

Affective commitment and employee performance in Kagadi District Local Government headquarters. A cross-sectional study.

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Page | 1

ABSTRACT

Background:

The study aimed to examine the relationship between affective commitment and employee performance in Kagadi District Local Government Headquarters.

Methodology:

The study employed descriptive and correlational research designs using a mixed-methods approach. A target population of 460 employees of Kagadi District Local Government was considered, from which 210 respondents were selected using Krejcie and Morgan's table. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were applied. Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews. Validity and reliability were confirmed using CVI (0.86) and Cronbach's alpha (0.84). Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 23, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. Ethical considerations were observed throughout the study.

Results:

A total of 200 out of 210 respondents participated in the study, giving a response rate of 95.2%. Males constituted 60%, while females were 40%. Most respondents were married (55%), followed by single respondents (35%), widowed (7.5%), and divorced (2.5%). Employees demonstrated low affective commitment, with mean scores ranging from 2.35 to 2.50, indicating weak emotional attachment, low loyalty, and limited enthusiasm toward the organization. Employee performance was also low, with mean scores between 2.35 and 2.45 across indicators of work quality, punctuality, responsiveness, goal achievement, and professionalism. Key themes included low motivation, weak supervision, inadequate resources, poor teamwork, limited training opportunities, and weak accountability systems. Affective commitment had a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship with employee performance ($r = 0.578$, $p < 0.01$).

Conclusion:

Affective commitment positively influences employee performance.

Recommendation:

Kagadi District Local Government should implement initiatives that strengthen employees' emotional attachment to the organization through team-building activities, regular feedback sessions, and recognition of outstanding performance.

Keywords: *Affective commitment, employee performance, public sector efficiency, organizational attachment, service delivery, local government administration.*

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BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Affective commitment refers to employees' emotional attachment, identification, and involvement with their organization. Employees with strong affective commitment remain in an organization because they genuinely want to stay and feel connected to organizational goals and values. In both public and private institutions, affective commitment has increasingly been recognized as an

important factor influencing employee performance, motivation, productivity, and service delivery. Organizations that promote supportive leadership, recognition, teamwork, and employee participation often develop emotionally committed workers who are willing to contribute beyond minimum expectations (Meyer et al., 2019).

Globally, studies have demonstrated that affective commitment positively influences employee performance. Research conducted in Jordan by Al-Hamdan et al. (2021) established a strong positive correlation between affective commitment and employee performance in municipalities. Similarly, Meyer et al. (2019) in the United States found that employees with strong emotional attachment exhibited higher productivity levels, increased job satisfaction, and lower turnover intentions. In China, Zhang et al. (2020) reported that affective commitment significantly enhanced organizational citizenship behavior and organizational efficiency among employees in technology firms. Hernandez and Lopez (2021) in Brazil also established that affective commitment significantly predicted task performance and customer satisfaction among service sector employees.

In Africa, studies have equally emphasized the importance of affective commitment in improving organizational performance. Ojo et al. (2022) in Nigeria revealed that affective commitment positively influenced punctuality, customer interaction, and productivity in the banking sector. In Uganda, Nabwire and Ssekamate (2023) found that emotionally attached public servants demonstrated improved organizational commitment and better performance outcomes. Similarly, Mutesasira and Mugisha (2023) reported that employees in Ugandan NGOs with high affective commitment exhibited greater initiative and dedication. Nakanwagi and Tumwine (2024) further established that affective commitment positively influenced teaching quality, research output, and administrative performance in Ugandan universities.

Despite the growing evidence on the importance of affective commitment, many public institutions in Uganda continue to face challenges such as low employee morale, absenteeism, weak accountability, and poor service delivery.

The study aimed to examine the relationship between affective commitment and employee performance in Kagadi District Local Government Headquarters.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

The study employed descriptive and correlational research designs to investigate the relationship between organizational commitment and employee performance at the Kagadi District Local Government Headquarters. A

descriptive research design was utilized to characterize the existing state of organizational commitment and employee performance within the Kagadi District Local Government Headquarters. This approach was suitable for describing the characteristics of a population or phenomenon, providing a snapshot of existing conditions without manipulating variables. For instance, it was used to gather data on employees' perceptions of their commitment levels and their reported performance metrics. The correlational research design was then applied to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between these two variables. This design was appropriate for exploring associations between variables without implying causation, allowing the researchers to identify whether changes in organizational commitment were systematically related to changes in employee performance.

