

Management Commitment to Safety Practices and Employee Performance in a Nigerian Teaching Hospital (2016 – 2025)

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of management commitment to safety practices on employee performance in Enugu State University Teaching Hospital (ESUTH), Parklane, between 2016 and 2025. Grounded in the Domino Theory, Safety Climate Theory, and the Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO) model, the research employed a survey methodology. Data were gathered from a sample of 280 respondents selected from a population of 2,802 staff utilising stratified and purposive selection methods. Both primary data sources (questionnaires and interviews) and secondary data sources were employed. Descriptive statistics and Chi-square (χ^2) were utilised for data analysis. The findings indicated a substantial disparity between management's commitment to safety and its actual implementation. Although the availability of fundamental equipment and regular sanitisation processes was recognised, essential elements such as safety training, communication, and workplace oversight were deemed insufficient. The Chi-square finding ($\chi^2 = 231.419$, $p < 0.05$) necessitated the rejection of the null hypothesis, signifying that management's commitment to safety standards did not substantially improve employee performance. The report reveals that inadequate implementation of safety protocols and a deficient safety culture have negatively impacted employee productivity. It advocates for reinforced policy execution, ongoing safety training, enhanced communication, and proactive oversight to improve safety and performance results.

Keywords: *Management Commitment, Safety Practices, Employee Performance, Safety Climate, Teaching Hospital.*

INTRODUCTION

The provision of quality healthcare services in contemporary societies relies primarily on the efficiency, motivation, and performance of healthcare workers, whose responsibilities are directly shaped by organisational structures, managerial practices, and workplace conditions. In both developed and developing nations, the healthcare sector has increasingly acknowledged that employee performance is not solely determined by individual competence but is profoundly influenced by institutional dedication to safety protocols, occupational health standards, and supportive work environments (Clarke, 2013; Neal & Griffin, 2006). Management's commitment to safety practices is a crucial factor influencing employee productivity, service quality, and overall organisational effectiveness, especially in high-risk settings like hospitals, where unsafe practices can lead to severe or fatal outcomes (Christian et al., 2009).

Healthcare institutions worldwide are marked by intricate and high-stress environments that subject staff to many occupational hazards, including biological diseases, physical injuries, psychological stress, and workplace violence (World Health Organization (WHO), 2020).

These dangers are further intensified in underdeveloped nations where health systems are frequently hindered by poor funding, inadequate infrastructure, and feeble regulatory enforcement (Adebayo et al., 2021). The situation in Nigeria is notably severe, as the healthcare sector struggles with systemic issues including personnel shortages, inadequate compensation, infrastructural deficiencies, and ineffective institutional governance (Oleribe et al., 2019). The problems significantly impact employee safety and performance, requiring enhanced managerial dedication to workplace safety standards as a strategic approach to enhancing healthcare delivery outcomes.

In Nigeria, teaching hospitals epitomise the pinnacle of healthcare delivery, integrating clinical services, research, and the education of medical professionals. Empirical research indicates that these institutions face considerable managerial and operational inefficiencies that detract from employee effectiveness. Research on tertiary healthcare facilities in Enugu State indicates that diminishing service quality, reduced productivity, and employee discontent are significantly associated with poor management practices and insufficient focus on worker welfare (Eze et al., 2023). This highlights the significance of executive commitment in establishing organisational objectives and cultivating a secure and supportive work environment that boosts employee engagement and productivity.

The significance of safety protocols in healthcare environments is paramount. Safety practices include the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE), enforcement of infection control protocols, regular safety training, effective communication of safety policies, and the establishment of mechanisms for reporting and addressing workplace hazards (WHO, 2020). When management exhibits a strong commitment to these behaviours, it conveys to employees that their well-being is prioritised, therefore cultivating a culture of trust, motivation, and accountability (Zohar, 2010). In contrast, insufficient management commitment to safety may result in heightened workplace accidents, employee unhappiness, absenteeism, and ultimately diminished employee performance (Clarke, 2013).

Empirical research in Nigerian teaching hospitals demonstrates a significant correlation between management practices and employee performance. Research conducted at Enugu State University Teaching Hospital (ESUTH), Parklane, revealed that human resource management practices, including staff orientation, employee welfare, and work-life balance, significantly impact employee performance metrics such as punctuality, efficiency, and service quality (Okeke & Eze, 2022). A research by Ugwu et al. (2021) shown that structured management approaches, such as management by objectives (MBO), significantly improved operational efficiency and reduced wastage within ESUTH, utilising data from more than 200 staff members.

