

## MEANINGFUL WORK AND NORMATIVE COMMITMENT AMONG EMPLOYEES IN SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS IN RIVERS STATE

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### Abstract

This study examined the relationship between meaningful work and normative commitment among employees in service organizations in Rivers State, Nigeria. The research adopted a survey research design, targeting a population of 519 employees across selected banks, the Rivers State Police Command, and Rivers State University. A sample of 226 employees was determined using Taro Yamane's formula, and a stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure proportional representation. Data were collected using a structured, closed-ended questionnaire measuring employees' perceptions of meaningful work and normative commitment, rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Out of 226 distributed questionnaires, 200 were completed and returned, yielding an 88.5% response rate. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis) and Pearson Product-Moment Correlation to test the hypothesized relationship. Findings revealed that employees generally perceived their work as meaningful, with an average mean score ranging from 3.06 to 3.27 across items. Normative commitment scores also indicated moderate to high levels, with mean values between 3.03 and 3.23. The correlation analysis showed a strong positive and significant relationship between meaningful work and normative commitment ( $r = .959$ ,  $p < .01$ ), suggesting that employees who find their work fulfilling and purposeful are more likely to feel a moral and ethical obligation to remain with their organization. The study concludes that fostering meaningful work environments can enhance employees' normative commitment, and it recommends that service organizations in Rivers State align job design, organizational values, and leadership practices to reinforce the sense of duty and loyalty among employees.

### Introduction

#### Background to the Study

The contemporary work environment increasingly emphasizes not only job performance but also the meaningfulness of work and the psychological bonds employees develop with their organizations. Meaningful work refers to the perception that one's job has significance, purpose, and aligns with personal values, contributing to individual fulfillment and broader organizational goals (Steger, Dik, & Duffy, 2012). In service organizations, where employee interactions directly impact customer satisfaction, meaningful work has been identified as a critical driver of employee engagement and discretionary effort (Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010). Normative commitment, on the other hand, reflects an employee's sense of obligation to remain with an organization, often grounded in moral or ethical reasoning rather than purely affective attachment or perceived costs of leaving (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Employees with high normative commitment feel duty-bound to continue contributing to organizational objectives, enhancing stability and knowledge retention within service organizations.

In Rivers State, service organizations face challenges such as high staff turnover, fluctuating employee morale, and competitive pressures that demand consistency in service delivery. Despite these pressures, few studies have empirically examined the link between meaningful work and normative commitment in this regional context. Evidence from other contexts suggests that employees who perceive their work as meaningful are more likely to internalize organizational values and uphold a sense of duty toward their organization (Rego & Cunha, 2010). This study, therefore, seeks to investigate how perceptions of meaningful work influence normative commitment among employees in service organizations in Rivers State. Establishing this relationship is critical because

understanding the psychological mechanisms that foster employee retention and ethical engagement can guide organizational interventions, human resource policies, and leadership practices tailored to the service sector's unique demands.

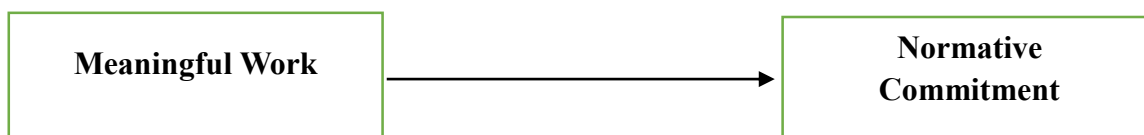
### Statement of the Problem

Service organizations in Rivers State operate in a competitive and dynamic environment, where employee performance, retention, and engagement are critical to sustaining quality service delivery. Despite efforts to implement human resource policies and staff development programs, many organizations continue to experience challenges such as high employee turnover, low morale, and inconsistent commitment levels. While the concepts of meaningful work and normative commitment have been explored in global studies, there is limited empirical evidence on how perceptions of meaningful work influence employees' sense of obligation to remain with their organization in the context of Rivers State's service sector.

