

# European Journal of Human Resource (EJH)



## Competence and Worker's Attitude in Health Ministries in South-South, Nigeria

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### **ABSTRACT**

**Purpose:** This study examined the relationship between competence and worker's attitude in health ministries in South-South, Nigeria.

**Methodology:** The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. Primary data was generated through a 4-point Likert scaled questionnaire. The population of the study was two thousand one hundred and eighty-one (2181) employees. A sample size of three hundred and thirty-eight (338) employees was drawn from the population using the Taro Yamane sample size determination formula. The study adopted the simple random sampling technique. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. The hypotheses were tested using Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences.

**Findings:** The findings revealed that competence had a significant positive relationship with affective commitment, affective satisfaction and workers engagement. Therefore, the study concludes that the level of competence thus has a direct bearing with worker's attitude. Inability of employees to perform maximally due to lack of competence will result in higher dissatisfaction.

**Recommendation:** Thus the researchers recommend that the management of the Health Ministries should embark on proper training and development of the workers to enhance their knowhow in the work as such will help boost their positive work attitude.

**Keywords:** *Competence, Worker's Attitude, Affective Satisfaction, Affective Commitment, Workers Engagement*

## INTRODUCTION

Attitudes exhibited by employees can directly affect the atmosphere within an organisation. An environment that is professional, fair and conducive for work needs to be created by an employer in order to keep employees motivated. If this environment is created, the employees are likely to work hard and successfully complete each assignment as expected of them. When employees are happy, it is usually because they are satisfied with their work. This also improves the quality of their work. Attitude and job satisfaction may not fall completely on the management but also on the employees. An attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour (Eagly & Chaiken, 2007). Attitude describes the way an employee feels inside. These are an employee's feelings toward his employer, his co-workers and his position within the organisation.

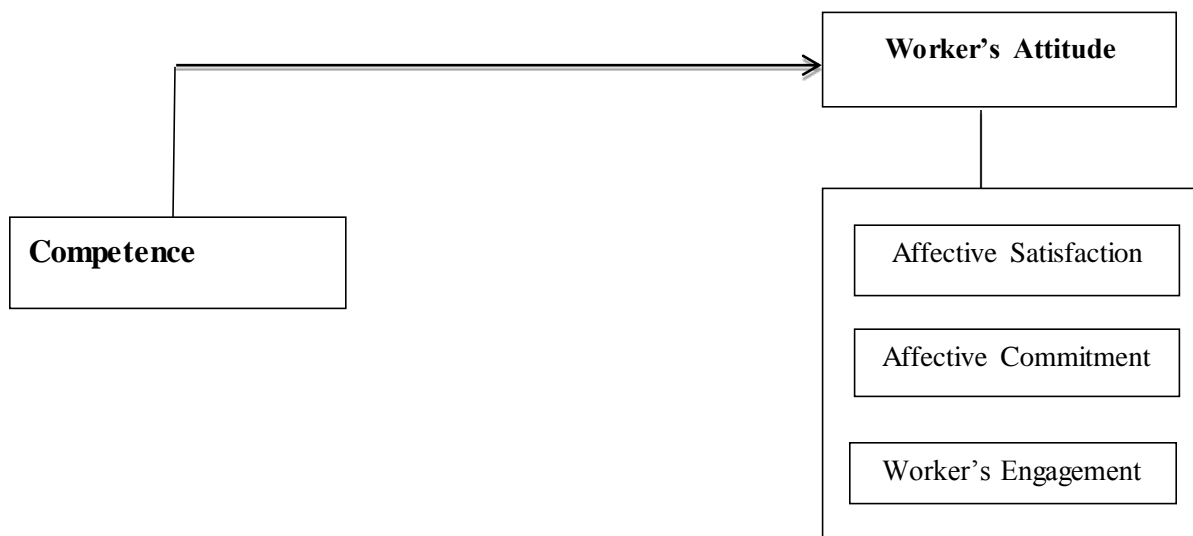
Employee work attitude; a form of social reality within the organization; is concerned with the expressions of contentment, commitment and enthusiasm for the job and the organization. It is described as the expression of inner states and feelings within social and organizational frameworks or contexts and can be directed towards self, others, the job or role. Employee work attitude is considered an important factor in the organizational integrative process wherein skills, experiences and knowledge are harnessed towards the achievement of specified objectives since it either buttresses the processes or acts as a setback (Gabriel & George, 2015; Aremu, 2010). A major predictor of employee attitude is how competent they are about their work.