Further evidence from ESUTH Parklane demonstrates that performance appraisal systems and supervisory techniques are essential in improving employee productivity and patient safety results (Nwankwo & Obi, 2020). Nonetheless, despite these favourable results, there are still notable deficiencies in safety management within the hospital. A study on workplace safety and violence at ESUTH indicated that around 37.6% of healthcare workers encountered workplace violence, comprising verbal abuse (38.7%), bullying (21.9%), and physical assault (16%), underscoring considerable deficiencies in safety enforcement and managerial supervision (Onyishi et al., 2022).

The continued existence of these safety challenges profoundly affects employee performance. Exposure to hazardous working circumstances can result in physical injuries,

psychological trauma, burnout, and diminished job satisfaction, all of which adversely impact productivity and service delivery (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). In severe instances, it may also lead to heightened staff turnover and brain drain, a problem that has grown increasingly common in Nigeria's healthcare industry (Oleribe et al., 2019). Thus, augmenting management's commitment to safety standards is both a moral obligation and a strategic requirement for raising employee performance and assuring sustainable healthcare provision.

In addition to ESUTH Parklane, data from other Nigerian teaching hospitals further substantiates the relationship between management practices and staff performance. A study at the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital identified a robust positive correlation between reward systems, employee dedication, and service delivery outcomes (Akinwale & George, 2020). Research on safety culture in tertiary hospitals in Southeast Nigeria indicated a significant relationship between safety practices and employee performance, with correlation coefficients surpassing 0.80, demonstrating a strong relationship between management-driven safety initiatives and workforce productivity (Ifeanyi et al., 2021).

Despite the increasing literature on management practices and employee performance, a significant gap persists in empirical research explicitly investigating the impact of management commitment to safety standards at ESUTH Parklane over an extended duration. Most current research emphasises discrete elements of management, failing to deliver a holistic examination of safety practices as a pivotal factor influencing employee performance. Furthermore, limited research used a longitudinal approach including the years 2016 to 2025, a period marked by substantial advancements in Nigeria's healthcare system, including the effects of the COVID-19 epidemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the criticality of workplace safety in hospital environments, subjecting frontline workers to unparalleled hazards and highlighting systemic deficiencies, including inadequate protective equipment and insufficient institutional support (WHO, 2020). In Nigeria, these difficulties were exacerbated by pre-existing structural flaws, underscoring the urgent necessity for enhanced management commitment to safety procedures.

This study aims to examine the impact of management commitment to safety practices on employee performance at Enugu State University Teaching Hospital (ESUTH), Parklane, from 2016 to 2025, through the following hypotheses:

H0: There is a significant positive relationship between management's level of commitment to safety practices and employee performance at Enugu State University Teaching Hospital (ESUTH), Parklane, from 2016 to 2025.

H1: There is no significant positive relationship between management's level of commitment to safety practices and employee performance at Enugu State University Teaching Hospital (ESUTH), Parklane, from 2016 to 2025.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Clarification

Management Commitment to Safety Practices

Management commitment to safety procedures denotes the degree to which organisational leaders emphasise and advocate for occupational health and safety via policy, oversight, and resource distribution. It is an essential element of safety atmosphere, indicating leadership's commitment to reducing risks and safeguarding employee welfare (Zohar, 2010).

This dedication is evidenced by the supply of safety equipment, enforcement of legislation, training programs, and reporting procedures.

Research indicates that managerial commitment constitutes the cornerstone of effective safety systems. Christian et al. (2009) discovered that leadership behaviours substantially affect safety outcomes, but Clarke (2013) associated both transformational and transactional leadership styles with safety performance. Adebayo et al. (2021) noted that in Nigeria, management commitment bolsters safety compliance by fostering enhanced working environment and employee involvement. In healthcare settings, such dedication is crucial due to significant exposure to occupational hazards.

Safety Practices in Healthcare Environments

Safety protocols in healthcare encompass systematic procedures designed to safeguard both personnel and patients. These encompass infection management, utilisation of personal protective equipment (PPE), danger identification, training, and violence avoidance (World Health Organization [WHO], 2020). Such practices are essential in hospitals because to the hazards linked to clinical activity.

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored their significance, since insufficient safety protocols heightened healthcare workers' susceptibility (WHO, 2020). Adebayo et al. (2021) discovered that hospitals in Nigeria with more robust safety systems exhibited greater compliance and reduced dangers. This indicates that efficient safety protocols are essential for personnel safeguarding and organisational robustness.

