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Building Trust and Employee Commitment in Bayelsa State Civil Service

By

Barnabas S. Stanfast (PhD)
Business Management
barnabasy2k@gmail.com
+4407442624490

Sira Badey Igbedion (PhD)
Business Management
seigbedion@yahoo.com
+4407547974095

Abstract

This paper examined the relationship between building trust and employee commitment. The study population consisted of twenty-five thousand, seven hundred and eighty-nine (25,789) civil servants drawn from the States' Fiscal Transparency, Accountability and Sustainability (SFTAS) Program report of 2021. The study adopted a simple size of three hundred and ninety-four (394) civil servants. Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient was used to analyze the data and the findings revealed that building trust significantly influences employee commitment. It is concluded that building trust positively and significantly relates to employee commitment. The study recommended that in a bit to improve employee commitment, Bayelsa state civil service should make deliberate efforts to ensure leaders use end values to influence civil servants' goals and beliefs to enable them to perform better and pursue objectives they ordinarily would not. This will enable civil servants to stick with their ministries because they owe the ministries a debt of loyalty.

Keywords: Building trust, employee commitment, affective commitment, normative commitment, continuance commitment.

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1.1 Introduction

The concept of organizational commitment was first introduced in 1956 by Whyte. He described the concept "as a situation where an employee in an organization not only works for the organization, but also commits himself to the organization and feels as if he belongs to it" (Whyte, 1956). It was also defined as a type of "commitment resulting from his recognition of the cost or lost side bets associated with the discontinuance of his efforts or activities in the organization as well as other values such as time, position and money he's gained during his employment" by Becker (1960). It is very important to an organization because it provides information about the level of commitment that the employees' feel towards their organizations (Lam et al., 2015).

The theory relating to employee commitment in an organization has received increasing popularity as it will help the company to retain more staff and thereby increase in performance, productivity and profitability (Abasilim et al., 2019). Commitment of staff is important for several reasons, it will ultimately reduce employee turnover (Chaudhry & Shah, 2011). Highly committed employees tend to work efficiently than less committed employees (Gul, 2015). Commitment of employees is a better indicator of effectiveness of an organization (Famakin & Abisuga, 2016).

Employee commitment can be referred to as an individuals' identification with and involvement in the specific company (Lee et al., 2015). According to Lee et al. (2015), employee commitment can be characterized by a minimum of three indicators such as "Acceptance of the company goals and values. Secondly, employee commitment describes an employee's ability and willingness to contribute considerable effort to attain the goals and values of the organization and finally a strong desire to continue with the company.

Commitment can be described as feelings of obligation or emotional attachment (Shin et al., 2015). However, in the last few years, a growing consensus has emerged that commitment should be viewed as a multidimensional construct (Schweizer & Patzelt, 2012). Allen and Meyer (1990) developed an early model that has received considerable attention. The three-component model they advocated was based on their observation that existing definitions of commitment at that time reflected at least three distinct themes: an affective emotional attachment towards an organization (affective commitment); the recognition of costs associated with leaving an organization (continuance commitment); and a moral obligation to remain with an organization (normative commitment).

Organizational commitment is a bond which is linking its employees to the company or organization (Schweizer & Patzelt, 2012). Several studies have shown that organizational commitment can prevent many variables such as absenteeism, organizational citizenship, performance and turnover. A primary aspect of organizational commitment can be extra role behaviour. This means employees go beyond their job specifications and do something extra. Most of the management appreciate initiatives from the employees; and this shows their commitment and positive attitude to the company.

Organizational commitment resulted in more positive outcomes such as it reduces absenteeism and it improves and promotes job satisfaction (Shin et al., 2016). What is now apparent is that, as long as the organization has been able to attract the right sort of employees and has provided a suitable work environment, employee commitment will be largely influenced by the interactions that occur between colleagues and with their immediate and senior managers (Chaudhry & Shah, 2011).

However, employees in Nigeria civil service have continued to experience several issues in the workplace. The experience of civil servants in terms of organization and management of their records, documents, files, and other sources of information has also not been pleasant, particularly when such documents are required for promotion. This is largely due to frequent movement of workers or non-delineation of responsibilities (Anazodo et al., 2012). The resultant effect of this is that civil servants feel disgruntled and show lack of commitment when denied promotion for no fault of theirs but rather because of the negligence of another.