It has been indicated that workers who have the perception that they are competent, and have confidence that they will succeed in their daily work tasks are happier and satisfied with their jobs than employees who fear that they might fail (Koen & Maaik van, 2011). Further, Ponton (2011) in his study in Australia posited that the more experienced employees seemed to be more confident and competent in their jobs. He argued that the more competent the employees felt, the more satisfied they were in their work. Hancer and George (2009) too found out that competence was rated higher by the more older and experienced hospitality employees. This had a direct relationship with satisfaction with their jobs. Employees who have had longer tenure in the hospitality industry are better adapted to the work environment and this can lead to feelings of competence and more likely to the feeling of satisfaction (Bhatnagar, 2012).

Competence reflects whether an employee can succeed in the performance of a given work role (Spreitzer & Mishra, 2002). It is the extent to which an employee can do his/her work roles with the required skills and knowledge (Zhu, 2008). Competence refers to the ability of employees to execute their work roles with the required level of knowledge and skills (Spreitzer, 2008). Competence makes employees feel more empowered (Buitenbach & Hlalele, 2005). Buitenbach and Hlalele (2005) further stated that the knowledge and the skills that the employees possess have a significant contribution to competence. Employees usually feel competent when they have the confidence about their capability of executing their job responsibilities well (Hsiang-Fei, Luoh Sheng-Hshiang Tsaor Ya-Yun Tang, 2014).

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between competence and worker's attitude in health ministries in South-South, Nigeria. The following research questions were provided as a guide in this study;

- i. What is the relationship between competence and worker's affective satisfaction in health ministries, South-South, Nigeria?
- ii. How does competence relate with worker's affective commitment in health ministries, South-South, Nigeria?
- iii. What is the relationship between competence and worker's engagement in health ministries, South-South, Nigeria?



**Figure 1: Conceptual framework for competence and worker's attitude**

*Source: Author's Desk Research, 2021*

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Foundation

#### Job Characteristics Theory

The job characteristics theory, developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976), demonstrates the relationship between job characteristics and an individual's response to work. Specifically, this theory specifies the task condition under which it is predicted that a worker or staff member will succeed in their given job or work. Hackman *et al.*, (1976) developed the job characteristics theory, which identifies three psychological states that result in individual benefits and positive work outcomes. These psychological states are experienced meaningfulness of the work, experienced responsibility for the outcomes of the work, and knowledge of the actual results of the work activities. When job characteristics dimensions are combined, these psychological states result in increased internal work motivation, high job satisfaction, and increased work effectiveness. In this theory, Hackman and Oldham asserted that employees must believe that what they are doing in the organization is something meaningful, or that what they are doing is worthwhile, and that it should also be significant, most notably to the organization, as well as to the individual's acceptable values and personal beliefs, among other things. Furthermore, according to the theory, there should be a proper fit or match between the skills of the individual and the requirements of the job itself. As a result of the second psychological state described in the theory (experienced responsibility for outcomes of work), employees are required to accept personal responsibility for the outcomes

of their work or the tasks that they perform for the organization. Finally, the theory suggests that employees are aware of the actual outcomes or outcomes of the study. Due to the fact that having knowledge of one's own results will aid in tracking and monitoring one's own job performance, which will ultimately lead to greater satisfaction and commitment on the part of the employee. Acquah (2017) emphasizes that internal motivation is the most important outcome variable in this theory because it contributes to the attitudes of employees. According to this theory, the worker or employee must go through the three psychological states in order for the expected or desired outcome to become a reality. If any of the three psychological states is absent, a variety of outcomes, such as low motivation, satisfaction, and commitment, can be expected to occur.

This theory is relevant in this study because when the characteristics of a job are designed to improve the psychological state of the employee, this aids in the enhancement of their positive work attitude. This theory is also relevant for this study because job characteristics can contribute to certain psychological states, and the strength of the employee's need for growth (Garg & Rastogi, 2006). Competence is usually conceptualized as the increased task motivation that results from an individual's positive orientation to the work role such as job design, and employees' skills and traits.