Employees who perceive their work as meaningful are likely to internalize organizational values and develop a stronger moral or ethical duty to contribute to organizational objectives. However, the extent to which this relationship holds in Rivers State remains unclear. Previous research indicates that lack of alignment between job significance and organizational expectations can weaken employees' normative commitment, potentially affecting loyalty, productivity, and organizational stability (Rego & Cunha, 2010; Meyer & Allen, 1991).

This knowledge gap underscores the need to investigate the connection between meaningful work and normative commitment among service sector employees in Rivers State. Understanding this relationship is crucial for designing interventions that foster a committed workforce, reduce turnover, and enhance organizational performance, particularly in an environment where human capital is central to service delivery.

### Conceptual Framework



### Source: Researcher Conceptualized (2017)

The predictor variable (Meaningful Work) was adopted from Ashmos, and Duchon, (2000) and the criterion variable (Normative Commitment) was adopted from Meyer and Allen (1991).

### Objective of the Study

To examine the relationship between Meaningful Work and normative commitment among employees of service organizations in Rivers State.

### Research Question

What is the relationship between Meaningful Work and normative commitment among employees of service organizations in Rivers State?

### Research Hypothesis

**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** Meaningful Work has no significant relationship with normative commitment among employees of service organizations in Rivers State.

## Review of Related Literature

### Conceptual Review

#### Concept of Meaningful Work

Meaningful work is generally understood as work that employees perceive as significant, purposeful, and aligned with their personal values, contributing to a sense of fulfillment and identity. It goes beyond mere job tasks to encompass the broader impact of one's work on others, the organization, and society (Steger, Dik, & Duffy, 2012). Employees who experience meaningful work often report higher engagement, satisfaction, and motivation, as they perceive their contributions as valuable and worthwhile (Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010).

Research emphasizes that meaningful work is both subjective and multidimensional. It involves the perception that one's tasks are purposeful, allow for personal growth, and reflect ethical and value-driven practices within the organization (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). Additionally, meaningful work is closely linked to intrinsic motivation, where employees are driven not just by extrinsic rewards, but by the personal significance of their work, the sense of making a difference, and alignment with personal and organizational values (Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin, & Schwartz, 1997). In the context of service organizations, meaningful work becomes particularly important because employees' attitudes, behaviors, and commitment directly influence service quality and customer satisfaction. When employees perceive their work as meaningful, they are more likely to internalize organizational goals, display discretionary effort, and maintain long-term commitment to the organization (Steger et al., 2012). Thus, fostering meaningful work can be an essential strategy for organizations seeking to enhance employee well-being, engagement, and normative commitment.

#### Concept of Normative Commitment

Normative commitment refers to an employee's sense of obligation or moral duty to remain with an organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Unlike affective commitment, which is driven by emotional attachment, or continuance commitment, which is based on the costs of leaving, normative commitment stems from internalized norms and values about loyalty and responsibility. Employees with high normative commitment feel that leaving the organization would be inappropriate or unfair, often perceiving their tenure as a moral or ethical responsibility (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002).

This form of commitment is influenced by organizational practices such as socialization, ethical leadership, and organizational culture. For instance, employees who receive support, mentoring, and recognition early in their careers often develop a stronger sense of obligation toward their employer (Gellatly, Meyer, & Luchak, 2006). Additionally, alignment between personal values and organizational values enhances normative commitment, as employees feel ethically compelled to reciprocate the organization's investment in them (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Edwards & Cable, 2009). In service organizations, normative commitment is particularly significant because employees often engage in discretionary behaviors that support organizational goals, even in the absence of immediate rewards. High normative commitment has been linked to reduced turnover, enhanced job performance, and stronger adherence to organizational policies, demonstrating its role in promoting stability and sustained organizational effectiveness (Rego & Cunha, 2008). Consequently, fostering a work environment that encourages ethical alignment, shared values, and mutual respect can strengthen employees' moral obligation to remain committed to the organization.

### Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) and Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) to explain the relationship between meaningful work and normative commitment in service organizations. These theories provide a robust lens for understanding how employees' perceptions of meaningful work foster a sense of obligation and loyalty toward their organization.