The fact that civil service does not create room for workers to exercise individual judgement and responsibility on the policies but rather you stick to the rules makes it tiring. Civil servants believe their initiative should be deployed in the execution of tasks. This has propelled a lack of commitment on the part of these civil servants. Most civil servants exhibit arrogance and impatience to the citizenry they are meant to serve. The civil service is also bedeviled by bribery and corruption. Many civil servants demand monetary and other gratifications before carrying out their duties to the citizens (Ajayi & Oyewobi, 2019; Ejumudo, 2014; Oparanma, 2011).

According to Abdirahman (2018) some notable challenges confronting civil servants include in-conducive work environment, absence of supportive leaders, absence of motivation packages, staff are not recognized, etc. Abdirahman (2018) opined that one way of fostering employee commitment is to design and execute tested and trusted work life balance programs.

One important point is that not all forms of employee commitment are positively associated with supportive leadership and superior performance at the organizational level (Meyer, 2016). For example, an employee who has low effective and normative commitment, but who has high continuance commitment is unlikely to yield performance benefits if there is a supportive leadership mechanism in place. The main reason such an employee remains with an organization is for the negative reason that the costs associated with leaving the organization are too great (Lee et al., 2015).

Agwu (2013) conducted a study to assess organizational culture alongside employee commitment levels within Bayelsa State's civil service. The research showed that organizational culture has a strong relationship with employee commitment but also found important variations in employee commitment based on gender, age and service duration within the Bayelsa State civil service. Emelah Gentle and Akhigbe (2020) researched how team trust affects affective commitment levels within Bayelsa state civil service. The study revealed that propensities to trust and perceived trustworthiness emerged as significant factors affecting affective commitment and corporative behaviour demonstrated a negative impact. A search of literature about the relationship between building trust and employee commitment in Bayelsa State Civil Service was scant. This forms the thrust of this study which seeks to examine the relationship between building trust and employee commitment in Bayelsa State Civil Service.

1.2 Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the study.

i. What is the relationship between building trust and affective commitment in Bayelsa State civil service?
ii. What is the relationship between building trust and continuance commitment in Bayelsa State civil service?
iii. What is the relationship between building trust and normative commitment in Bayelsa State civil service?

1.3 Research Hypotheses

The following null research hypotheses were formulated and were tested:

HO_1: There is no significant relationship between building trust and affective commitment in Bayelsa State civil service.

HO_2: There is no significant relationship between building trust and continuance commitment in Bayelsa State civil service.

HO_3: There is no significant relationship between building trust and normative commitment in Bayelsa State civil service.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1Building Trust

Rousseau et al. (1998) described trust as "a psychological state, characterized by the intention to accept vulnerability based on positive expectations of the intentions or behaviour of another". Therefore, trust is not an action or a decision; rather, it is a psychological condition that might lead to or follow such activities (Rousseau et al. 1998). According to Larson and LaFasto (1989), trust improves a group's capacity for cooperation, which in turn improves team performance. Gaining a coworker's trust promotes dedication and enjoyment.

Fox (1974) classified trust into two categories, lateral and vertical, depending on the sort of interaction. Building trust with peers is referred to as lateral trust, whilst developing trust with superiors is referred to as vertical trust. While trust in coworkers is lateral, it is vertical in management and immediate superiors. He claimed that the way trust functions allow one to distinguish between institutional and interpersonal trust (Fox, 1974). In contrast to institutional trust, which is placed in an organization, interpersonal trust is placed in an individual or group of individuals. The methods for establishing trust will vary accordingly. Interpersonal trust depends on the personality traits of the trustee and is primarily built through frequent contact between people. But because institutional trust frequently results from the organization's norms and structured relations (Fox, 1974), it must be fostered through system management or organizational culture (McCauley & Kuhnert, 1992).

Employee trust in management is defined as "the relationship between an employee and a composite of individuals at or near the top of the organizational chart," according to McCauley and Kuhnert (1992). We consider it institutional trust rather than interpersonal trust because the object of trust is not identified as an identifiable entity. Mayer et al. (1995) described trust as the “readiness of a party to be susceptible to the actions of another party based on promising expectation from other party.