Employee Performance

Employee performance denotes the efficacy with which individuals fulfil tasks aligned with organisational objectives. In healthcare, it is accessed via service quality, efficiency, patient satisfaction, and compliance with clinical standards. It is affected by motivation, job satisfaction, leadership, and working environment (Neal & Griffin, 2006).

Studies demonstrate that performance is significantly influenced by the workplace environment and organisational support. Maslach and Leiter (2016) contend that hazardous environments contribute to burnout, hence diminishing productivity. Oleribe et al. (2019) similarly identified that systemic inefficiencies inside Nigeria's healthcare system adversely impact performance. These findings underscore the significance of management, especially safety commitment, in affecting employee outcomes.

Management commitment and Employee Performance

The correlation between management techniques and performance is well recognised. The Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO) framework posits that employee performance enhances when individuals are equipped with skills, motivation, and favourable work settings (Abuh et al., 2025). Management's dedication to safety corresponds with the "opportunity" dimension by establishing secure working environments.

Empirical evidence substantiates this correlation. Christian et al. (2009) discovered that safety programs enhance employee compliance and engagement, whereas Clarke (2013) noted beneficial impacts on attitudes and performance. Okeke and Eze (2022) demonstrated that employee welfare, training, and monitoring at ESUTH Parklane improve production. Likewise, Ugwu et al. (2021) discovered that management by objectives enhanced efficiency and

diminished waste. These findings underscore the significance of management approaches in influencing performance within healthcare organisations.

Safety Management Practices and Organisational Outcomes

Safety management techniques are essential factors influencing organisational effectiveness. Efficient systems diminish accidents and improve morale, engagement, and output (Christian et al., 2009).

Adebayo et al. (2021) discovered that in Nigeria, managerial commitment, communication, and staff involvement substantially affect safety performance. Neal and Griffin (2006) shown that safety atmosphere is directly correlated with safety behaviour and job performance. The WHO (2020) underscored that efficient safety procedures safeguard both personnel and patients in healthcare. Research indicates that training, supervision, and the supply of personal protective equipment enhance compliance and mitigate dangers (Adebayo et al., 2021).

Work Environment, Safety Climate, and Performance

The safety climate, characterised by employees' collective perceptions of safety priorities, profoundly affects workplace behaviour and performance (Zohar, 2010). An affirmative safety culture promotes adherence, diminishes incidents, and elevates performance.

The dedication of management is a crucial factor in establishing a safety climate. Neal and Griffin (2006) demonstrated that management techniques affect safety behaviour, whereas Clarke (2013) associated leadership commitment with enhanced attitudes and diminished risks.

Occupational safety also influences psychological well-being. Maslach and Leiter (2016) discovered that hazardous situations contribute to burnout and diminished productivity. In contrast, supportive settings characterised by robust safety protocols improve engagement, contentment, and performance.

Theoretical Framework

This research is based on a comprehensive theoretical framework that integrates the Domino Theory of Accident Causation, Safety Climate Theory, and the Ability–Motivation–Opportunity (AMO) Model. The amalgamation of these ideas offers a thorough elucidation of the impact of management's dedication to safety protocols on employee performance within healthcare contexts, especially in high-risk settings like Enugu State University Teaching Hospital (ESUTH), Parklane.

Domino Theory of Accident Causation

The Domino Theory, initially proposed by Heinrich (1931) and later developed by Bird and Germain (1990), asserts that workplace accidents arise from a series of interconnected occurrences. These encompass lineage and social context, employee error, hazardous behaviours or circumstances, incidents, and injuries. Regulating any of these elements, particularly hazardous behaviours or circumstances, helps avert accidents.

In this study, managerial dedication to safety protocols is essential for disrupting this cycle. Through the enforcement of safety standards, provision of protective equipment, and assurance of compliance, management can eradicate hazardous conditions. Empirical research indicates that efficient safety management systems mitigate dangers and enhance outcomes

(Christian et al., 2009). Consequently, the theory emphasises the significance of proactive managerial interventions in improving safety and performance.

Safety Climate Theory

Safety Climate Theory, proposed by Zohar (1980, 2010), underscores the collective perceptions of employees on organisational safety policies and procedures. When management emphasises safety, employees are more inclined to adjust their behaviour accordingly.

A favourable safety climate entails explicit communication, uniform enforcement, and evident leadership dedication. It is a major predictor of safety compliance and job success (Neal & Griffin, 2006; Clarke, 2013). In hospital environments, such an atmosphere diminishes injuries and enhances service provision. At ESUTH Parklane, management methods mould employees' perspectives, affecting engagement, motivation, and performance.

Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) Model

The AMO Model (Appelbaum et al., 2000) asserts that performance is contingent upon ability, motivation, and opportunity. Management's dedication to safety corresponds with the "opportunity" dimension by fostering a secure work environment. Safety training improves capability, whilst supportive leadership bolsters drive.

Empirical research substantiates its significance, demonstrating that enhanced ability, motivation, and opportunity augment performance (Abuh et al., 2025). In healthcare, secure environments are crucial for maintaining productivity.

Integration of Theories

Collectively, these theories elucidate how management commitment mitigates risks (Domino Theory), influences perceptions (Safety Climate), and improves performance conditions (AMO Model). This integrated methodology offers a thorough foundation for examining the impact of safety procedures on employee performance at ESUTH Parklane.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research employed a survey design, recognised for its efficacy in systematically gathering data from a specified population to produce generalisable results (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The approach facilitated the researcher in acquiring both quantitative and qualitative data regarding management's commitment to safety standards and staff performance at Enugu State University Teaching Hospital (ESUTH), Parklane.

Population of the Study

The study population included all employment types at ESUTH Parklane, amounting to 2,802 individuals, encompassing medical personnel, nursing staff, allied health professionals, administrative staff, and support staff. Considering the diverse characteristics of the community, a sample size of 280 respondents was established, constituting 10% of the overall population, in accordance with Nwana's (1981) guidelines for populations in the thousands.

Sampling Techniques

A multi-stage sampling method was utilised. Initially, stratified random sampling was employed to guarantee proportional representation among the five principal staff groups. Subsequently, purposive sampling was employed to identify respondents with sufficient

knowledge and expertise pertinent to occupational safety procedures and employee performance. The proportional distribution of respondents among strata was calculated using Kumar's (2014) formula, guaranteeing equitable representation of each category in the final sample.

Method of Data Collection

The study's data were acquired from primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained by administering structured questionnaires to the selected respondents. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were performed with twelve (12) intentionally chosen staff members from essential occupational categories to yield more profound insights and corroborate questionnaire replies. Secondary data were obtained from textbooks, peer-reviewed journals, official papers, and institutional publications pertinent to occupational health and safety and employee performance.

Validity of Research Instrument

Both face and content validity techniques were implemented to ascertain the study instrument's validity. The questionnaire was evaluated by specialists in Public Administration and Measurement and Evaluation, who examined its clarity, relevance, and sufficiency in fulfilling the study objectives. Their feedback prompted essential modifications to enhance the instrument.

Reliability of the Instrument

The instrument's reliability was determined by the test-retest approach. The questionnaire was presented twice to a pilot sample of 21 respondents at varying intervals, and the findings were analysed using Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient. A dependability coefficient of 0.97 was achieved, signifying a substantial degree of internal consistency and stability.

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistical approaches were utilised for data analysis. Descriptive data were analysed by basic percentages, and the hypothesis was evaluated with the Chi-square (χ^2) statistical method with the use of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. Qualitative data from interviews were examined utilising Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) methodologies to discern patterns and produce explanatory insights.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Hypotheses

H0: There is a significant positive relationship between management's level of commitment to safety practices and employee performance in Enugu State University Teaching Hospital between 2016 and 2025.

H1: There is no significant positive relationship between management's level of commitment to safety practices and employee performance in Enugu State University Teaching Hospital between 2016 and 2025.

Questionnaire Item 1: Management's level of commitment to safety practices in ESUTH enhanced employee performance.

Table 1: Management's Level of Commitment to Safety Practices

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	12	4.5	4.5	4.5
Agree	26	9.7	9.7	14.2
Undecided	21	7.8	7.8	22.0
Strongly Disagree	101	37.5	37.5	59.5
Disagree	109	40.5	40.5	100
Total	269	100.0	100.0	Mean 2

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In table 1 above, the researcher asked to know how the management's level of commitment to safety practices in ESUTH enhanced employee performance. The responses of the respondent's shows that 12 representing 4.5% strongly agreed, 26 representing 9.7% agreed, 21 representing 7.8% were undecided, 101 representing 37.5 strongly disagreed while 109 representing 40.5 disagreed. The mean average of 2 shows that management's level of commitment to safety practices in Enugu State University Teaching Hospital affect employee performance.

Questionnaire Item 2: Management occasionally organises workshops for employees on health and safety aspect of their job schedule.