### **Competence**

When it comes to employees' beliefs in their capability to complete their tasks successfully, Spreitzer (1995) and Quiones, Van den Broeck, and De Witte (2013) define competence as the belief that they have in their ability to complete their tasks successfully. Al-douri (2018) explains that competence is the ability to face challenges in both the internal and external environments by creating an environment conducive to thinking and creativity, as well as training employees in decision-making, initiative, and innovation (Spreitzer, 1995; Ibrahim, 2020). It has been shown that the greater an individual's sense of self-efficacy, the more committed they will be towards accomplishing specific tasks (Taylor, 2013). Those individuals would take more initiative, would be more persistent, and would put forth more effort when confronted with difficult circumstances. Competence is defined as an individual's ability to perform a job correctly. A competency is a set of defined behaviours that serve as a structured guide for the identification, evaluation, and development of the behaviour in individual employees. Competencies are defined as observable abilities, skills, knowledge, motivations, or traits that are defined in terms of the behaviours required for successful job performance. Notably, employee competencies are inherited with all of these characteristics, and as a result, they serve as the primary source of competitive advantage as well as the primary drivers of improved organizational performance (Ciziuniene, Vaiciute & Batarliene, 2016). When people have the ability to choose, they become more self-assured. Being self-assured means being well-organized in your activities and having hands-on experience with their implementation.

A sense of personal mastery that one is capable of successfully completing a task is referred to as competence. Competence is defined as the ability to perform the tasks assigned to oneself. It addresses the question of whether or not the employees who will be empowered have the skills necessary to perform the tasks that will be assigned to them if they are empowered. Following the identification of what is required to pursue and achieve a goal, the level of actual (rather than perceived) skill relevant to the task becomes significantly important. The issue of competence is addressed through the identification of existing skills and the acquisition of new skills.



Quiones, *et al.* (2013) define competence as an employee's belief in his or her own capability to complete their assigned tasks successfully. When employees are confident in their abilities to complete all of their job responsibilities successfully, they perceive themselves as competent in their positions (Quinn & Spreitzer, 1997). It refers to an individual's perception of the skills and abilities required to deal with a variety of work environments (Spreitzer, 2008). According to Bandura (1977), competence is derived from the concept of self-efficacy, with higher levels of self-efficacy indicating that individuals are more committed to completing tasks and are therefore more effective at doing so (Bandura, 1977). (Goodale, Koerner & Roney, 1997; Taylor, 2013). Those individuals would take more initiative, be more persistent, and put forth more effort when confronted with difficult situations (Bandura, 1977). For example, competence in teaching refers to the ability of lecturers to use their own abilities to develop an appropriate teaching plan in order to assist students in learning (Shapira-Lishchinsky & Tsemach, 2014). Their perception of their own ability to succeed is a critical factor in achieving academic goals (El-Sayed, El-Zeiny & Adeyemo, 2014).

### **Worker's Attitude**

Attitudes can be defined as either a positive or negative feeling or mental state of readiness that has been learned and organized through experience and that has a specific attitude on a person's response to other people and objects, as well as to specific situations. Affective attitudes, according to Newstorm and Davis (1993), are reasonably good predictors of behavioural outcomes. The information they provide can be used to deduce an employee's behavioural intentions or inclinations to act in a specific manner. Positive job attitudes are associated with the attitude of constructive behaviours, whereas negative job attitudes are associated with the prediction of undesirable behaviours. Attitudes toward work refer to the feelings we have about various aspects of the workplace that we encounter (Carpenter, Talya & Erdogan, 2009). According to the authors, there are several factors that influence attitudes toward work, including personality, person-environment fit, job characteristics, psychological contract, organizational justice, work relationship, and stress.