Colquitt et al. (2012) define trust as ‘uncertainty reducer’. They argued that trust can boost employees' self-assurance for greater professional outcomes like dedication.

Podsakoff et al. (2000) used the phrase "trust in supervisor" to indicate an employee's faith and dependence in their manager. This means that if employees have a high level of trust in their immediate boss, they can expect a positive attitude, respect, and a good working relationship with their employer.

According to Mishra and Spreitzer (1998), management trust can lessen the degree to which employees perceive organizational reduction as a threat. Additionally, employees' reactions are likely to be unfavourable when they believe that downsizing has been handled unfairly, which heightens anxiety (Brockner et al., 2004).

Trust is an emotional relationship between people; the expectation of faith that individuals have on the organization and leadership (Darcy, 2010). It is the foundation for constructive

conflict, commitment, personal accountability, and achieving collective goals (Collins, 2010; Lencioni, 2005).

In organizations, trust is a crucial factor that affects performance and, if it is violated, could have major negative consequences. Employee compliance with organizational rules and laws is likely to increase as a result of employee trust in leaders, which will also make it easier to implement organizational change and enhance employee contributions in terms of performance, commitment, and civic virtue behaviour (Ponnu & Tennakoon, 2009; Robinson, 1996; Van Zyl & Lazenby, 2002). Employees view leaders as trustworthy individuals who can be relied upon (Mayer et al., 2009). If a leader is seen as being dishonest, unethical, or likely to take advantage of them, employees are reluctant to follow them (Robbins et al., 2008).

The Commitment Trust Theory states that commitment and trust are crucial components in establishing and preserving successful relationships between employees and the organization (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Building trust is the belief and confidence that an employee has in a leader. It enhances that individual's willingness to stay, connect to, and loyalty to the organization. It forges a solid emotional connection between the boss and the team member, fostering more loyalty and constructive behavioural goals. The Commitment Trust Theory states that trust is a requirement for commitment. Before an employee becomes deeply committed to the organization, they must have faith in their leader in the case of organizational loyalty. When a leader continuously satisfies or surpasses employees' expectations, offers accurate and reliable information, and conducts themselves in an ethical and open manner, trust is established (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Employees who believe in and care about the company are more likely to take good actions including promoting the company, defending the company's reputation, and refusing to use competing products (Kaur & Soch, 2018). The sustainability or survival of the civil service is more likely for leaders who place a high priority on developing trust with their workforce. One of the most important factors in a successful firm is staff dedication (Oliver, 1999). An employee is more likely to be dedicated and obedient when he is satisfied with his manager and the company (Elena & Jose, 2001). Buchanan (1974), opined that commitment is characterized as a person's devotion to or sense of affection for a business. Additionally, Aaker (1991) said such phrase refers to a worker's loyalty to a company. According to relationship marketing ideas, trust is the primary goal of any long-term engagement. Trust is seen as the psychological trait that permits individuals to become long-term loyalists to an organization (Larzelere & Huston, 1980; Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Ozuem et al., 2021).

Iqbal et al. (2023) assert that because trust is an emotional concept, it eventually results in employee loyalty. If an employee trusts and is dedicated to their existing organization, they will be less likely to investigate alternative job offers. They frequently ignore small service deficiencies, flaws in the leadership, and are less inclined to migrate to a rival organization (Sheth & Park, 1974).

Trust is defined as "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a specific action important to the trustor, regardless of the ability to monitor or control that other party" (Ahamed & Noboa, 2022), as cited in Mayer et al. (1995). The work that has already been published has paid much attention to whether trust is an individual or organizational trait and whether this construct is best characterized as being unidimensional or multidimensional.

2.2 Employee Commitment

Despite the abundance of writings on organizational commitment, little progress has been made in defining what commitment is, as a concept, in the public eye. Azeez (2015), described commitment as the feeling of adoration that employees have for the company for which they work. The extent to which an employee adheres to the organization's values, standards, orientation, and goals, as well as their sense of personal involvement in the task of ensuring the success of the company, is, according to him, a major determinant of how dedicated they are to it. In a similar vein, Ng and Feldman (2008) stated that commitment is the powerful force that binds employees to their organizations. According to Azeez et al. (2016), the current workplace environment necessitates that managers and organizational leadership exercise some initiative and implement plans that will aid in luring and keeping talented workers. Furthermore, they found that devoted workers still need managerial guidance to complete daily responsibilities with freedom and autonomy.