Table 2: Management Organises Workshops on Health and Safety of their Job

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	8	3.0	3.0	3.0
Agree	14	5.2	5.2	8.2
Undecided	1	0.4	0.4	8.6
Strongly Disagree	147	54.6	54.6	63.2
Disagree	99	36.8	36.8	100.0
Total	269	100.0	100.0	Mean 1.82

Source: Field Survey, 2025

From table 2 above, the research sought to know management's regularity in organising workshops for employees on health and safety aspect of their job schedule. The responses of our respondents shows that 8 representing 3.0% strongly agreed, 14 representing 5.2% agreed, 1 representing 0.4% were undecided, 147 representing 54.6 strongly disagreed while 99 representing 36.8% disagreed. The mean average 1.82 shows that management do not organise workshops for employees on health and safety aspect of their job schedule in the hospital.

Questionnaire Item 3: Management promote safety awareness through continuous education and empowerment.

Table 3: Management Promotes Safety Awareness through Continuous Education

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	46	17.1	17.1	17.1
Agree	32	11.9	11.9	29.0
Undecided	19	7.0	7.0	36.0
Strongly Disagree	79	29.4	29.4	65.4
Disagree	93	34.6	34.6	100.0
Total	269	100.0	100.0	Mean 2.47

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In table 3 above, the research asked to know how management promote safety awareness through continuous education and empowerment. The responses from of the respondent's shows that 46 representing 17.1% strongly agreed, 32 representing 11.9% agreed, 19 representing 7.0% were undecided, 79 representing 29.4 strongly disagreed while 93 representing 34.6% disagreed. The mean average of 2.47 shows that management do not promote safety awareness through continuous education and empowerment in Enugu State University Teaching Hospital, Parklane from 2016 to 2023.

Questionnaire Item 4: The organization provides equipment which includes tools and machines that people work with.

Table 4: The Organization Provides Equipments People Work With

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	166	61.7	61.7	61.7
Agree	85	31.6	31.6	93.3
Undecided	2	0.8	0.8	94.1
Strongly Disagree	7	2.6	2.6	96.7
Disagree	9	3.3	3.3	100
Total	100	100.0	100.0	Mean 4.45

Source: Field Survey, 2025

From table 4 above, the research sought to know if organization provides equipment which includes tools and machines that people work with in Enugu State University Teaching Hospital.

The responses from our respondent's shows that 166 representing 61.7% strongly agreed, 85 representing 31.6% agreed, 2 representing 0.8% were undecided, 7 representing 2.6% strongly disagreed while 9 representing 3.3% disagreed. The mean average of 4.45 strongly indicates that organization provides equipment which includes tools and machines that people work with.

Questionnaire Item 5: The employees do not have the ability to approach management on issues of concern with regards to their health and safety.

Table 5: Employees Approach Management on Issues Concerning Health and Safety

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	59	21.9	21.9	21.9
Agree	62	23.1	23.1	45.0
Undecided	13	4.8	4.8	49.8
Strongly Disagree	71	26.4	26.4	76.2
Disagree	64	23.8	23.8	100
Total	269	100.0	100.0	Mean 2.92

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In the table 5 above, the research shows that employees do not have the ability to approach management on issues of concern with regards to their health and safety. The responses of the respondent's shows that 59 representing 21.9% strongly agreed, 62 representing 23.1% agreed, 13 representing 4.8% were undecided, 71 representing 26.4% strongly disagreed while 64 representing 23.8% disagreed. The mean average of 2.92 indicates that employees have the ability to approach management on issues of concern with regards to their health and safety in Enugu State University Teaching Hospital.

Questionnaire Item 6: The management monitors and optimizes workplace environmental conditions.

Table 6: Management Monitor Workplace Environmental Condition

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	7	2.6	2.6	2.6
Agree	11	4.1	4.1	6.7
Undecided	6	2.3	2.3	9.0
Strongly Disagree	87	32.3	32.3	41.3
Disagree	158	58.7	58.7	100
Total	269	100.0	100.0	Mean 1.59

Source: Field Survey, 2025

From table 6 above, the research sought to know if the management monitor and optimize workplace environmental conditions in Enugu State University Teaching Hospital. The responses from our respondent's shows that 7 representing 2.6% strongly agreed, 11 representing 4.1% agreed, 6 representing 2.3% were undecided, 87 representing 32.3% strongly disagreed while 158 representing 58.7% disagreed. The mean average of 1.59 strongly indicates that the management do not monitor and optimize workplace environmental conditions in ESUTH from 2016 to 2023.

Questionnaire Item 7: The management is always conscious of proper sanitization practice in Parklane.