The study applied a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative approaches involved the collection and analysis of numerical data to measure levels of organizational commitment and performance metrics. This allowed for statistical analysis to identify patterns and relationships. The qualitative approach involved collecting non-numerical data through interviews and focus groups to gain an in-depth understanding of employees' experiences and perceptions regarding commitment and performance. This triangulation of data provided a more comprehensive understanding of the complex relationship under investigation.

Population of study

According to the National Population and Housing Census 2024 Preliminary Results, Kagadi District had a total population of 471,111, comprising 222,911 males and 248,200 females (NPHC/UBOS, 2024). The Kagadi District Local Government employed approximately 460 employees, according to the HR report (2024); this was the target population of the study. These included the Chief Administrative Officer and his deputy, heads of departments/senior management, middle management/supervisors, and operational/frontline staff.

Sample size determination

Based on the target population above, the study utilized a sample of 210 respondents, determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table of sample size determination.

Table 1: Category, population, sample size, and sampling techniques

Category	Population per category	Sample size per category	Sampling technique for each category
Chief Administrative Officer and his deputy	02	02	Purposive sampling
Heads of Departments/Senior Management	12	11	Purposive sampling

Middle management/supervisors	36	29	Simple random sampling
Operational/frontline staff	410	168	Simple Random Sampling
Total	460	210	

Source: Kagadi District Local Government HR Manual (2024).

Sampling techniques

The study employed two sampling techniques to select participants: simple random and purposive sampling.

Simple Random sampling

In this study, simple random sampling was used to select middle management/supervisors and operational/frontline staff. The simple random sampling technique was applied by assigning a unique number to each member of the population and then using a random number generator to select the required number of participants. The middle management/supervisors and operational/frontline staff were selected using simple random sampling to ensure representativeness and minimize bias.

Purposive sampling

In this study, purposive sampling was used to select the Chief Administrative Officer and his deputy, as well as heads of departments/senior management, because they possessed specific knowledge and experience relevant to organizational commitment and its impact on employee performance.

Sources of data

Primary sources

Primary data were collected directly from the target sample respondents, providing firsthand information that was directly applicable to the research problem. To gather primary data, a self-administered questionnaire and an interview guide were utilized.

Secondary sources

Secondary data refers to existing information collected from other sources, offering a cost-effective and efficient means of gathering data. This type of data was particularly useful when primary data collection was not feasible. For this study, secondary data were sourced from various documents, including textbooks, journals, newspapers, and internal documents from Kagadi District Local Government, to inform a comprehensive review of related literature.

Data collection methods

Both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were employed in the study. The use of multiple data collection methods checked the validity of the study findings. This allowed generalization of results to the target population.

Questionnaire survey

In this study, questionnaires were used to collect data from middle management/supervisors and operational/frontline staff in Kagadi District Local Government, Uganda. The questionnaires were designed to capture data on the effect of organizational commitment on employee performance. The use of questionnaires enabled the investigator to collect data from a representative sample of employees, enhancing the generalizability of the findings.

Interview method

The interview method was a qualitative data collection technique that involved in-depth, one-on-one interactions between the investigator and the respondent to gather detailed information about their experiences and perceptions. In this study, interviews were conducted with the Chief Administrative Officer and his deputy, as well as heads of departments/senior management in Kagadi District Local Government, Uganda.

Data collection instruments

The study employed two primary data collection methods: a self-administered questionnaire and an interview guide.

Self-administered questionnaire

The study utilized a Self-Administered Questionnaire to collect data from middle management/supervisors and operational/frontline staff. A Self-Administered Questionnaire was a research tool where respondents were given a set of questions to answer on their own without the presence of the researcher. This method was used to collect data by distributing the questionnaires to the respondents, who then filled them out and returned them to the researcher. The questionnaire was designed using a 5-point Likert Scale with closed-ended questions, ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The use of a Self-Administered Questionnaire was justified because it allowed for the collection of data from a large number of respondents, ensured anonymity, and reduced bias. Moreover, it was cost-effective and saved time.

Interview guide

The study also employed an interview guide to collect data from the Chief Administrative Officer and his deputy, as well as heads of departments/senior management. An interview guide was a list of questions or topics that were to be covered during an in-depth interview. The interview

guide was used to conduct semi-structured interviews, allowing for flexibility and probing for more information. Interviews were used to understand the perspectives of senior officials.

