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Aptitude Management And Employees Performance (Selected Private Schools In Ozoro, Delta State)

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ABSTRACT

This study examined aptitude management and employees performance; a study of selected private schools in Ozoro, Delta State. The objectives of the study are; to look at the connection between aptitude management practice and the performance of employees, and to also consider the impacts of training and career development on the productivity of employees. The study adopted the survey research design. The study's population was made up of 132 employees, including management staff and junior employees. A total sample size of 80 respondents consisting both junior employees and management staff of four selected private schools; Final Touch, Royal Foundation, Parapet and De Achiever's International schools all in Ozoro town were used for the study. A well-structured questionnaire was the instrument used in gathering data for the study. The questionnaire consist of 10 items structured in a 4-point Likert type format of the range strongly agreed (SA), agreed (A), disagreed (DA} and strongly disagreed (SD). With the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Software, the data was analyzed using tables, simple percentages, mean, and standard deviation. The hypotheses were tested using Chi-Square statistics and the result of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between aptitude management practices and employee performance in selected private schools in Ozoro. The study also demonstrated that training and development have significant impact on employee productivity. Based on the findings, it was recommended that private schools in Ozoro, should implement structured aptitude management programmes, including recruitment, training, and career development, to enhance employee performance.

Keywords: Aptitude, Management, Performance, Sector, Educational

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Aptitude management is a critical factor influencing employee performance in modern organizations, particularly in the education sector, where efficiency and productivity are essential. Private Schools in Ozoro, Delta State, operate in a highly competitive and dynamic environment that demands skilled and committed employees. Effective aptitude management strategies, including recruitment, training, career development, and retention, play a significant role in enhancing employee productivity and overall organizational success (Ile, Bello, & Nwachukwu, 2024). When Schools invest in identifying and nurturing top aptitude, employees feel valued and are more likely to perform at their best, contributing to improved service delivery and students satisfaction.

Moreover, aptitude management fosters innovation and adaptability, enabling schools to respond effectively to industry changes. Employees who undergo regular training in digital Education solutions, for example, are better equipped to handle technological advancements and meet students expectations (Afolabi, Okafor & Yusuf.,2024). By strategically managing aptitude, schools in Ozoro can create a competitive workforce that drives long-term success, enhances educational performance, and strengthens their s market or competitive position in Nigeria's education sector.

In many educational institutions, poor aptitude management practices have resulted in high employee turnover, reduced job satisfaction, and decreased efficiency. For instance, Schools that fail to provide clear career growth opportunities may struggle with disengaged employees who lack motivation to excel (Shakirat, & Ishaq, 2023). On the other hand, Eretan (2023) observed that organizations that implement structured training programs and mentorship initiatives often experience higher levels of employee engagement and commitment. A case in point is when a school sponsors professional certification courses for its employees, leading to improved skills, job performance, and loyalty to the organization.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the critical role of aptitude management in enhancing employee performance, many private schools in Ozoro, Delta State, struggle with ineffective strategies, leading to high staff turnover, low productivity, and reduced organizational efficiency. Poor recruitment, inadequate training, and lack of career development opportunities result in disengaged employees who deliver suboptimal performance. Schools that fail to invest in structured aptitude management face declining service quality and employees dissatisfaction. The increasing competition in the education sector demands a skilled workforce, yet many schools fail to attract, develop, and retain top aptitude, posing a significant threat to long-term sustainability and growth.

Objectives of the Study

To guide the study the following objectives are considered

1. To examine the relationship between aptitude management practices and employee performance in selected private schools in Ozoro, Delta State.
2. To assess the impact of training and career development on employee productivity in selected private schools in Ozoro, Delta State.

Research Questions

1. Is there relationship between aptitude management practices and employee performance in private schools in Ozoro, Delta State?
2. Does training and career development impact employee productivity in private schools in Ozoro, Delta State?

Research Hypotheses

1. H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between aptitude management practices and employee performance in private schools in Ozoro, Delta State.
2. H_{02}: Training and career development have no significant impact on employee productivity in private schools in Ozoro, Delta State.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it provides valuable insights into the role of aptitude management in enhancing employee performance, benefiting various stakeholders. Schools and educational institutions can use the findings to develop effective strategies for attracting, developing, and retaining top aptitude, thereby improving productivity and service quality. Policymakers can formulate regulations that promote better workforce management in the education sector. Proprietors or Proprietress of private schools will gain practical knowledge on how training and career development influence employee efficiency. Employees will benefit from improved work conditions, career growth opportunities, and job satisfaction, ultimately leading to a more motivated and high-performing workforce.