### **Social Exchange Theory**

Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) posits that social behavior is the result of reciprocal exchanges where individuals seek to maximize benefits and minimize costs. In organizational settings, employees evaluate the support, recognition, and opportunities they receive from their employer and respond with reciprocal behaviors, such as commitment and loyalty (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

#### **Assumptions:**

- i. Employees reciprocate perceived organizational support with moral and ethical obligations to remain, enhancing normative commitment.
- ii. Meaningful work acts as a social resource, providing intrinsic and extrinsic rewards that strengthen reciprocal loyalty.
- iii. Relationships built on fairness, recognition, and value alignment foster stronger normative commitment.

#### **Critiques:**

While social exchange theory explains reciprocity-based commitment, it may underestimate intrinsic psychological drivers, such as personal purpose or autonomy, which also contribute to normative commitment (Gellatly, Meyer, & Luchak, 2006).

#### **Relevance/Application:**

In Rivers State service organizations, when employees perceive their work as meaningful and aligned with organizational values, they develop a moral obligation to reciprocate through sustained loyalty and compliance with organizational norms, which manifests as normative commitment.

### **Self-Determination Theory (SDT)**

Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) emphasizes the role of intrinsic motivation and fulfillment of basic psychological needs autonomy, competence, and relatedness in promoting engagement and commitment. Meaningful work satisfies these needs, fostering a sense of ethical obligation and loyalty toward the organization.

#### **Assumptions:**

- i. Employees who experience autonomy and perceive their work as purposeful are more likely to internalize the organization's values, enhancing normative commitment.
- ii. Competence and relatedness in meaningful work environments strengthen ethical and moral reasoning about remaining with the organization.

#### **Critiques:**

SDT primarily focuses on internal psychological processes, potentially overlooking external organizational factors such as policies, leadership style, and socio-cultural influences (Fry, 2010).

#### **Relevance/Application:**

Service organizations in Rivers State can leverage SDT by designing meaningful roles, promoting skill development, and fostering supportive relationships to enhance employees' sense of moral obligation to remain, thereby strengthening normative commitment. Combining Social Exchange Theory and Self-Determination Theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the dynamics between meaningful work and normative commitment. Social Exchange Theory emphasizes reciprocity and moral obligation derived from organizational support and value alignment, whereas SDT highlights intrinsic motivation and psychological fulfillment as key drivers of ethical commitment. Together, these theories suggest that organizations that create meaningful, autonomy-supportive, and value-aligned work environments can cultivate stronger normative

commitment among employees, leading to reduced turnover, improved loyalty, and sustainable organizational performance.

### **Empirical Review**

Several empirical studies have examined the relationship between meaningful work and normative commitment, highlighting how employees' perceptions of purpose and value alignment influence their sense of obligation and loyalty to the organization.

Cable and DeRue (2002) conducted a quantitative survey of employees across multiple U.S. organizations to assess person–organization fit, including value alignment. Using structured questionnaires and statistical techniques such as regression and factor analysis, they found that employees whose personal values aligned with organizational values exhibited higher levels of normative commitment. The study concluded that value congruence strengthens employees' moral obligation to remain, recommending that organizations prioritize value alignment during recruitment and onboarding processes.

Similarly, Edwards and Cable (2009) synthesized multiple studies and conducted primary survey analyses across industries, examining value congruence as a predictor of normative commitment and other job attitudes. The findings indicated that employees perceiving strong value alignment reported a higher sense of ethical obligation to stay with the organization. The study concluded that value alignment is a fundamental driver of normative commitment, advising managers to clearly communicate organizational values and evaluate fit regularly.

Rego and Cunha (2010) investigated workplace spirituality and its impact on organizational commitment in Portuguese service organizations. Using a cross-sectional survey and structural equation modeling, the study found that value alignment and a sense of community were significant predictors of normative commitment. Employees with shared organizational values felt a stronger duty to remain, leading the authors to recommend leadership practices that reinforce value alignment and promote a supportive organizational culture.

In the U.S. context, Milliman, Czaplewski, and Ferguson (2003) explored workplace spirituality, meaningful work, and work attitudes using quantitative surveys among service employees. Regression analyses revealed that employees who perceived their work as meaningful and experienced a strong sense of community reported higher normative commitment. The study emphasized that organizations should institutionalize practices such as team-building and collaborative decision-making to enhance ethical obligations and loyalty.