Khan et al. (2011) examined the effects of employee commitment (Affective commitment, continuance commitment, and Normative commitment) on worker job performance and found out a strong correlation between workers' commitment to their jobs and their job performance. Job performance has thus become a factor in determining how committed an individual is. In order to improve employee performance and subsequently raise organizational productivity, Khan (2010) encouraged managers to pay close attention to all the elements that foster employee commitment as well as the antecedents of that behavior.

A study by Habib (2010) to examine the interdependency of job satisfaction and job performance, effect of employee commitment and attitude towards work on performance

shows that, in comparison to workers who are less disposed toward their work, employees with stronger employee commitment perform better and are more satisfied with their jobs. This view is supported by Ali et al. (2010), that there is a strong correlation between organizational performance and both employee dedication and corporate social responsibility. Since social activities also consider the wellbeing of participants and their families, they concluded that organizations could increase performance through employees' commitment.

2.3 Affective Commitment

When compared to the other two elements of employee commitment, affective commitment is viewed as the ideal commitment because it stems from the individual's desire to remain with the company rather than from the influence of other factors, such as those that form the basis of normative commitment and continuance commitment (Kundi et al., 2021; Meyer & Allen, 1991; Meyer et al., 1993). The employee who is dominated by affective commitment is very dedicated and willing to make the best contribution to the organization. When an employee has affective commitment, he or she is delighted to be working for the company, believes in what the company stands for, is at ease, and is obligated to give the company his or her all (George and Jones, 2012). The effectiveness of an employee is determined by how he feels about his job and with whom he works for, as well as his attitude towards the organization that employs him. This is a consideration for all workers who can determine the commitment of a person (George & Sabapathy, 2011). Workers who have a strong affective commitment will continue to work with the organization because of the desire to do the work. Employees with affective commitment will be engaged at work and give their best effort. However, a subpar employee will exhibit laziness, poor performance, a lack of ambition, and even a desire to leave the company (Chaudhry et al., 2021; Kaur, 2020; Yuliani et al., 2021). Employees who have a strong sense of affective commitment will adhere to the organization's policies and principles as well as the norms of engagement. They will also have high regard for the management because they are willing to stick around.

Khan et al. (2021) Identify the factors that lead to affective commitment, such as the leader-member exchange and the employee-friendly appraisal process that satisfies their needs and serves as the foundation for their self-esteem, emotional support, and affiliation needs (Bhatti et al., 2019; Oh & Sawang, 2021; Shafiq et al., 2021). A balanced attitude to work-life balance, higher connection with work, a positive employee appraisal process, decreased anxiety, and greater job satisfaction are additional consequences of affective commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Becker et al., 2012).

2.4 Continuance Commitment

According to Owan (2021), Continuance commitment reflects staff persistence to work in an organization just because of the perceived dangers or hardship they stand to face if they decide to leave the organization (Owan et al., 2020). This kind of commitment is based on the benefits or compensation workers receive from employers that provide the impression that it would be difficult or impossible to find something better elsewhere. The sensible course of action is to continue being dedicated to the current workplaces. Employees who are motivated by continuance commitment may quit an organization if a favorable salary offer arrives from another source, therefore it makes sense that this sort of commitment looks to be more temporal than emotional commitment.

Yogun (2014), explained that the tendency of a person to continue a behavior series while taking investment losses into account after that behavior series has ended is known as a continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1984).