Table 7: Management are Conscious of Proper Sanitization Practice

Responses	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	134	49.8	49.8	49.8
Agree	98	36.4	36.4	86.2
Undecided	1	0.4	0.4	86.6
Strongly Disagree	22	8.2	8.2	94.8
Disagree	14	5.2	5.2	100
Total		100.0	100.0	Mean 4.17

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In the table 7 above, the research shows that the management is always conscious of proper sanitization practice in ESUTH. The responses of the respondent's indicates that 134 representing 49.8% strongly agreed, 98 representing 36.4% agreed, 1 representing 0.4% were undecided, 22 representing 8.2% strongly disagreed while 14 representing 5.2% disagreed. The mean average of 4.17 strongly shows that management of Enugu State University Teaching Hospital is always conscious of proper sanitization practice in the hospital.

Test of Hypotheses

Table 8: Calculation Table for the Test of Hypotheses Three Management's Level of Commitment to Safety Practices

Options	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Strongly Agree	12	53.8	-41.8
Agree	26	53.8	-27.8
Undecided	21	53.8	-32.8
Strongly Disagree	101	53.8	47.2
Disagree	109	53.8	55.2

Total	269		
Chi-Square		231.419	
Df		4	
Asymp. Sig.		0.001	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chi-Square statistics (231.419) measures the difference between observed and expected frequency. • Degree of freedom (4) is calculated as (Number of categories - 1) = (5-1). • p-value (>0.001) shows the probability of observing this difference (or more extreme) by chance. • Since $p > 0.001$, we reject the null hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05 			

Source: Field Survey, 2025

RESEARCH RESULT

From the computation in table 8 above, the Chi-Square (X^2) Calculated is 231.419, while the Chi-square (X^2) tabulated is at the expected frequency 53.8. Thus, the Chi-Square Calculated is greater than the Chi-Square Tabulated. Therefore, we reject the null hypotheses and accept the alternate hypotheses which states that management's level of commitment to safety practices does not enhance employee performance in Enugu State University Teaching Hospital between 2016 and 2023. Instead, management commitment level to safety practices may be detrimental to employee performance. Most employees disagree or strongly disagree with the positive impact of management commitment.

Findings on the Hypotheses

Based on the responses of the respondents, we made the following findings:

- The study found that employees of ESUTH do not perceive management's safety efforts as significantly contributing to their performance. This could reflect a lack of visibility or effectiveness of the safety practices implemented by management. .
- The study also found that **workshops are infrequent or non-existent**; it indicates a lack of ongoing training related to workplace safety. This implies that employees are not receiving the necessary education to stay informed about health and safety protocols. This can lead to a lack of preparedness in handling workplace risks, which negatively impact performance.
- **The study found that most of the equipment in the hospital is either outdated, insufficient, or unsafe**, leading to an inability to work efficiently and safely. If the organization does not provide adequate or up-to-date tools and equipment, employees are likely struggling with unsafe or inefficient work conditions. This lack of proper equipment reduces performance, as employees are either more prone to accidents or cannot complete their tasks effectively.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the hypotheses two research result and findings, it indicates that management's safety efforts were insufficient or ineffective in enhancing employee performance in Enugu State University Teaching Hospital between 2016 and 2025. There is a clear gap between management's stated commitment to safety and actual implementation.

The discrepancy between policy and practice shows that management's commitment is more theoretical than practical. When employees do not see a strong enforcement of safety practices or when safety standards are compromised under work pressure, it undermines their confidence in management's commitment. This, in turn, weakens the overall safety culture and diminishes any potential positive impact on performance. Employees cannot perform at their best if they feel that safety is being overlooked or that management is not fully invested in their well-being.

The analysis of the interview conducted in ESUTH on 8th October, 2024, revealed that while policies and workshops may exist, they are not consistently enforced or integrated into the daily work routine. As a result, employees do not perceive a direct link between safety practices and their performance.

A physiotherapist who preferred anonymity has this to say:

While management emphasizes the importance of safety, there is often a disparity between what is said and what is done. Policies exist, but they are not consistently enforced. As a result, many employees don't feel that safety practices directly improve their performance. For instance, safety protocols are frequently ignored due to time pressures or lack of supervision. I don't believe management's commitment to safety has had a direct impact on my performance. Sometimes we don't even have the tools we need to stay safe, so how can I perform efficiently?

