**

Hypotheses	R	R <sup>2</sup>	P value	Decision
HO <sub>1</sub>	0.921	0.85	0.000	Reject
HO <sub>2</sub>	0.714	0.51	0.020	Reject
HO <sub>3</sub>	0.799	0.64	0.006	Reject
HO <sub>4</sub>	0.757	0.57	0.011	Reject

#### **Relationship between Promotion and Job satisfaction**

The initial hypothesis suggested that there is no significant link between promotion and job satisfaction within the Emohua Local Government Area in Rivers State. The first null hypothesis was evaluated at a significance level of 5%. The findings revealed the probability value to be 0.000, whereas the alpha value stood at 0.05. According to the decision rule, the first null hypothesis was dismissed. This indicates that there is a significant connection between promotion and job satisfaction in the Emohua Local Government Area in Rivers State. This conclusion aligns with Kumar (2022), who noted that promotion accompanied by financial incentives is tied to motivation. Furthermore, Masood et al. (2023) contended that the civil service can only achieve sustained success through the performance of qualified, promoted, compensated, satisfied, and committed employees, alongside supportive leadership.

#### **Relationship between Compensation and Job Satisfaction**

The second hypothesis proposed that there is no significant connection between compensation and job satisfaction within the Emohua Local Government Area in Rivers State. The null hypothesis two was evaluated at a 5% significance level. The findings indicated a probability value of 0.020, while the alpha value was set at 0.05. According to the decision rule, null hypothesis two was dismissed. This suggests that a significant relationship exists between compensation and job satisfaction in the Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State. This outcome aligns with the research conducted by Odunukwe & Nnanyelugo (2023), whose argument emphasizes that compensation encompasses all types of financial returns and tangible benefits that employees receive as part of their employment relationship.

#### **Relationship between Employee Welfare and Job Satisfaction**

The third hypothesis proposed that there is no significant connection between employee welfare and job satisfaction in Emohua Local Government Area, Rivers State. The third null hypothesis was evaluated at a 5% significance level. The outcome indicated a probability value of 0.006, while the alpha value was set at 0.05. According to the decision-making criteria, the third null hypothesis was dismissed. This suggests that a significant relationship exists between employee welfare and job satisfaction in Emohua Local Government Area, Rivers State. This result aligns with the findings of Ugochukwu et al. (2020), who determined that staff productivity is influenced by staff welfare. Similarly, Fafure (2023) concluded in their research that a favorable welfare package significantly affects the performance levels of police officers..

#### **Relationship between Work Environment and Job Satisfaction**

The fourth hypothesis posited that there is no significant correlation between the work environment and job satisfaction in the Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State. The fourth null hypothesis was examined at a 5% significance level. The findings indicated a probability value of 0.011, whereas the alpha value was set at 0.05. According to the decision rule, the fourth null hypothesis was dismissed. This indicates a significant association between the work environment and job satisfaction in the Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State. This result aligns with the study conducted by Alegbeleye et al. (2020), which categorized the work environment into conducive and toxic types.

### **Summary of Findings**

This research explored how civil service practices affect employee performance in the Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State. The predictor variable (civil service practices) was defined through promotion, compensation, employee welfare, and the work environment. Employee performance was evaluated based on job satisfaction. The findings of the analysis are therefore presented as follows.

- The research revealed a positive correlation between civil service practices and employee performance in the Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.

- The research demonstrated a positive correlation between promotion and job satisfaction in the Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.
- The research showed a positive correlation between compensation and job satisfaction in the Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.
- The research indicated a positive correlation between employee welfare and job satisfaction in the Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.
- The research established a positive correlation between work environment and job satisfaction in the Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State.

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## Conclusion

It has been shown that civil service practices have a significant connection to employee performance, aligning with the hypotheses assessed in this study. The results revealed a strong link between civil service practices and employee performance within organizations. The data analysis results and literature review indicate a clear need for improved standards of civil service practices in Emohua Local Government Area. This suggests that implementing civil service practices can lead to greater job satisfaction. In relation to the Local Government Area, this research developed a new quality model aimed at enhancing the perception of civil service practices in Emohua Local Government Area.

The primary finding of this study suggests that Local Government can significantly benefit from civil service practices, which encompass aspects such as promotion, compensation, employee welfare, and work environment. These systems will contribute to enhancing employee performance regarding job satisfaction. Consequently, these measures represent a promising strategy for revitalizing the Local Government Area and boosting employee performance. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of these initiatives in enhancing performance is greatly influenced by leadership behavior.

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## Recommendations

In light of the study's findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

- The local government should actively support the advancement of deserving employees and ensure that promotions are accompanied by timely and complete compensation.
- Compensation for local government employees, including regular salary, deferred cash, retirement packages, death and disability benefits, medical coverage, additional perks (such as vehicles, vacations, loans), and incentives (including bonuses, profit-sharing, and recognition), should not be subject to unnecessary delays.
- The welfare of local government employees should be prioritized by providing access to social clubs and sports facilities as suitable, overseeing staff canteens, managing sick clubs and savings plans, handling pension funds and leave entitlements, offering loans for hardship situations, and delivering other forms of direct and indirect support.
- The workplace environment for local government employees should be secure, comfortable, and free from toxicity and other obstacles that could hinder operations at the local government level.

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