Solinger, Van Olfen, and Roe (2008) examined Dutch public and private sector employees using structural modeling to extend the three-component commitment model. They found that relational factors, including value alignment and supportive work communities, had a significant influence on normative commitment beyond affective and continuance components. The study concluded that organizations should recognize and foster social and relational dynamics to enhance employees' moral obligation to remain.

Finally, Gellatly, Meyer, and Luchak (2006) conducted a multi-sector quantitative study to explore how commitment components influence discretionary behaviors. Their findings indicated that normative commitment, strengthened by value alignment and workplace community, contributed to organizational citizenship behaviors, suggesting that employees' ethical obligation to stay drives positive workplace actions. The authors recommended integrating value alignment into HR systems to enhance normative commitment and employee engagement. Across these studies, there is consistent evidence that meaningful work, value alignment, and a supportive work environment significantly predict normative commitment. Employees who perceive their roles as purposeful and aligned with organizational values feel a moral and ethical obligation to remain with the organization. These findings underscore the importance of organizational practices that promote value congruence, meaningful job design, and workplace community in enhancing employees' loyalty and long-term retention, particularly in service organizations where employee commitment directly impacts service quality.



## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a survey research design, which is suitable for examining relationships between organizational variables among a large group of respondents. This approach facilitated the systematic collection of standardized data regarding employees' perceptions of value alignment and normative commitment in service organizations within Rivers State. Survey research is particularly effective for assessing attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, allowing researchers to identify patterns and correlations across diverse organizational contexts (Creswell, 2014).

### **Population of the Study**

The study population comprised 519 employees from selected service organizations in Rivers State, Nigeria, including banks, the Rivers State Police Command, and Rivers State University. These organizations were chosen to represent a mix of private and public service sectors. The population was considered appropriate because employees in these organizations are directly involved in service delivery and are likely to exhibit varying levels of commitment and alignment with organizational values. Official staff records from the respective human resource departments served as the source of population data (Rivers State University Human Resource Department, Rivers State Police Command Personnel Office, and selected banks, 2018).

### **Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

Using Taro Yamane's (1967) formula for determining sample size from finite populations, a total of 226 employees was selected for the study. A stratified random sampling technique was applied to ensure proportional representation from each organizational category (banks, police command, and university). Stratification helped reduce sampling bias and ensured that the sample reflected the structure of the population. Within each stratum, employees were randomly selected to provide an equal opportunity for participation.

### **Instrument for Data Collection**

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, designed to measure employees' perceptions of value alignment and normative commitment. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: Section A measured value alignment, while Section B assessed normative commitment. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The instrument was validated through expert review and a pilot study, ensuring clarity, reliability, and content validity prior to administration.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 25. Descriptive statistics including mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis were computed to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics and perceptions of the study variables. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the hypothesized relationship between value alignment and normative commitment. A significance level of 0.01 was adopted to assess the strength and direction of the relationship.

### **Data Presentation**

Out of the 226 questionnaires distributed, 200 were correctly completed and returned, representing an 88.5% response rate. These valid responses provided the dataset for subsequent analysis, ensuring that the findings accurately reflected the perceptions of employees across the selected service organizations.

## Data Analyses

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Meaningful Work**

|                                                                                  | N                | Min            | Max            | Sum              | Mean              | Std.<br>Deviation  | Skewness           | Std.<br>Error | Kurtosis            | Std.<br>Error     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| I consider my job to be fulfilling and important.                                | Statistic<br>200 | Statistic<br>1 | Statistic<br>5 | Statistic<br>651 | Statistic<br>3.26 | Statistic<br>1.341 | Statistic<br>-.324 | .172          | Statistic<br>-1.158 | Statistic<br>.342 |
| My work responsibilities significantly contribute to the organization's success. | 200              | 1              | 5              | 654              | 3.27              | 1.399              | -.192              | .172          | -1.266              | .342              |
| The work I do positively impacts others around me.                               | 200              | 1              | 5              | 640              | 3.20              | 1.334              | -.205              | .172          | -1.151              | .342              |
| I feel motivated because my role has purpose and meaning.                        | 200              | 1              | 5              | 626              | 3.13              | 1.157              | -.001              | .172          | -.925               | .342              |
| I take pride in performing my assigned tasks effectively.                        | 200              | 1              | 5              | 612              | 3.06              | 1.344              | .053               | .172          | -1.218              | .342              |
| Valid N (listwise)                                                               | 200              |                |                |                  |                   |                    |                    |               |                     |                   |