Scope of the Study

This study focuses on aptitude management and employee performance in selected private schools in Ozoro, Delta State. It examines aptitude management practices, training, and career development. The

study targets School employees and proprietors and proprietresses, analyzing their experiences, perceptions, and the impact of aptitude management on organizational performance in schools within Ozoro, Delta State.

Definition of Operational Terms

Aptitude Management – This refers to a strategic approach to attracting, developing, retaining, and utilizing employees with the capacity to work to enhance organizational performance and achieve business goals.

Employee Performance – This is the effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity of an employee in executing assigned tasks, often measured through key performance indicators (KPIs).

Training and Career Development – This refers to organizational efforts to enhance employees' skills and knowledge through mentorship, and professional growth opportunities.

Private Schools – These are educational institutions owned by individuals or organizations and are licensed by the government to train pupils and students, provide moral standard, and offer enlightenment, care services to individuals and relieve homes of burdens.

Organizational Productivity – This refers to the overall efficiency and output of an organization, influenced by employee performance, management strategies, and operational effectiveness.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Aptitude Management

As observed by Obomeghie and Musah (2024), aptitude management is a strategic approach used by organizations to attract, develop, retain, and optimize employees to enhance overall performance and achieve business objectives. It involves a series of interconnected processes, including recruitment, onboarding, training, career development, performance management, and succession planning. Effective aptitude management ensures that organizations have the right people with the necessary skills to drive growth and maintain a competitive edge. In the education sector, proper aptitude management leads to improved employee engagement, higher productivity, and better service delivery. When employees feel valued and supported, they are more likely to contribute meaningfully to organizational success (Johnson & Adeyemi, 2024).

Aptitude Management Practices in Private Schools

Ukpabi and Salaudeen (2021) maintained that Private Schools implement several aptitude management practices to enhance employee performance and organizational efficiency. By implementing these practices, Private Schools create a motivated workforce, improve service delivery, and maintain a competitive advantage in the educational sector.

1. **Recruitment and Selection** – Schools use rigorous hiring processes, including aptitude tests and interviews, to attract and select the most qualified candidates (Donatus & Kenneth, 2021).
2. **Training and Development** – Employees undergo continuous training programs, including on-the-job training, leadership workshops, and digital education skill enhancement to improve their competencies (Obomeghie & Musah, 2024).
3. **Performance Management** – Schools use key performance indicators (KPIs) and regular appraisals to assess employee productivity and provide feedback for improvement.
4. **Career Development and Succession Planning** – Employees are offered career growth opportunities through promotions, mentorship programs, and leadership training, ensuring long-term retention of top aptitude (Ile, Bello & Nwachukwu., 2024).
5. **Employee Engagement and Retention Strategies** – Schools provide competitive salaries, incentives, and workplace benefits to enhance job satisfaction and reduce turnover rates.

Influence of Aptitude Management on Employee Performance

Aptitude management significantly influences employee performance by ensuring that organizations attract, develop, and retain skilled personnel. When employees are recruited based on merit and provided with structured training programs, they acquire the necessary competencies to perform more efficiently.

Career development opportunities, such as mentorship and promotions, enhance motivation and commitment, leading to higher productivity. Effective performance management, including regular appraisals and feedback, helps employees understand their strengths and areas for improvement, fostering continuous growth (Afolabi et al., 2024).

Furthermore, Johnson and Adeyemi (2024) remarked that competitive compensation, incentives, and a positive work environment improve job satisfaction and reduce turnover rates. In private schools, well-managed aptitude ensures that employees are engaged, innovative, and student-focused, which enhances service delivery. By implementing strong aptitude management strategies, organizations create a high-performing workforce that drives schools growth, strengthens competitiveness and ensures long-term sustainability in the education sector.

Empirical Review

In a study by Shakirat and Ishaq (2023) conducted an empirical study on the influence of talent management initiatives on organizational performance within software engineering enterprises in Nigeria. The study aimed to assess how aptitude management strategies affect software process improvement. The population included employees from various software firms, with a sample size of 120 selected through random sampling. Data were collected using structured questionnaires validated by software industry experts, and reliability was ascertained with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.83. Data analysis utilized path analysis to explore the relationships between aptitude management initiatives and performance metrics. Findings revealed that proactive aptitude management, including continuous skill development and career advancement opportunities, leads to significant improvements in organizational performance. The study recommends that software firms adopt strategic aptitude management practices to enhance their competitive edge. This aligns with the current research's emphasis on the Education sector, suggesting that effective aptitude management is universally beneficial across various industries.