Another respondent who work as Administrative officer stated that it is only on a rare occasion that he participated in workshops in the teaching hospital. He said he has been working here for several years and can only remember attending one workshop. That most of what he know about safety, he have learned on the job through trial and error. When workshops are organized, they're very generic and not really specific to the hazards we face daily in our roles. It feels more like a tick-box exercise than a genuine effort to improve safety practices.

Another informant, a dietician who pleaded on the condition of anonymity, revealed that: There isn't much education about safety after the initial induction process. We don't receive regular updates or training to empower us to take charge of our own safety. Safety awareness is not part of the daily culture here. I think management could do more to remind us of the importance of safety and how it contributes to our performance.

The statement above highlights a prevalent issue with safety awareness through continuous education and empowerment. Training and continuous education are critical components of fostering a safety culture.

When training is irregular or not tailored to specific job hazards, employees are left to figure out safety procedures on their own, which can lead to accidents or decreased performance. Without proper and regular safety education, employees are not empowered to take ownership of their safety, leading to a work environment where safety is not prioritized, and performance suffers as a result.

A consultant who preferred anonymity stated thus:

The equipment we work with is often outdated, and in some cases, it's not even safe. We've had instances where machines break down or don't function properly, increasing

the risk of accidents. We often have to make do with the tools we have, even when they are inadequate. This definitely affects both our safety and our ability to perform well.

Another respondent, a laboratory scientist highlighted more on the above assertion. He said that provision of proper equipment is a basic requirement for ensuring safety and performance.

When employees have to work with unsafe or malfunctioning tools, it not only increases the risk of accidents but also decreases productivity. Management's failure to provide up-to-date and functioning equipment reflects a lack of commitment to both safety and performance, leading to frustration among employees and a decline in their ability to perform optimally.

A registered nurse who preferred anonymity revealed shocking issue about employee's ability to approach management on issues of concern with regards to their health and safety. She stated that:

Management is not always approachable when it comes to raising safety concerns. Even when we do raise issues, it can take a long time for anything to be done about it. I personally avoid raising safety concerns because I know management will just brush them off or give excuses about budget limitations.

Many interviewees expressed that they do not feel comfortable approaching management with safety concerns, as their issues are often ignored or addressed slowly, if at all. Open communication is essential for identifying and addressing safety issues before they escalate. If employees do not feel comfortable raising concerns or if they perceive management as unresponsive, it fosters a work environment where safety issues go unresolved.

This not only endangers employees but also creates a culture of indifference toward safety, which negatively impacts both morale and performance. The absence of effective communication channels signals a weak commitment from management to ensuring a safe and productive work environment.

A porter who preferred to be anonymous stated thus:

Sanitization practices are inconsistent. During certain periods, like when external inspections are scheduled, they seem more conscious of it, but in everyday operations, cleanliness can be neglected. There are periods when management pays attention to sanitization, especially after any incident, but it's not always a priority. This affects how safe we feel at work.

Sanitization practices were noted as inconsistent, with employees reporting that management only focuses on cleanliness when inspections are imminent or after specific incidents occur. In a healthcare setting, proper sanitation is critical for both employee safety and performance. Inconsistent sanitization practices not only expose employees to health risks but also reduce their confidence in management's commitment to maintaining a safe workplace. This inconsistency highlights management's reactive approach to safety, addressing issues only when external pressure is applied, rather than proactively ensuring a consistently safe environment. In line with the above discussion, Mohammed et al. (2023) states that the management should intensify effort to upholds occupational health and safety sensitization programs and policy practices. They argued that employees do not perceive management's safety efforts as significantly contributing to their performance. This could reflect a lack of visibility or effectiveness of the safety practices implemented by management. Employees feel that while safety protocols exist, they are not actively contributing to their

ability to perform well. These points to a gap between policy and actual impact on employee performance.

Olabisi et al. (2024) argued that that leadership style had a significant positive effect on nurses' performance. Effective leadership can create an environment where management show tremendous commitment, create safe working environment that uphold safety practices and motivates employees, provides clear direction, and supports their professional development, leading to improved performance. They emphasized that poorly managed workplace stress and safety can impair employee performance by increasing absenteeism, turnover, and medical costs while decreasing productivity. Okeke et al. (2024) corroborates this by arguing that working in an uncondusive environment lacking basic amenities was reported as affecting the concentration and productivity of residents, resulting in emotions of weariness and burnout. They posit that when there is inadequate equipments and resources are unmet, it not only increases the risk of accidents but also decreases productivity. Management's failure to provide up-to-date and functioning equipment reflects a lack of commitment to both safety and performance, leading to frustration among employees and a decline in their ability to perform optimally. This reflects systemic issues that can impede the delivery of quality patient care.