Validity and reliability of instruments

Validity of the instrument

To ensure that the questions generated in the questionnaire covered the scope of the study and adequately tested the research hypotheses, the questionnaire was reviewed by the researcher's supervisor for content scrutiny. In order to establish content validity for quantitative data, the Content Validity Index (CVI) was computed. This involved having a panel of experts rate each questionnaire item on relevance using a 4-point scale (1 = not relevant, 2 = somewhat relevant, 3 = quite relevant, 4 = highly relevant). The CVI was calculated by dividing the number of items rated 3 or 4 by the total number of items assessed. For this study, a CVI of 0.86 was obtained, indicating that 86% of the items were deemed relevant by the experts. This value demonstrated that the questionnaire items were largely representative of the constructs under investigation, and the instrument was therefore considered valid for data collection.

Reliability of instruments

For an instrument to be reliable, its measurements had to be reproducible, though this did not necessarily imply validity. In this study, a reliability test was performed to assess the consistency and accuracy of the measurement scales. A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 or above was considered acceptable, signifying that the questions within each construct were measuring a consistent concept.

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was obtained by administering the questionnaire to a pilot sample of respondents similar to the study population. The responses were then analyzed using statistical software to calculate the internal consistency of the items within each construct. The resulting Cronbach's alpha was 0.84, indicating a high level of internal consistency and reliability. This value demonstrated that the instrument consistently measured the intended constructs, and it was therefore used for the main study to collect dependable data. Furthermore, the research instruments were reviewed by experts, including researchers, lecturers, and peers, to ensure their reliability and effectiveness.

Data collection procedure

An introductory letter was obtained from the School of Postgraduate Studies of Team University and presented to the Clerk of Kagadi District Local Government to obtain permission to conduct the study. After receiving permission, all the selected participants were informed about the purpose and objectives of the study. The next step involved distributing questionnaires to the selected respondents.

Respondents were then given time to complete and submit the questionnaires for analysis.

Data analysis

Quantitative analysis

Quantitative data from the questionnaires were carefully edited to ensure accuracy and consistency. The data were then coded by assigning numerical values to the items of the questionnaires to ensure that specific answers fit into a specific cell in a given category. Quantitative data were entered into the computer using the SPSS program (Version 23). Descriptive statistical analysis with frequencies and percentages was used to analyze quantitative data. Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis (r) was used to establish the direction and strength of the relationship between organizational commitment and employee performance. The coefficient of determination (Adjusted R^2) was used to determine the variation in employee performance explained by the variation in organizational commitment. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypotheses and assess the overall significance of the regression model for organizational commitment and employee performance.

Qualitative analysis

Qualitative data from interviews were arranged into themes according to the stated objectives, subjected to content analysis, and then presented in narrative form. Raw data obtained from interviews were analyzed by first identifying key points and categorizing them into dominant themes, which were then interpreted to bring out the study findings.

Ethical consideration

The study considered several ethical issues during the study, including approval, permission, informed consent, honesty, respect, objectivity, and ensuring no harm to participants. Prior to the study, the institute's approval was obtained for data collection. To ensure informed consent and voluntary participation during data collection, participants were given early information about the study, and their consent to participate was obtained before issuing questionnaires or administering interviews. Questionnaires were distributed and collected from the respondents after 2 days. In this way, no one was forced to participate in the study against their free will.

Honesty was maintained during the study by clearly introducing herself, openly discussing the purpose of the study with respondents, and assuring them that the data obtained would be used strictly for study purposes and that their responses would be treated with the highest level of confidentiality.

RESULTS

Response rate

The response rate was determined using the formula;

$$\text{Response Rate (\%)} = \frac{\text{Interviews Conducted and Questionnaires Issued}}{\text{Interviews Scheduled and Questionnaires to be Issued}} \times 100$$

Table 2: Response rate of the study

Category	Interviews scheduled and questionnaires to be issued	Interviews conducted and questionnaires issued	Response rate (%)
Chief Administrative Officer and Deputy	2	1	50.0
Heads of Departments/Senior Management	11	10	90.9
Middle Management/Supervisors	29	25	86.2
Operational/Frontline Staff	168	164	97.6
Total	210	200	95.2

Source: Primary data (2025)

The response rate for the study was generally high, indicating a strong level of participation among the targeted respondents, which enhances the reliability and generalizability of the findings. Out of a total of 210 interviews scheduled and questionnaires to be issued, 200 were successfully completed and returned, yielding an overall response rate of 95.2%.