Ukpabi and Salaudeen (2021), the researchers aimed to determine the relationship between recruitment processes and employee performance at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The population comprised university employees, with a sample size of 200 selected through stratified random sampling. Data were collected using structured questionnaires, validated through expert review, and reliability was confirmed via a pilot study yielding a Cronbach's alpha of 0.82. Analysis was conducted using Pearson's correlation and regression techniques to assess relationships between variables. Findings indicated a significant positive relationship between effective recruitment processes and employee performance, leading to the recommendation that universities adopt transparent and merit-based recruitment strategies. This aligns with the present study's focus on aptitude management in schools, highlighting the universal importance of robust recruitment practices across sectors.

Eretan (2023) assessed the effect of material management on project performance at Deux Project Limited in Nigeria. The study encompassed all project management staff, with a sample size of 80 selected through simple random sampling. Data were gathered via structured interviews and questionnaires, validated by industry professionals, and reliability was established with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.85. Descriptive and inferential statistics, including regression analysis, were employed to interpret the data. Findings revealed that efficient material management positively correlates with improved project outcomes, leading to recommendations for firms to invest in robust material management systems. This study, though focused on material resources, parallels the current research by emphasizing that strategic management of resources, human or material is crucial for performance enhancement in organizations.

Afolabi et al. (2024) explored the relationship between aptitude management practices and employee productivity in Nigeria's public sector. The research targeted employees in federal ministries, with a sample size of 250 selected through stratified sampling. Data collection was conducted using questionnaires validated by human resource experts, and reliability was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.81. Analysis involved multiple regression techniques to determine the impact of various aptitude management practices on productivity. Results indicated that practices such as continuous

training and clear career progression paths significantly boost employee productivity. The study recommends that public sector organizations institutionalize comprehensive aptitude management frameworks. These findings resonate with the present study's focus on the education sector, reinforcing the notion that effective aptitude management is a critical driver of performance across different institutions.

Theoretical Framework

This study is hinged on Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory. The theory was propounded by Barney (1991), emphasizing that an organization's sustainable competitive advantage depends on its internal resources rather than external market conditions. The theory argues that firms that effectively acquire, develop, and manage valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) resources can achieve superior performance. Human aptitude is considered one of the most critical strategic assets within this framework. The foundation of RBV lies in the idea that organizations differ in their resource endowments, and firms that manage their human resources effectively gain a long-term edge over competitors. In the context of aptitude management and employee performance in private schools in Ozoro, Delta State, this theory suggests that Schools that invest in acquiring and developing top-tier employees can outperform others in service delivery, innovation, and student satisfaction. For example, a school that implements structured training programmes, leadership development, and employee retention strategies can enhance employee expertise and engagement, leading to increased productivity. If school A provides regular digital education training to employees while school B does not, school A is more likely to achieve higher efficiency and students satisfaction. Therefore, by applying RBV, private schools in Ozoro can view aptitude management as a strategic resource, ensuring that employees' skill, knowledge, and motivation contribute significantly to organizational success and long-term sustainability.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

The study adopted a survey research design to examine the relationship between aptitude management and employee performance in selected private schools in Ozoro, Delta State. This design was appropriate as it allowed for the collection of data from a sample of respondents through structured questionnaires, enabling an in-depth analysis of their perceptions and experiences.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised 132 employees, including management staff and junior employees, from selected private schools in Ozoro, Delta State. This population was chosen to ensure the study captured diverse perspectives on aptitude management and employee performance within the education sector.

Sample Size

The sample size was mathematically determined using Taro Yamane's (1967) formula. This mathematical method is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where;

n = sample size
N = the total population (132)
e = level of significance (0.05)
1 = a constant

By substituting in the above equation

$$n = \frac{132}{1+132(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{132}{1+132(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{132}{1+0.655}$$

$$n = \frac{132}{1.655}$$

n = 79.76

A total of 80 respondents, comprising of employees and management staff selected as the sample size for the study. The four schools used for the study are Final Touch School, Royal Foundation School , Parapet School, and De Achievers International School.

Sampling Technique

The study employed a simple random sampling technique, ensuring that every individual within the study population had an equal chance of being selected. This technique minimized bias and enhanced the representativeness of the sample.

Sources of Data Collection

The study relied mainly on primary data source, specifically structured questionnaires, to obtain firsthand responses from employees and management regarding aptitude management practices and employee performance.

Method of Data Collection

Data were collected using a questionnaire consisting of 10 structured items, designed on a 4-point Likert type ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." The questionnaire items were tailored to comprehensively address the study variables.

Validity of the Instrument

The questionnaire was validated by experts from the field of Human Resource Management and Entrepreneurship. Their feedback ensured that the instrument was clear, relevant, and adequately measured the study variables. Necessary modifications were made based on their recommendations to enhance content validity.