Tamuno – Opubo et al. (2024), argued that raising awareness is a pivotal step in the journey to improve employee and patient safety. It is the platform upon which training initiatives and adherence to protocols can be built. An informed health-care workforce is better equipped to prevent mishaps and offer optimal care. Nwosu *et al.* (2019) unveiled a striking finding in their study: a significant number of surgeons in Enugu, Nigeria, lacked awareness about patient safety. This lack of awareness among such a critical group of healthcare professional's points toward the dire need for management interventions to boost knowledge and awareness about safety principles in surgical settings. Tamuno-Opubo further asserts that a robust healthcare system is fundamentally anchored on the effective implementation of safety protocols. However, when gaps and inconsistencies manifest in practice, they may compromise the integrity of employee and patient care, leading to avoidable risks and mishaps.

Elegbede et al. (2024) opined that that health and safety hazards affect workers' performance, satisfaction, and commitment to work. Worker's wellness plays a significant role in their attitude to work. A healthy and safe worker will desire to report for duty as expected of him/her and put in his/her best at work. However, unhealthy, and unsafe workers will feel demoralized and record a high rate of low performance, low commitment, and disengagement at work, which reduces the organisation's performance level. Industrial health and safety contribute to workers' attitudes when perceived as threatening to their well-being. The frequency of industrial health and safety was observed to be the main cause of workers' attitudes and low commitment to work, and it affects both the life of the employee and their performance level. To make a workplace healthy and safe, management must show high level of commitment; promote a healthy and safe culture among workers.

The research result and findings clearly reject the hypothesis that **"Management's level of commitment to safety practices enhanced employee performance at Enugu State University Teaching Hospital between 2016 and 2025."** It suggests that while safety policies may exist, they are not effectively enforced or integrated into daily operations. The lack of regular, job-specific training, inadequate equipment, poor communication, and inconsistent monitoring of safety conditions have all contributed to a weak safety culture. This, in turn, has negatively impacted employee performance, leading to the conclusion that management's safety practices have not enhanced performance during the period studied.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between management's commitment to safety practices and employee performance at Enugu State University Teaching Hospital (ESUTH), Parklane, from 2016 to 2025. Analysis of the survey data, hypothesis testing, and qualitative insights indicates a distinct disparity between management's professed dedication to safety and its actual execution. Although some aspects of safety management, including the provision of essential equipment and regular sanitisation efforts, were recognised, the overall safety framework was deemed inadequate, inconsistent, and predominantly ineffective.

The descriptive and inferential analyses, namely the Chi-square result ($\chi^2 = 231.419$, $p < 0.05$), resulted in the rejection of the hypothesis that management commitment to safety practices enhanced employee performance. The findings reveal that insufficient safety training, ineffective communication, inconsistent monitoring of workplace conditions, and minimal employee engagement have compromised safety outcomes and performance levels. Interview replies further validated these findings, emphasising problems such as obsolete equipment, insufficient safety training, and perceived managerial apathy towards employee difficulties.

These results correspond with the current literature, which highlights that inadequate safety management systems diminish safety climate and impair employee engagement and productivity (Clarke, 2013; Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Thus, the study shows that management's dedication to safety standards at ESUTH Parklane has not substantially improved employee performance during the period under study. Systemic flaws in safety implementation have resulted in a suboptimal work environment, consequently constraining employee effectiveness and overall organisational performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, this study makes the following recommendations:

- 1) **Strengthening Safety Policy Enforcement:** Management must progress from merely formulating policies to the constant and conspicuous implementation of safety standards. It is imperative to establish regular oversight and accountability measures to ensure adherence.
- 2) **Institutionalisation of Continuous Safety Training:** Regular, job-specific safety training and workshops must be conducted to improve employee knowledge, proficiency, and readiness in managing workplace dangers.
- 3) **Improvement of Workplace Conditions and Equipment:** Hospital management must prioritise the provision of contemporary, functional, and safe equipment to mitigate occupational hazards and improve operational efficiency.
- 4) **Improvement of Communication Channels:** Establish open and responsive communication methods to enable employees to report safety problems without fear of neglect or retaliation.
- 5) **Systematic Monitoring and Evaluation of Safety Practices:** An organised framework for the ongoing monitoring of workplace safety conditions must be established to proactively detect and mitigate possible dangers.
- 6) **Advancement of a Positive Safety Culture:** Management must exhibit authentic dedication to employee welfare by cultivating a culture that incorporates safety into everyday operations, therefore enhancing both morale and performance.

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