Yogun (2014) opined that Allen and Meyer identified several factors that affect an employee's continuance commitment to their work: capability transfer: the situation of an employee's abilities and experiences being transferred to another organization; and training: the question of whether an employee's training is applicable to other organizations. Self-investment: In this scenario, the employee devoted most of his time and effort to the current organization. Acquired tangible benefits: The fear that an employee would lose some of their income, primarily retirement benefits, if they leave the firm. Alternative job opportunities: instances where workers have left an organization and found comparable or better positions. According to Allen and Meyer (1990), The Becker side subject method shouldn't be taken into account when using a behavioral approach. Since continuance commitment is assessed within attitudinal commitment on the established measure. Realizing the potential repercussions of leaving an organization, in Allen and Meyer's opinion, indicates the psychological nature of the relationship between the employee and the organization and does not have an attitude-related component. Therefore according to Allen and Meyer (1990), Becker’s side subject approach which is founded over costs which will be caused from leaving from organization, is suggested to be evaluated as continuance commitment within attitudinal commitment.

Mayer and Schoorman (1992) opined that commitment is based on economic considerations, and the employee feels compelled to commit to the business because leaving has significant financial, social, and psychological repercussions. Employee commitment to the organization grows in step with rising economic costs, and employees steer clear of actions that can jeopardize their membership.

2.5 Normative Commitment

Madi et al. (2012) stated that normative commitment is a worker's sense of duty to stay with the company when it is based on the worker having assimilated the company's values and objectives. According to Meyer and Smith (2000); Bal et al. (2014), normative commitment is a reflection of the employee's sense of duty to uphold membership in the organization.

Coworker commitment, which comprises affective and normative dimensions as well as commitment behavior, organizational dependability, and participative management have also been proposed as potential antecedents for normative commitment. Furthermore, it is anticipated that the commitment of coworkers would act as normative cues that guide the formation of normative commitment. It is important to note that participatory management and organizational reliability are important factors that will encourage and establish a sense of moral obligation to give back to the organization. According to Bal et al. (2014), normative commitment is a reflection of the employee's sense of duty to uphold membership in the organization.

Additionally, according to Meyer and Maltin (2010), the latter insight about normative commitment is compatible with recent findings, showing that it can have two faces, one indicating a moral imperative and the other reflecting a duty owed (Meyer & Parfyonova, 2010). First off, the moral imperative mindset manifests when strong affective commitment is coupled with normative commitment. Second, persistence with weak affective commitment combined with a strong normative commitment leads to the mindset of obligated obligation. Furthermore, Lee and Chen (2013) argued that normative commitment is related to a responsibility that an employee might believe they owe the company for providing them with a job when they most needed one. That will undoubtedly boost or raise employee engagement, particularly in a country with an army of unemployed individuals.

3.0 Methodology

The population of this study is made up of all civil servants from twenty-two (22) ministries in Bayelsa state who are captured in the Report of 2021 Biometrics Register. For this, the study population is twenty-five thousand, seven hundred and eighty-nine (25,789) civil servants. This figure is obtained from the States' Fiscal Transparency, Accountability and Sustainability (SFTAS) Program report of 2021. The study adopted a simple random sampling technique and derived a sample size of three hundred and ninety-four (394) civil servants.

3.1 Hypothesis Testing

The hypotheses to address the relationship between building trust and the measures of employee commitment are reflected in the following hypotheses:

HO_1: There is no significant relationship between building trust and affective commitment in Bayelsa State civil service.

HO_2: There is no significant relationship between building trust and continuance commitment in Bayelsa State civil service.

HO_3: There is no significant relationship between building trust and normative commitment in Bayelsa State civil service.

Evidence from the analysis demonstrates the significant relationship between building trust and the measures of employee commitment. The result points to building trust as having a substantial impact on the outcomes of employee commitment where the relationship between building trust and affective commitment is revealed to be significant at a rho = 0.580 and P = 0.05; the relationship between building trust and continuance commitment is revealed to be significant at a rho = 0.959 and P = 0.05 and furthermore the relationship between building trust and normative commitment is observed not to be significant at a rho = 0.002 and P = 0.05.

The results generated herein point to the nature of the relationship between supportive leadership and employee commitment. Evidence from the analysis demonstrates the usefulness and imperatives of supportive leadership in driving commitment of civil servants

within Bayelsa state civil service. In line with the observed outcome of the tests on the bivariate hypotheses, the following results on the tests are stated:

i. Building trust is significantly related to affective commitment in Bayelsa State civil service.
ii. Building trust is significantly related to continuance commitment in Bayelsa State civil service.
iii. Building trust is not significantly relatedto normative commitment in Bayelsa State civil service.