**Source: Survey Data (2018) via SPSS version 25**

Based on Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Meaningful Work, the analysis of 200 respondents reveals that employees generally perceive their work as meaningful, though the intensity varies across different items. The mean scores range from 3.06 to 3.27 on a 5-point Likert scale, indicating a moderate level of agreement that their jobs are fulfilling, contribute to organizational success, and have a positive impact on others. Specifically, respondents agreed most strongly that their work responsibilities significantly contribute to the organization's success (mean = 3.27) and consider their job fulfilling and important (mean = 3.26). Items reflecting pride in task performance (mean = 3.06) and motivation derived from work purpose (mean = 3.13) scored slightly lower, suggesting that while employees recognize the significance of their roles, there may be room for enhancing intrinsic motivation and personal fulfillment.

The skewness values, ranging from -.324 to .053, are close to zero, indicating that the distribution of responses is approximately symmetrical with no extreme bias toward agreement or disagreement. Similarly, kurtosis values between -1.266 and -0.925 suggest a slightly flat distribution, implying moderate variability in responses. In summary, the descriptive statistics indicate that employees in service organizations in Rivers State generally perceive their work as meaningful, which provides a foundation for exploring how this perception relates to normative commitment.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on normative commitment**

|                                                                                        | N         | Min       | Max       | Sum       | Mean      | Std.<br>Deviation | Skewness  | Kurtosis      |           |               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|---------------|
|                                                                                        | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic         | Statistic | Std.<br>Error | Statistic | Std.<br>Error |
| I feel a personal duty to continue working with this organization.                     | 200       | 1         | 5         | 641       | 3.21      | 1.335             | -.279     | .172          | -1.172    | .342          |
| It is the right thing for me to remain with this organization.                         | 200       | 1         | 5         | 645       | 3.23      | 1.394             | -.151     | .172          | -1.265    | .342          |
| I would feel uneasy or guilty if I left the organization at this time.                 | 200       | 1         | 5         | 632       | 3.16      | 1.332             | -.168     | .172          | -1.159    | .342          |
| I am committed to contributing to the organization's goals out of responsibility.      | 200       | 1         | 5         | 621       | 3.11      | 1.162             | .007      | .172          | -.933     | .342          |
| I stay with this organization because I respect its values and believe in its mission. | 200       | 1         | 5         | 605       | 3.03      | 1.339             | .081      | .172          | -1.204    | .342          |
| Valid N (listwise)                                                                     | 200       |           |           |           |           |                   |           |               |           |               |

**Source: Survey Data (2018) via SPSS version 25**

Based on Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Normative Commitment, the results indicate that employees in service organizations in Rivers State generally express moderate levels of normative commitment. The mean scores range from 3.03 to 3.23 on the 5-point Likert scale, reflecting that respondents feel a sense of moral or ethical obligation to remain with their organization. Specifically, employees agreed most with the statement that it is the right thing to stay with the organization (mean = 3.23) and that they feel a personal duty to continue working with the organization (mean = 3.21). Items reflecting commitment based on respect for organizational values and mission (mean = 3.03) and responsibility toward organizational goals (mean = 3.11) scored slightly lower, indicating that while ethical and moral considerations are influential, there may be variability in how strongly employees internalize these obligations.

Skewness values range from -.279 to .081, showing that responses are fairly symmetrical without strong leaning toward extreme agreement or disagreement. Kurtosis values between -1.265 and -0.933 suggest a slightly flat distribution, indicating moderate dispersion in the responses. In conclusion, the descriptive analysis suggests that employees demonstrate a moderate sense of normative commitment, reflecting a perceived moral duty and loyalty to the organization, which provides a basis for examining its relationship with meaningful work.