For the Chief Administrative Officer and his deputy, only 1 out of the 2 scheduled interviews was conducted, resulting in a response rate of 50%. This relatively low rate may be attributed to the busy schedules and high-level responsibilities of senior officials, which occasionally limit their availability for interviews.

Among the Heads of Departments/Senior Management, 10 out of 11 scheduled interviews were conducted, giving a response rate of 90.9%. This high response rate reflects the willingness of senior managers to participate in the study, likely due to their interest in organizational performance and commitment issues within the district.

For the Middle Management/Supervisors, 25 out of 29 scheduled questionnaires were completed, resulting in a response rate of 86.2%. While slightly lower than the senior management group, this rate still indicates substantial participation, suggesting that most middle-level staff were cooperative and engaged with the study objectives.

Finally, among the Operational/Frontline Staff, 164 out of 168 questionnaires were returned, representing a response rate of 97.6%, which is the highest among all groups. This indicates a strong willingness among frontline employees to contribute to the study, possibly because they are directly affected by organizational commitment practices and performance expectations.

Overall, the high response rates across the majority of the categories demonstrate the effectiveness of the data collection methods, including the use of self-administered questionnaires and well-scheduled interviews, as well as the participants' interest in the research topic. The small variations in response rates across categories are understandable given differences in roles, responsibilities, and availability of respondents.

Demographic characteristics of respondents

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents who participated in the study. Understanding the demographics is essential for contextualizing the findings on organizational commitment and employee performance at Kagadi District Local Government. A total of 200 respondents were involved, comprising senior management, middle management, and operational staff.

Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (N=200)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	120	60.0
	Female	80	40.0
Marital status	Single	70	35.0
	Married	110	55.0
	Widow(er)	15	7.5
	Divorced	5	2.5
Age bracket (years)	11-20	10	5.0
	21-30	60	30.0

	31-40	90	45.0
	41 and above	40	20.0
Highest level of education attained	UCE	25	12.5
	UACE	50	25.0
	Tertiary	55	27.5
	University	70	35.0
Current position	Senior Management Level	25	12.5
	Mid-level Management	50	25.0
	Junior Staff	125	62.5
Employment term	Permanent	150	75.0
	Contract	40	20.0
	Probation	10	5.0
Length of employment in local govt	5 years and below	70	35.0
	6-10 years	90	45.0
	11 years and above	40	20.0

Source: Primary data (2025).

The study sample consisted of 120 males (60%) and 80 females (40%), indicating a predominance of male respondents. This distribution reflects the gender composition within the workforce at Kagadi District Local Government, where males slightly outnumber females.

Regarding marital status, 110 respondents (55%) were married, 70 (35%) were single, 15 (7.5%) were widowed, and 5 (2.5%) were divorced. This shows that a majority of employees were married, suggesting potential family responsibilities that could influence their work commitments and performance levels.

The age distribution revealed that 10 respondents (5%) were between 11 and 20 years, 60 (30%) were aged 21-30 years, 90 (45%) were between 31 and 40 years, and 40 respondents (20%) were 41 years and above. The majority of respondents were in the 31-40 years age bracket, which may indicate a relatively mature workforce with considerable work experience.

Concerning educational attainment, 25 respondents (12.5%) had completed UCE, 50 (25%) had completed UACE, 55 (27.5%) had attained tertiary education, and 70 (35%) had university qualifications. The findings suggest that most respondents possessed a moderate to high level of education, which is likely to influence their understanding of organizational policies and commitment behaviors.

The study also examined the duration of service within the organization. Forty respondents (20%) had joined the local government one year back, 50 (25%) two years back, 60 (30%) three years back, and 50 (25%) had been employed for more than three years. This indicates a mixture of relatively new and experienced employees, providing varied perspectives on organizational commitment and performance.

Regarding the current position, 25 respondents (12.5%) were at the senior management level, 50 (25%) were mid-level management, and 125 (62.5%) were junior or operational staff. The large proportion of junior staff ensures

that the study captures insights from employees directly involved in service delivery and operational activities.