4.0 Discussion

4.1 Building Trust and Affective Commitment

The finding demonstrates the role of building trust as critical to the outcome affective commitment; building trust as a key function of supportive leadership which drives affective commitments of employees. According to Larson and LaFasto (1989), trust improves a group's capacity for cooperation, which in turn improves team performance. Gaining a coworker's trust promotes dedication and enjoyment.

4.2 Building Trust and Continuance Commitment

Employee trust in management is defined as "the relationship between an employee and a composite of individuals at or near the top of the organizational chart," according to McCauley and Kuhnert (1992). Colquitt et al. (2012) argued that trust can boost employees' self-assurance for greater professional outcomes like dedication. Podsakoff et al. (2000) used the phrase "trust in supervisor" to indicate an employee's faith and dependence in their manager. This means that if employees have a high level of trust in their immediate boss, they can expect a positive attitude, respect, and a good working relationship with their employer.

4.3 Building Trust and Normative Commitment

According to the findings of this study, trust is a crucial factor that affects performance and, if it is violated, could have major negative consequences. Employee compliance with organizational rules and laws may not necessarily increase as a result of employee trust in leaders, which will also make it easier to implement organizational change and enhance employee contributions in terms of performance, commitment, and civic virtue behaviour(Ponnu & Tennakoon, 2009; Robinson, 1996; Van Zyl & Lazenby, 2002). Building trust is the belief and confidence that an employee has in a leader. It enhances that individual's willingness to stay, connection to, and loyalty to the organization. It forges a solid emotional connection between the boss and the team member, fostering more loyalty and constructive behavioural goals. Before an employee becomes deeply committed to the organization, they must have faith in their leader in the case of organizational loyalty. When a leader continuously satisfies or surpasses employees' expectations, offers accurate and reliable information, and conducts themselves in an ethical and open manner, trust is established (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

5.0 Conclusion

The relationship between building trust and employee commitment is revealed to be positive and significant. The findings of this study demonstrate the role of building trust as critical for the employees' level of affective and continuance commitment but not normative commitment. In line with the results, the study concludes as follows:

Building trust which indicates employees' faith and dependence in their manager advances the required level of responsiveness necessary for employee commitment and outcomes such

as affective and continuance commitment but not normative commitments because the organization ensures solid emotional connection between employees and management.

6.0 Recommendations

The relationship between building trust and employee commitment is established herein as significant and positive. Building trust can be considered as positively impacting and facilitating employee commitment features such as affective and continuance commitment but not normative commitments. Thus, in line with the findings of this study, the following recommendations are put forward:

i. Bayelsa state civil service should ensure leaders use end values to influence civil servants' goals and beliefs to enable them to perform better and pursue objectives they ordinarily would not. This will enable civil servants to stick with their ministries because they owe the ministries a debt of loyalty.

ii. Bayelsa State Civil Service should provide good working conditions and make the civil servants feel owed by the Service for the possibilities and benefits offered by them. This will enhance civil servants' devotion to their ministries, and they will stop at nothing to ensure that the Service achieves its highest degree of success.

iii. Bayelsa State Civil Service should build trust amongst leaders and followers as this will boost civil servants' self-assurance for greater professional outcomes like dedication. It will also increase civil servants' loyalty to stick with their ministries.

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Appendix

Table 1: Relationship between building trust and measures of employee commitment

Correlations

			BUILD_TRUST	AFFECTIVE_COMM	CONTINUANCE_COMM	NORMATIVE_COMM
Spearman's rho	BUILD_TRUST	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.029	-.003	-.164**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.580	.959	.002
		N	359	359	359	359
	AFFECTIVE_COMM	Correlation Coefficient	-.029	1.000	.121*	-.091
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.580	.	.021	.084
		N	359	359	359	359
	CONTINUANCE_COMM	Correlation Coefficient	-.003	.121*	1.000	-.153**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.959	.021	.	.004
		N	359	359	359	359
	NORMATIVE_COMM	Correlation Coefficient	-.164**	-.091	-.153**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.084	.004	.
		N	359	359	359	359

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

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Research Data (SPSS Output), 2023