### **Affective Satisfaction**

In the workplace, job affective satisfaction refers to the emotions or feelings that they associate with their jobs. Individuals' overall emotional appraisal of their jobs determines their level of affective satisfaction with their jobs. As a result, it focuses on whether the job elicits a positive feeling, as well as affectively-oriented measures of job satisfaction. According to Tekell (2008), affective satisfaction includes both Positive Affect (PA) (i.e., the extent to which an individual feels enthusiastic, alert, and active) and Negative Affect (NA) (i.e., the extent to which an individual feels depressed, anxious, or passive) and (the extent to which an individual experience a general dimension of subjective distress and unpleasant engagement which may take the form of emotional states such as anger, contempt, fear, disgust, guilt and nervousness). This implies that employees who report high levels of negative affective satisfaction also report higher levels of physical complaints and stress, indicating that they may regard their lives as a series of stresses or hassles, regardless of what actually happens to them in their jobs. Additionally, employees who report high levels of positive affective satisfaction are more energetic and outgoing in their jobs, as well as more satisfied with their jobs and with life in general. They are also more sensitive to the frequency of rewards, indicating that they may be more inclined to focus on the positive aspects

of life (Yik & Russell, 2001). It is the affective component of attitudes that is responsible for the feelings or emotions that people associate with their job or attitude object, as well as the valence of those emotions (Weiss & Cropanzo, 1996). Not surprisingly, these individuals engage in more social behaviour as a result of their PA, which has been linked to increased extroversion (Watson, Clark, McIntyre & Hamaker, 1992).

### **Affective Commitment**

Employees experience feelings and emotions, which they express in a variety of ways depending on the situation. According to Allen and Meyer (1990), affective commitment is defined as an individual's emotional identification with a particular organization. In the workplace, it is an emotional tie or bond that connects employees to their various organizations, and it is a determinant of dedication and loyalty (Rhoades, Elsenberger & Armeli, 2001). The researchers went on to say that an affective committed worker is perceived to have a sense of identification and belonging, which increases their participation in the organization's goals and increases their desire to remain with the organization. An individual becomes emotionally attached to an organization when there is a link or congruence between his or her personal goals and values and those of the organization. The personality and values of employees, on the other hand, are a precondition for affective commitment. In the opinion of Osita-Ejikeme and Worlu (2017), once a human resource has identified the organization's goals and is willing to work toward achieving them, he will become emotionally attached to the organization. A further finding by Kaptijn (2009) is that personal characteristics have a significant positive influence on affective commitment. Gozukara and Yildirim (2015) found that corporate reputation had a significant impact on affective commitment, which in turn causes employees to have a strong emotional attachment to their employer's products or services.

Affective commitment has been found to be associated with positive work-related behaviours such as organizational citizenship behaviour, attendance, and other aspects of job performance (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky, 2002). An important antecedent of affective commitment is a set of dispositional variables that include values and personality traits (Allen & Meyer, 1990). While Meyer *et al.* (2002) suggest that there are several categories, they also propose that there are several subcategories. These categories include demographic variables (e.g., age, education level, marital status and gender), job characteristics, structural characteristics and individual differences, as well as work experience. Affective commitment was found to be associated with interactional justice, transformational leadership, and organizational support, according to their research. This is in contrast to previous work conducted by Meyer, *et al.* (2002), they assert that job satisfaction is a distinct concept from organizational commitment and that the two are not related. Affective commitment was found to be correlated with occupational commitment and job involvement (Meyer *et al.*, 2002).

### **Employee Engagement**

Engagement, as a concept that has evolved over time, has been defined in numerous, often inconsistent, ways in the literature, to the point where the term has become ambiguous to many and it is rare to find two people who define it in the same way (Macey & Schneider, 2008). It has been conceptualized as a psychological or affective state (e.g., commitment, involvement, attachment, etc.), a performance construct (e.g., role performance, effort, observable behaviour, organizational citizenship behaviour, and so on; or an attitude. According to Macey *et al.*, (2008),

some researchers even link the concept of engagement to other specific constructs such as altruism or initiative. However, there is no consensus among researchers regarding which of these definitions is the definitive, or at the very least, "best-fit" model of engagement. When defining engagement, Macey *et al.*, (2008) divide it into three categories: trait engagement, state engagement, and behavioural engagement. They argue that trait engagement is an inclination to see the world from a particular vantage point, and that this is reflected in the individual's "state engagement," which leads to "behavioural engagement," which is defined in terms of exerting discretionary effort. As pointed out by Newman and Harrison (2008), however, when engagement is broken down into the separate aspects of state, trait, and behaviour, state engagement becomes a redundant construct that tells us nothing more than an individual's attitude toward their job, which, as they point out, has been adequately measured in the past by other constructs.