**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** Meaningful Work has no significant relationship with normative commitment among employees of service organizations in Rivers State.

**Table 3: Correlation on Meaningful Work and normative commitment**

|                      |                     | Meaningful Work | Normative commitment |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Meaningful Work      | Pearson Correlation | 1               | .959**               |
|                      | Sig. (2-tailed)     |                 | .000                 |
|                      | N                   | 200             | 200                  |
| Normative commitment | Pearson Correlation | .959**          | 1                    |
|                      | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000            |                      |
|                      | N                   | 200             | 200                  |

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

Based on Table 3: Correlation on Meaningful Work and Normative Commitment, the analysis shows a strong positive relationship between meaningful work and normative commitment among employees in service organizations in Rivers State, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.959. The relationship is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ( $p = 0.000$ ), indicating that the likelihood of this correlation occurring by chance is extremely low. This result implies that employees who perceive their work as meaningful fulfilling, purposeful, and impactful are much more likely to experience a sense of moral or ethical obligation to remain with their organization. In other words, as employees find greater purpose and significance in their roles, their normative commitment strengthens, reflecting loyalty, duty, and respect for organizational values. The high correlation coefficient also suggests that meaningful work is a critical antecedent of normative commitment in service organizations, emphasizing the importance of designing jobs that provide purpose and align with employees' personal and professional values. Consequently, Ho<sub>1</sub> is rejected, confirming that meaningful work significantly influences normative commitment in this context.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study indicate a very strong positive relationship between meaningful work and normative commitment among employees of service organizations in Rivers State. The correlation analysis ( $r = 0.959$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) demonstrates that employees who perceive their roles as meaningful are significantly more likely to develop a sense of moral obligation, duty, and loyalty toward their organizations. These results are consistent with prior empirical studies emphasizing the importance of meaningful work in fostering commitment. For instance, Rego and Cunha (2010) found that when employees' work was aligned with their personal values and provided a sense of purpose, normative commitment increased because employees felt ethically and socially obliged to remain with the organization. Similarly, Gellatly, Meyer, and Luchak (2006) reported that employees who perceived their work as meaningful exhibited stronger normative commitment, which translated into positive discretionary behaviors such as organizational citizenship and ethical adherence.

The findings also corroborate the theoretical underpinnings of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Self-Determination Theory (SDT). Herzberg (1959) suggested that intrinsic motivators, including meaningful work, generate positive attitudes and commitment, while SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985) posits that fulfilling basic psychological needs autonomy, competence, and relatedness enhances engagement and commitment. In the context of Rivers State service organizations, employees appear to internalize the purpose and significance of their roles, which strengthens their ethical and emotional attachment to the organization. Furthermore, the study underscores the practical importance of creating work environments that provide significance, purpose, and alignment with employees' personal and professional values. Organizations that fail to ensure meaningful work may

struggle with weaker normative commitment, potentially leading to higher turnover intentions and reduced organizational stability. Overall, the study confirms that meaningful work is a critical antecedent of normative commitment, highlighting the ethical and value-driven dimensions of employee retention in service organizations. It suggests that management interventions focusing on job enrichment, value alignment, and purposeful work design can substantially enhance employee loyalty and moral responsibility.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study established that meaningful work has a significant and positive relationship with normative commitment among employees of service organizations in Rivers State. Employees who perceive their jobs as fulfilling, purposeful, and aligned with their personal values are more likely to develop a strong sense of duty, loyalty, and moral obligation to remain with their organization. This indicates that normative commitment is not solely influenced by contractual or external factors but is strongly shaped by employees' intrinsic perception of their work. Therefore, organizations that foster meaningful work environments can expect higher levels of ethical responsibility and sustained employee retention.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the finding, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Organizations should design roles that provide employees with clear purpose, responsibility, and opportunities to contribute meaningfully to organizational goals. Employees should be acknowledged for contributions that have organizational impact, as recognition reinforces the perception of meaningful work and strengthens normative commitment.

These measures can help service organizations in Rivers State retain committed employees, reduce turnover, and maintain high service quality through strengthened normative commitment.