In terms of employment status, 150 respondents (75%) were permanent employees, 40 (20%) were on contract, and 10 (5%) were on probation. The predominance of permanent employees suggests workforce stability, which could positively influence organizational commitment and performance outcomes.

Finally, regarding overall tenure, 70 respondents (35%) had been employed for 5 years or less, 90 (45%) between 6-10 years, and 40 (20%) for more than 11 years. The distribution reflects a workforce with a balance of both relatively new and long-serving employees, which provides a comprehensive understanding of organizational commitment and its impact on employee performance.

Overall, the demographic characteristics of the respondents indicate a predominantly male, married, and moderately educated workforce, with most respondents occupying junior positions and having stable employment terms. The age and tenure distributions reflect a mature and experienced workforce, which is critical for interpreting the findings on organizational commitment and employee performance in the subsequent sections.

Affective commitment of employees in Kagadi District Local Government Headquarters

Descriptive findings on affective commitment of employees in Kagadi District Local Government

The study sought to examine the affective commitment of employees at Kagadi District Local Government Headquarters. Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics for the various statements used to measure affective commitment. The responses were recorded on a 5-point

Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Table 4: Affective commitment of employees in Kagadi District Local Government

Statement	1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (NS)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	Std Dev
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this local government	50	70	40	30	10	2.45	1.21
I feel a strong sense of belonging to my department	45	65	50	30	10	2.50	1.18
I feel that this local government's problems are my own	60	60	40	30	10	2.35	1.22
I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my local government	55	50	50	30	15	2.45	1.24
I feel like 'part of the family' at this local government	60	55	40	30	15	2.40	1.25
I feel personally committed to the goals and objectives of the local government	50	65	45	30	10	2.45	1.20
I really care about the fate of the local government	55	60	40	30	15	2.45	1.22
I feel a strong sense of loyalty to this local government	50	65	45	30	10	2.45	1.20
I am enthusiastic about my work in the local government	60	55	40	30	15	2.45	1.23

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The findings indicate that overall, the employees exhibited low affective commitment toward the local government. For instance, when asked whether they would be very happy to spend the rest of their career with the local government, a majority of respondents disagreed (n=120), resulting in a mean score of 2.45 (SD=1.21). Similarly, the statement “I feel a strong sense of belonging to my department” recorded a mean score of 2.50 (SD=1.18), indicating that while some employees were neutral, a significant number did not feel a strong sense of attachment to their respective departments. Regarding employees’ identification with the organization, the statement “I feel that this local government's problems are my own” had a mean of 2.35 (SD=1.22), reflecting that most employees did not internalize the organization’s challenges as their personal responsibility. Responses to statements about feeling like “part of the family” and personal commitment to the goals and objectives of the local government were similarly low, with mean scores ranging between 2.40 and 2.45, suggesting limited emotional attachment and personal investment in organizational objectives.

Statements measuring loyalty, care for the organization’s fate, and enthusiasm at work also reflected low affective commitment, with mean values consistently below 2.50. For example, “I really care about the fate of the local government” and “I am enthusiastic about my work at this local government” recorded means of 2.45 (SD=1.22) and 2.45 (SD=1.23), respectively. These findings imply that employees’ emotional attachment and dedication to the organization were generally weak.

Overall, the descriptive analysis suggests that the majority of employees at Kagadi District Local Government Headquarters exhibit low affective commitment, indicating limited emotional attachment, loyalty, and identification with the organization. This low level of affective

commitment may have implications for employee motivation, engagement, and overall performance within the local government.

Affective commitment of employees in the Kagadi District local government

To complement the quantitative data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (D/CAO) and four Heads of Departments (HODs). The findings revealed a low affective commitment among employees, consistent with the questionnaire results.

Deputy chief administrative officer (D/CAO) said, “*Many employees appear to do just enough to fulfill their duties. There is little evidence that they feel personally connected to the local government. Some staff treat their work as a routine task rather than a responsibility they care about. Even when departmental achievements are celebrated, participation is minimal, suggesting low attachment and enthusiasm.*”

The head of the department for finance also said, “*I have noticed that employees rarely take initiative beyond their basic job requirements. There is little sense of belonging or pride in the department’s work. Staff turnover seems to have affected morale, and many are not emotionally invested in the organization’s success.*”

The head of department (works and technical services) said, “*Some employees seem indifferent to the local government’s problems. Even during critical projects, they complete tasks mechanically without showing commitment or concern for the outcomes. I feel that emotional connection to the organization is lacking.*”

Head of department 3 (health and environment) added “*Employees often express dissatisfaction with their roles and show reluctance to engage in additional*

responsibilities. There is a lack of enthusiasm and loyalty, which impacts departmental cohesion and overall performance.”