Reliability of the Instrument

The Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument, and a coefficient value of 0.85 was obtained using SPSS. This indicated a high level of internal consistency, confirming the reliability of the questionnaire for data collection.

Method of Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Tables and simple percentages were used to present demographic data, while mean and standard deviation were employed to answer the research questions. The Chi-Square test was used to test the hypotheses, providing statistical evidence on the relationship between aptitude management and employees performance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demography of Respondents

Table 1: Gender of Respondents

Gender		Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	47	58.75	58.75
	Female	33	41.25	100.00
	Total	80	100.00	

Source: Researcher's Compilation via SPSS25 (2026)

From table 1, 47 respondents representing 58.75% are male, while 33 respondents representing 41.25% are female. The analysis shows that most of the participants are male.

Table 2: Age distribution of respondents

Years		Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 30 years	26	32.50	32.50
	30 – 35 years	34	42.50	75.00
	36 – 40 years	18	22.50	97.50
	41 years and above	2	2.50	100.00
	Total	80	100.00	

Source: Researcher's Compilation via SPSS25 (2026)

From table 2, 26 (32.50%) respondents are below 30 years, 34 (42.50%) respondents are between 30 – 35 years, 18 (22.50%) are between 36 – 40 years, while, 2 (2.50%) respondents are 41 years and above. The result shows that majority of the participants are between 30-35 years.

Table 3: Academic qualification of respondents

Qualification		Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Percent
Valid	SSCE	5	6.25	6.25
	ND/NCE	20	25.00	31.25
	HND/BSC	50	62.50	93.75
	MASTERS	5	6.25	100.00
	Total	80	100.00	

Source: Researcher's Compilation via SPSS25 (2026)

From table 3, 5 (6.25%) respondents are SSCE holders, 20 (25.00%) respondents are ND/NCE holders, while 50 (62.50%) respondents are HND/BSC holders while 5 representing 6.25% are master degree holders. The result shows that majority of the respondents are HND/BSC holders.

Analysis of Research Questions

The research questions are analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Mean values greater than 2.50 shows respondents' agreement, while mean values below 2.50 shows disagreement.

Research Question One: *Is there relationship between aptitude management practices and employees' performance in private schools ?*

Items 1 – 5 of the questionnaire are used in answering research question one.

Table 4: Mean rating of the relationship between aptitude management practices and employee performance.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	School's aptitude acquisition strategy enhances employee performance.	80	3.09	0.779
2	Regular training and development programmes improve employee efficiency at work.	80	3.17	0.975
3	Employee retention strategies (e.g., career growth opportunities) boost productivity.	80	3.21	0.886
4	Performance appraisal and feedback mechanisms help employees perform better.	80	3.34	0.841
5	Succession planning and leadership development initiatives positively impact employee work performance.	80	3.37	0.719

From table 4, the mean values obtained indicated a strong agreement among respondents that various aptitude management practices positively influence employee performance in private schools. The highest mean (3.37) for succession planning and leadership development suggests that structured career advancement opportunities significantly enhance employee productivity. Similarly, performance appraisal (3.34) and employee retention strategies (3.21) contribute to improved job performance. Regular training (3.17) and aptitude acquisition strategies (3.09) also enhance efficiency.

Research Question Two: *Does training and career development impact employees productivity in private schools?*

Items 6 – 10 of the questionnaire are used in answering research question two.

Table 5: Mean rating of how training and development impact employee productivity

S/N	Questionnaire Items	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
6	The training programmes provided by my School enhance my job efficiency and performance.	80	3.14	0.919
7	Career development opportunities in my School improve my motivation and commitment to work.	80	3.20	0.876
8	Regular participation in training programmes has improved my ability to meet performance targets.	80	3.40	0.832
9	The skills acquired from training sessions have positively impacted my productivity and job effectiveness.	80	3.53	0.791
10	My school's career development initiatives have enhanced my job satisfaction and long-term career growth.	80	3.46	0.853

From table 5, the mean values of 3.14, 3.20, 3.40, 3.53, and 3.46 indicate a strong positive perception of the impact of training and career development on employee productivity in private schools. The highest mean value of 3.53 suggests that the skills acquired from training sessions have significantly improved productivity and job effectiveness. The mean value of 3.46 shows that career development initiatives enhance job satisfaction and long-term career growth. Regular participation in training programs (3.40) and career development opportunities (3.20) improve motivation and commitment. The lowest mean value of 3.14 still reflects a positive influence of training programs on job efficiency. These findings suggest that training and career development play a crucial role in enhancing employee performance and overall organizational success in the education sector.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between aptitude management practices and employee performance in selected Private Schools in Ozoro, Delta State.