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#### Appendix A Questionnaire form

**questionnaire** table for **Meaningful Work** and **Normative Commitment** with response options as **SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, MA = Moderately Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree**.

| Variable                    | Item Statement                                                                   | SA                       | A                        | MA                       | D                        | SD                       |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Meaningful Work</b>      | I consider my job to be fulfilling and important.                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                             | My work responsibilities significantly contribute to the organization's success. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                             | The work I do positively impacts others around me.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                             | I feel motivated because my role has purpose and meaning.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                             | I take pride in performing my assigned tasks effectively.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Normative Commitment</b> | I feel a personal duty to continue working with this organization.               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|                             | It is the right thing for me to remain with this organization.                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| Variable | Item Statement                                                                         | SA                       | A                        | MA                       | D                        | SD                       |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|          | I would feel uneasy or guilty if I left the organization at this time.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|          | I am committed to contributing to the organization's goals out of responsibility.      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|          | I stay with this organization because I respect its values and believe in its mission. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Instructions for Respondents:**

- Tick the box that best represents your opinion for each statement.
- SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, MA = Moderately Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree.
- Respond based on your experience and perception of your work and organization.

**Appendix B  
SPSS output**

CORRELATIONS  
/VARIABLES=VAR00001 VAR00002  
/PRINT=TWOTAIL NOSIG  
/MISSING=PAIRWISE.

**Correlations**

| Notes                  |                                |                                                                                                 |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Output Created         |                                | 19-MAR-2026 08:43:43                                                                            |
| Comments               |                                |                                                                                                 |
| Input                  | Active Dataset                 | DataSet0                                                                                        |
|                        | Filter                         | <none>                                                                                          |
|                        | Weight                         | <none>                                                                                          |
|                        | Split File                     | <none>                                                                                          |
|                        | N of Rows in Working Data File | 200                                                                                             |
| Missing Value Handling | Definition of Missing          | User-defined missing values are treated as missing.                                             |
|                        | Cases Used                     | Statistics for each pair of variables are based on all the cases with valid data for that pair. |
| Syntax                 |                                | CORRELATIONS<br>/VARIABLES=VAR00001<br>VAR00002<br>/PRINT=TWOTAIL NOSIG<br>/MISSING=PAIRWISE.   |
| Resources              | Processor Time                 | 00:00:00.02                                                                                     |
|                        | Elapsed Time                   | 00:00:00.05                                                                                     |

**Correlations**

|                 |                     | Meaningful Work | Normative commitment |
|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Meaningful Work | Pearson Correlation | 1               | .959**               |
|                 | Sig. (2-tailed)     |                 | .000                 |

|                      |                     |        |     |
|----------------------|---------------------|--------|-----|
|                      | N                   | 200    | 200 |
| Normative commitment | Pearson Correlation | .959** | 1   |
|                      | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000   |     |
|                      | N                   | 200    | 200 |

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

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=VAR00001 VAR00002 VAR00012 VAR00013 VAR00014  
/STATISTICS=MEAN SUM STDDEV MIN MAX KURTOSIS SKEWNESS.

## Descriptives

| Notes                  |                                |                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Output Created         |                                | 19-MAR-2026 08:48:41                                                                                                                         |
| Comments               |                                |                                                                                                                                              |
| Input                  | Active Dataset                 | DataSet0                                                                                                                                     |
|                        | Filter                         | <none>                                                                                                                                       |
|                        | Weight                         | <none>                                                                                                                                       |
|                        | Split File                     | <none>                                                                                                                                       |
|                        | N of Rows in Working Data File | 200                                                                                                                                          |
| Missing Value Handling | Definition of Missing          | User defined missing values are treated as missing.                                                                                          |
|                        | Cases Used                     | All non-missing data are used.                                                                                                               |
| Syntax                 |                                | DESCRIPTIVES<br>VARIABLES=VAR00001<br>VAR00002 VAR00012<br>VAR00013 VAR00014<br>/STATISTICS=MEAN SUM<br>STDDEV MIN MAX KURTOSIS<br>SKEWNESS. |
| Resources              | Processor Time                 | 00:00:00.00                                                                                                                                  |
|                        | Elapsed Time                   | 00:00:00.01                                                                                                                                  |