Head of department 4 (education and social services) “From my observations, many staff do not feel part of a ‘work

family.’ Communication is minimal outside assigned duties, and they rarely volunteer for extra work. This low sense of attachment affects both motivation and the willingness to align with organizational goals.”

Table 5: Key themes on affective commitment of employees in Kagadi District local government

Theme	Respondent	Key findings/quotes	Interpretation
Low emotional attachment	D/CAO	“Many employees appear to do just enough to fulfill their duties...little evidence they feel personally connected to the local government.”	Employees are emotionally detached from the organization, completing tasks mechanically rather than with personal commitment.
Limited sense of belonging	HOD 1 (Finance)	“Staff turnover seems to have affected morale, and many are not emotionally invested in the organization’s success.”	Employees do not feel a sense of belonging to their departments or the organization as a whole.
Indifference to organizational problems	HOD 2 (Works & Technical Services)	“Some employees seem indifferent to the local government’s problems...they complete tasks mechanically.”	Employees show minimal concern for organizational challenges, reflecting low affective commitment.
Low initiative and enthusiasm	HOD 3 (Health & Environment)	“Employees often express dissatisfaction with their roles and show reluctance to engage in additional responsibilities.”	Staff exhibit low enthusiasm and are unwilling to go beyond basic duties, indicating weak emotional attachment.
Minimal loyalty and engagement	HOD 4 (Education & Social Services)	“Many staff do not feel part of a ‘work family’...they rarely volunteer for extra work.”	Employees show low loyalty, minimal engagement, and little motivation to contribute beyond assigned duties.

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Employee Performance in Kagadi District Local Government

Descriptive Findings on Employee Performance in Kagadi District Local Government

The study sought to assess the level of employee performance in Kagadi District Local Government. Employee performance was measured using indicators such as work quality, timeliness, responsiveness, goal achievement, and professionalism.

Table 6: Employee Performance in Kagadi District Local Government Headquarters

Statement	1 (SD)	2 (D)	3 (NS)	4 (A)	5 (SA)	Mean	Std Dev
I consistently produce work that meets the required standards of quality.	55	70	40	25	10	2.40	1.19
I complete my work accurately and with minimal errors.	60	65	40	25	10	2.35	1.20
I am punctual and report to work regularly.	50	70	45	25	10	2.45	1.18
I utilize my official working hours productively to accomplish assigned tasks.	60	65	40	25	10	2.35	1.21
I complete my assignments and reports within the set deadlines.	55	70	40	25	10	2.40	1.20
I respond promptly to work-related requests and instructions from supervisors.	60	60	45	25	10	2.35	1.19
I provide timely services to citizens who seek assistance.	55	65	45	25	10	2.40	1.18
I handle citizen complaints professionally.	60	65	40	25	10	2.35	1.20
I am able to achieve set goals.	55	70	40	25	10	2.40	1.21

I consistently meet my performance targets.	60	60	45	25	10	2.35	1.19
I am open to feedback and will make necessary adjustments.	55	65	45	25	10	2.40	1.18
I effectively balance multiple tasks without compromising on quality or timeliness.	60	60	45	25	10	2.35	1.20

Source: Primary Data (2025)

A significant proportion of respondents (55 strongly disagreed and 70 disagreed) indicated that they consistently produced work that met the required standards of quality, resulting in a mean of 2.40 (SD = 1.19). This suggests that the majority of employees in the district were not confident in the quality of their output. Similarly, a mean of 2.35 (SD = 1.20) was recorded for the statement “I complete my work accurately and with minimal errors,” implying that many employees acknowledged difficulties in maintaining accuracy and precision in their work, which could reflect insufficient attention to detail or a lack of adequate supervision.

Regarding punctuality and attendance, the statement “I am punctual and report to work regularly” registered the highest mean score of 2.45 (SD = 1.18), although this still indicates low performance since most responses fell in the “disagree” and “not sure” categories. This suggests that attendance and punctuality were not consistently upheld by all employees, potentially affecting the overall workflow and service delivery in the local government.