Table 6: Chi-square statistical result for hypothesis one

N	X^2 Calculated Value	X^2 Critical Value	Level of significance	Remark
80	26.771	21.026 (P < 0.05)	0.05	Significant

Since Chi Square (X^2) calculated value (26.771) was greater than X^2 table value (21.026), the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected which states that; there is no significant relationship between aptitude management practices and employee performance in selected Private Schools in Ozoro, Delta State. On the other hand, the alternative hypothesis (H_i) was accepted which states that there is a significant relationship between aptitude management practices and employee performance in selected Private Schools in Ozoro, Delta State.

Hypothesis Two: Training and career development have no significant impact on employee productivity in selected Private Schools in Ozoro, Delta State.

Table 7: Chi-square statistical result for hypothesis two

N	X^2 Calculated Value	X^2 Critical Value	Level of significance	Remark
80	77.625	21.026 (P < 0.05)	0.05	Significant

Since Chi Square (X^2) calculated value (77.625) was greater than X^2 table value (21.026), the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected which states that training and career development have no significant impact

on employee productivity in selected Private Schools in Ozoro, Delta State. Moreover, the alternative hypothesis (H_i) was accepted which states that training and career development have a significant impact on employee productivity in selected Private Schools in Ozoro, Delta State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study revealed that aptitude management practices significantly influence employee performance in selected Private Schools in Ozoro, Delta State. Respondents strongly agreed that effective aptitude management strategies, including structured recruitment, continuous training, career development, and employee retention initiatives, enhance productivity, job satisfaction, and overall organizational efficiency. This aligns with the findings of Johnson and Adeyemi (2024), who examined aptitude management in selected commercial schools in Nigeria and concluded that well-structured aptitude management frameworks contribute to improved job satisfaction and performance. Similarly, Afolabi, Okafor, and Yusuf (2024) found that aptitude management positively affects employee productivity in Nigeria's public sector, further validating the importance of investing in employee growth. However, unlike the present study, which focuses specifically on the private sector, Afolabi et al. (2024) examined the broader public sector, where different organizational structures and policies may influence the implementation of aptitude management strategies.

The second research question demonstrated a strong positive perception of the impact of training and career development on employee productivity in private schools. Employees acknowledged that regular participation in training programs do improved their ability to meet performance targets, enhanced their job efficiency, and increased their motivation and long-term commitment. These findings are consistent with the study by Shakirat and Ishaq (2023), which explored software engineering enterprises in Nigeria and revealed that continuous skill development and structured career growth pathways significantly enhance employee performance. In contrast, the work of Donatus and Kenneth (2021) and Ukpabi and Salaudeen (2021), both focusing on recruitment processes at the University of Ibadan, highlighted that while proper recruitment improves job placement and initial performance, ongoing training and career development remain critical in sustaining long-term employee effectiveness. The present study extends this perspective by emphasizing the continuous nature of aptitude management and its direct link to education sector productivity.

While all these studies reinforce the significance of aptitude management, the present research fills a unique gap by specifically addressing the impact of training and career development on employee performance within selected private schools in Ozoro, Delta State. Unlike previous studies that broadly examined recruitment processes of public sector organizations, this study provides institution-specific insights, making it more relevant to educational institutions seeking to enhance workforce efficiency.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the impact of aptitude management on employees performance in selected private schools in Ozoro, Delta State. Findings revealed that effective aptitude management practices, including structured recruitment, training, career development, and employee retention, significantly enhance productivity, motivation, and job satisfaction. Respondents strongly agreed that training and career development positively influence their efficiency and long-term career growth. Comparisons with previous studies validated these findings, though this study uniquely focused on the education sector. The study underscores the need for educational institutions to adopt strategic aptitude management initiatives to improve workforce performance and sustain competitive advantage.

This study concluded that aptitude management practices significantly enhance employee performance in selected Private Schools in Ozoro, Delta State. Findings from the first research question showed that effective aptitude management strategies, such as structured recruitment, training, and career development, positively influence employee productivity and job satisfaction. Results from the second research question confirmed that training and career development initiatives improve employee efficiency, motivation, and long-term commitment. Overall, the study demonstrated that well-

implemented aptitude management practices contribute to a highly productive workforce, reinforcing the need for Schools to prioritize employee development for sustained organizational success.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Private schools in Ozoro should implement structured aptitude management programs, including recruitment, training, and career development, to enhance employees performance.
2. Schools should invest in continuous training programmes to improve employees' skills, job efficiency, and long-term career growth.
3. Management should develop employee retention strategies, such as incentives and clear career progression plans, to boost morale and reduce turnover rates.

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