Kahn (1990) defines engagement in terms of a psychological state as the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally while performing their roles. Individuals who are engaged are willing to invest significant personal resources, such as time and effort, in the successful completion of their task, and engagement is at its highest when an individual is channelling personal energies into physical, cognitive, and emotional labours. Employee engagement is a feeling that is associated with the level of satisfaction that an employee has with his or her commitment to his or her job and the organization. It is an excellent work relationship that the employee has with his or her job. The level at which employees commit to their jobs in their organization, as well as the length of job they can expect to remain and work in the organization as a result of this commitment, are both important factors to consider (Council, 2004).

An employee's level of engagement can be measured by the degree to which they express a high level of satisfaction and an emotional connection to their employer's development and success. It also contributes to the creation of an improvement, increases performance, and assists directly or indirectly in the retention of employees and the support of turnover (Taylor, 2011). Positive attitudes and feelings among employees at work are not the only characteristics of employee engagement; it can also be defined in terms of "organization citizenship attitude, commitment, and high involvement work practices." It is used as a method of motivating employees to work more actively and creatively in order to achieve organizational objectives.

### **Competence and Worker's Attitude**

Rania, Rahmanb and Yusakc (2021) conducted a study, and on the study investigated the relationship between the four dimensions of psychological empowerment between employees' performance in the automotive after sales service in Malaysia. In line with self-determination theory, employees have intrinsic motivation when they are genuinely happy and enjoy while delivering the job in achieving the goals. Employees feel empowered when experiencing feelings of meaningful, competence, self-determination and impact. The data was collected through survey instrument from the sample size of 241 employees representing the employees working in the automotive after sales service. Statistical software SPSS version 26 was used for correlation and regression analysis. The result of the study shows that meaning, competence, self-determination and impact found significantly correlated and predicted employees' performance.

Nassar (2017) in his study of psychological empowerment and organizational change among hotel employees in Egypt surveyed 386 employees in chain hotels. He posited that employees who had



the required skills in performing their work tasks had high levels of job satisfaction. Further, Buitendach and Hlalele (2005) in their study of South Africa engineers found a positive correlation of medium effect between the cognition of competence and job satisfaction. This implied that the two variables were related, that is, those employees who perceived that they had the required knowledge and skills to perform their jobs had high level of job satisfaction. In addition, Gachunga, Maina and Kabare (2016) in their study on the influence of psychological empowerment on organizational commitment in Kenyan civil service found that the dimension of competence was positively correlated to job satisfaction, which in turn lead to organizational commitment.

It has been indicated that workers who have the perception that they are competent, and have confidence that they will succeed in their daily work tasks are happier and satisfied with their jobs than employees who fear that they might fail (Koen & Maaik van, 2011). Further, Ponton (2011) in his study in Australia posited that the more experienced employees seemed to be more confident and competent in their jobs. He argued that the more competent the employees felt, the more satisfied they were in their work. Hancer *et al.*, (2009) too found out that competence was rated higher by the more older and experienced hospitality employees. This had a direct relationship with satisfaction with their jobs. Employees who have had longer tenure in the hospitality industry are better adapted to the work environment and this can lead to feelings of competence and more likely to the feeling of satisfaction (Bhatnagar, 2012).

Moreover, Tsai, Cheng and Chang (2013) in their analysis of the drivers of hospitality industry employees' job satisfaction in Taiwan observed that employees perceived that their competence empowerment was high. This correlated with the high levels of job satisfaction advanced by the researchers in their sample of these Taiwanese hotels. This meant that the employees had very good training background and excellent skills to perform their work roles, which positively affected their job satisfaction. Patah, Abudullah and Derani (2012) in their study of Kuala Lumpur hotel receptionists posited that the tenet of competence of psychological empowerment does have a significant influence on the overall job satisfaction. This meant that receptionists who had a higher level of competence experienced a higher level of job satisfaction.