## Descriptive Statistics

|                                                   | N         | Minimum   | Maximum   | Sum       | Mean      | Std. Deviation | Skewness  |            | Kurtosis  |            |
|---------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
|                                                   | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic      | Statistic | Std. Error | Statistic | Std. Error |
| I consider my job to be fulfilling and important. | 200       | 1         | 5         | 651       | 3.26      | 1.341          | -.324     | .172       | -1.158    | .342       |

|                                                                                  |     |   |   |     |      |       |       |      |        |      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|---|---|-----|------|-------|-------|------|--------|------|
| My work responsibilities significantly contribute to the organization's success. | 200 | 1 | 5 | 654 | 3.27 | 1.399 | -.192 | .172 | -1.266 | .342 |
| The work I do positively impacts others around me.                               | 200 | 1 | 5 | 640 | 3.20 | 1.334 | -.205 | .172 | -1.151 | .342 |
| I feel motivated because my role has purpose and meaning.                        | 200 | 1 | 5 | 626 | 3.13 | 1.157 | -.001 | .172 | -.925  | .342 |
| I take pride in performing my assigned tasks effectively.                        | 200 | 1 | 5 | 612 | 3.06 | 1.344 | .053  | .172 | -1.218 | .342 |
| Valid N (listwise)                                                               | 200 |   |   |     |      |       |       |      |        |      |

DESCRIPTIVES VARIABLES=VAR00001 VAR00002 VAR00012 VAR00013 VAR00014  
/STATISTICS=MEAN SUM STDDEV MIN MAX KURTOSIS SKEWNESS.

## Descriptives

| Notes                  |                                |                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Output Created         |                                | 19-MAR-2026 08:49:38                                                                                                                         |
| Comments               |                                |                                                                                                                                              |
| Input                  | Active Dataset                 | DataSet0                                                                                                                                     |
|                        | Filter                         | <none>                                                                                                                                       |
|                        | Weight                         | <none>                                                                                                                                       |
|                        | Split File                     | <none>                                                                                                                                       |
|                        | N of Rows in Working Data File | 200                                                                                                                                          |
| Missing Value Handling | Definition of Missing          | User defined missing values are treated as missing.                                                                                          |
|                        | Cases Used                     | All non-missing data are used.                                                                                                               |
| Syntax                 |                                | DESCRIPTIVES<br>VARIABLES=VAR00001<br>VAR00002 VAR00012<br>VAR00013 VAR00014<br>/STATISTICS=MEAN SUM<br>STDDEV MIN MAX KURTOSIS<br>SKEWNESS. |
| Resources              | Processor Time                 | 00:00:00.00                                                                                                                                  |
|                        | Elapsed Time                   | 00:00:00.00                                                                                                                                  |

## Descriptive Statistics

| N         | Minimum   | Maximum   | Sum       | Mean      | Std. Deviation | Skewness  |            | Kurtosis  |            |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic | Statistic      | Statistic | Std. Error | Statistic | Std. Error |



|                                                                                        |     |   |   |     |      |       |       |      |        |      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|---|---|-----|------|-------|-------|------|--------|------|
| I feel a personal duty to continue working with this organization.                     | 200 | 1 | 5 | 641 | 3.21 | 1.335 | -.279 | .172 | -1.172 | .342 |
| It is the right thing for me to remain with this organization.                         | 200 | 1 | 5 | 645 | 3.23 | 1.394 | -.151 | .172 | -1.265 | .342 |
| I would feel uneasy or guilty if I left the organization at this time.                 | 200 | 1 | 5 | 632 | 3.16 | 1.332 | -.168 | .172 | -1.159 | .342 |
| I am committed to contributing to the organization's goals out of responsibility.      | 200 | 1 | 5 | 621 | 3.11 | 1.162 | .007  | .172 | -.933  | .342 |
| I stay with this organization because I respect its values and believe in its mission. | 200 | 1 | 5 | 605 | 3.03 | 1.339 | .081  | .172 | -1.204 | .342 |
| Valid N (listwise)                                                                     | 200 |   |   |     |      |       |       |      |        |      |