Based on the foregoing, the following hypotheses are postulated:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between competence and worker's affective satisfaction in health ministries in South-South, Nigeria.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between competence and worker's affective commitment in health ministries in South-South, Nigeria.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between competence and worker's engagement in health ministries in South-South, Nigeria.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. Primary data was generated through a 4-point Likert scaled questionnaire. The population of the study was two thousand one hundred and eighty-one (2181) employees. A sample size of three hundred and thirty-eight (338) employees was drawn from the population using the Taro Yamane sample size determination formula. The study adopted the simple random sampling technique. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. The

hypotheses were tested using Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS).

## DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

### Bivariate Analysis

The level of significance 0.05 was adopted as a criterion for the probability of accepting the null hypothesis in ( $p > 0.05$ ) or rejecting the null hypothesis in ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 1: Competence and Worker's Affective Satisfaction**

		Competence	Affective Satisfaction
Spearman's rho	Competence	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.859**
		N	.000
	Affective Satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.859**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	304

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2021

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Competence and Worker's Affective Satisfaction in Health Ministries, South-South, Nigeria.

The result of the analysis in Table 1 shows a correlation value of  $\rho = 0.859$  implying that there is a positive relationship between Competence and Worker's Affective Satisfaction. The result also indicates a significant level  $p < 0.05$  ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), this means that there is a significant relationship between Competence and Worker's Affective Satisfaction. The study therefore observes that there is a positive and significant association between Competence and Worker's Affective Satisfaction. In light of this, the study therefore rejects the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between Competence and Worker's Affective Satisfaction in Health Ministries, South-South, Nigeria.

**Table 2: Competence and Worker's Affective Commitment**

		Competence	Affective Commitment
Spearman's rho	Competence	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.837**
		N	.000
	Affective Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.837**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	304

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2021

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Competence and Worker's Affective Commitment in Health Ministries, South-South, Nigeria.

The result of the analysis in Table 2 shows a correlation value of  $\rho = 0.837$  implying that there is a very strong positive relationship between Competence and Worker's Affective Commitment. The study also indicates a significant level  $p < 0.05$  ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), this means that there is a significant relationship between Competence and Worker's Affective Commitment. The study therefore observes that there is a positive and significant association between Competence and Worker's Affective Commitment. In light of this, the study therefore rejects the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between Competence and Worker's Affective Commitment in Health Ministries, South-South, Nigeria.

**Table 3: Competence and Worker's Engagement**

		Competence	Worker's Engagement
Spearman's rho	Competence	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.750**
		N	.000
Worker's Engagement	Competence	Correlation Coefficient	.750**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
		N	.000
		N	304

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2021

Ho<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Competence and Worker's Engagement in Health Ministries, South-South, Nigeria.

The result of the analysis in Table 3 shows a correlation value of  $\rho = 0.750$  implying that there is a strong positive relationship between Competence and Worker's Engagement. The study also indicates a significant level  $p < 0.05$  ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), this means that there is a significant relationship between Competence and Worker's Engagement. The study therefore observes that there is a positive and significant association between Competence and Worker's Engagement. In light of this, the study therefore rejects the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between Competence and Worker's Engagement in Health Ministries, South-South, Nigeria.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings revealed that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between competence and Worker's Attitude in Health Ministries, South-South, Nigeria. Hence, Competence is an essential factor in organizations that helps increase Worker's Affective Satisfaction, Worker's Affective Commitment and Worker's Engagement. This result further affirms the stance of Kumanwee (2017) who points out that there is a significant relationship between competence and engagement of employees. Nassar (2017) posits that employees who have the required skills in performing their work tasks have high levels of job satisfaction. Buitendach and Hlalele (2005) find a positive correlation of medium effect between the cognition of competence and job satisfaction. Ponton (2011) in his study in Australia posits that the more

experienced employees seem to be more confident and competent in their jobs. He argues that the more competent the employees feel, the more satisfied they were in their work. However, Dehkordi, Kamrani, Ardestani and Abdolmanafi (2011) find that the cognition of competence has no positive relationship with job satisfaction. This means that the perception of having the required skills to do the work has no relationship with job satisfaction.

The current finding supports the previous study carried out by Rania, *et al.* (2021) who conducted a study on the relationship between the four dimensions of psychological empowerment between employees' performance in the automotive after sales service in Malaysia and whose result revealed that meaning, competence, self-determination and impact found significantly correlated and predicted employees' performance. Likewise, supporting this current finding was the study by Kumanwee (2017) who undertook a study on psychological empowerment and employee affective commitment in manufacturing firms in Rivers State, Nigeria and whose finding revealed a very strong and positive significant relationship between competence and employee shared value. Also the finding competence and employees' personal involvement is very strong and positive. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between competence and personal involvement of employees in manufacturing firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

This study finding further affirms the stance of Gachunga *et al.*, (2016) who find that the dimension of competence lead to commitment. Boussalem (2014) reveals that there is a statistically significant impact of competence on commitment. Psychologically empowered employees are more committed to and satisfied with their jobs as well as with the company that employs them (Malik, Chughtai, Igbal & Ramzan, 2013). This result is informed by the argument of Ponton (2011) who posits that the more experienced employees seem to be more confident and competent in their jobs. Bhatnagar (2012) puts forward that, employees who have had longer tenure in the hospitality industry are better adapted to the work environment and this can lead to feelings of competence and more likely to the feeling of engagement. Psychologically empowered employees are more committed to and satisfied with their jobs as well as with the company that employs them (Malik, *et al.*, 2013).

Further corroborating the current finding is the study by Nassar (2017) who examined psychological empowerment and organizational change among hotel employees in Egypt and found that employees who had the required skills in performing their work tasks had high levels of job satisfaction. Further, Buitendach *et al.*, (2005) in their study of South Africa engineers found a positive correlation of medium effect between the cognition of competence and job satisfaction. This implied that the two variables were related, that is, those employees who perceived that they had the required knowledge and skills to perform their jobs had high level of job satisfaction. In addition, Gachunga *et al.*, (2016) in their study on the influence of psychological empowerment on organizational commitment in Kenyan civil service found that the dimension of competence was positively correlated to job satisfaction, which in turn lead to organizational commitment.

The study finding supports the conceptual arguments that workers who have the perception that they are competent, and have confidence that they will succeed in their daily work tasks are happier and satisfied with their jobs than employees who fear that they might fail (Koen *et al.*, 2011). Further, Ponton (2011) in his study in Australia posited that the more experienced employees seemed to be more confident and competent in their jobs. He argued that the more competent the employees felt, the more satisfied they were in their work. Hancer *et al.*, (2009) too found out that

competence was rated higher by the more older and experienced hospitality employees. This had a direct relationship with satisfaction with their jobs. Employees who have had longer tenure in the hospitality industry are better adapted to the work environment and this can lead to feelings of competence and more likely to the feeling of satisfaction (Bhatnagar, 2012).

Moreover, the previous finding by Tsai, *et al.* (2013) supports our current finding by examining the drivers of hospitality industry employees' job satisfaction in Taiwan and found that employees perceived that their competence empowerment was high. This correlated with the high levels of job satisfaction advanced by the researchers in their sample of these Taiwanese hotels. This meant that the employees had very good training background and excellent skills to perform their work roles, which positively affected their job satisfaction. Similarly, the current finding is in agreement with Patah *et al.*, (2012) in their study of Kuala Lumpur hotel receptionists in which they found that the tenet of competence of psychological empowerment does have a significant influence on the overall job satisfaction. This meant that receptionists who had a higher level of competence experienced a higher level of job satisfaction.

It is to be noted that the current finding contradicts the finding by Dehkordi, *et al.*, (2011) whose study revealed that the overall psychological empowerment and its dimensions- impact, meaning, and choice seemed to have a significant and positive relationship with job satisfaction and consequently organizational loyalty. However, interestingly they found that the cognition of competence had no positive relationship with job satisfaction. This meant that the perception of having the required skills to do the work had no relationship with job satisfaction.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The researchers conclude that there is a strong positive significant relationship between competence and worker's attitude in Health Ministries in South-South, Nigeria. The level of competence thus has a direct bearing with worker's attitude. Inability of employees to perform maximally due to lack of competence will result in higher dissatisfaction.

The study recommends that the management of the Health Ministries should embark on proper training and development of the workers to enhance their knowhow in the work as such will help boost their positive work attitude.

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