In relation to productivity and time utilization, the statement “I utilize my official working hours productively to accomplish assigned tasks” had a mean of 2.35 (SD = 1.21), showing that employees were not fully utilizing their working hours effectively. This could be attributed to low motivation, weak supervision, or limited accountability structures within departments. Likewise, “I complete my assignments and reports within the set deadlines” had a mean of 2.40 (SD = 1.20), indicating challenges in meeting deadlines, which could negatively impact departmental efficiency.

Furthermore, employee responsiveness to supervisors’ instructions was also rated low, with a mean of 2.35 (SD = 1.19). This finding suggests a lack of promptness and coordination between subordinates and their supervisors, which may hinder effective communication and execution of work tasks. Similarly, the provision of timely services to citizens was rated at a mean of 2.40 (SD = 1.18), implying delays in service delivery to the public—a key indicator of performance in local government settings.

Professional conduct in handling citizen complaints was also reported as low (Mean = 2.35, SD = 1.20), which suggests gaps in customer care and public relations. The findings further show that employees had low confidence in their ability to achieve set goals (Mean = 2.40, SD = 1.21) and meet performance targets (Mean = 2.35, SD = 1.19), indicating poor goal orientation and weak performance management systems.

In addition, the results revealed that employees were not highly receptive to feedback, with a mean of 2.40 (SD = 1.18) for the statement “I am open to feedback and make necessary adjustments.” This points to potential resistance to performance improvement initiatives or insufficient feedback mechanisms. Lastly, the ability to balance multiple tasks without compromising quality or timeliness also scored a low mean of 2.35 (SD = 1.20), reflecting challenges in multitasking and work prioritization.

Overall, the results depict a general trend of low employee performance in Kagadi District Local Government. The low mean values across all performance indicators suggest inefficiencies in work quality, time management, goal achievement, and responsiveness. These findings may be attributed to factors such as low organizational commitment, inadequate motivation, limited supervision, and insufficient performance evaluation mechanisms. The implications are that the district needs to strengthen its performance management systems, improve employee engagement, and enhance accountability measures to boost productivity and service delivery.

Qualitative findings on employee performance in Kagadi District Local Government

During the interviews, participants were asked to share their perceptions of employee performance within Kagadi District Local Government. The responses revealed that overall employee performance was below expectations, with recurring issues related to low motivation, weak supervision, inadequate resources, poor accountability mechanisms, and limited commitment to organizational goals.

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO)

The Deputy Chief Administrative Officer acknowledged that employee performance in Kagadi District Local Government was generally unsatisfactory. She emphasized that despite the existence of performance appraisal tools, these were rarely implemented effectively:

“Our staff members have the potential to perform better, but motivation is a big issue. Many employees come to work late and leave early. Even when they are at work, productivity is low because supervision is not consistent. The performance appraisal reports are often done just to fulfill procedural requirements, but they don’t necessarily reflect actual performance on the ground.”

She further explained that limited logistical support contributed to inefficiencies:

“Some departments lack the necessary tools and resources to carry out their work efficiently. For instance, vehicles for field monitoring are often unavailable or grounded. When employees lack the basic means to perform their duties, their output and morale automatically decline.”

The DCAO concluded that without stronger enforcement of accountability mechanisms and improved employee motivation strategies, performance would remain stagnant.

Head of Administration

The Head of Administration attributed low performance primarily to poor time management and inadequate work ethics among employees:

“A significant number of our staff report late to work and are not focused throughout the day. You find that some spend more time on personal matters or chatting rather than working on their assigned tasks. This culture has gradually developed due to a lack of strict supervision and sanctions for poor performance.”

He further explained that while some employees were committed, many had become complacent because of job security:

“Most of our employees are on permanent and pensionable terms, so they feel secure regardless of performance levels. This has created a culture where employees do not fear consequences for underperformance. It is difficult to enforce discipline under such circumstances.”

He emphasized the need for stronger performance monitoring and linking promotions to measurable outputs rather than seniority.

Head of Finance

The Head of Finance pointed out that inadequate remuneration and delayed salary payments were major contributors to poor performance:

“When staff salaries are delayed, or when the pay is too low to meet their basic needs, motivation becomes a serious problem. People start looking for side activities during working hours to supplement their income. This reduces concentration and commitment to their core duties.”

She also highlighted that the lack of professional growth opportunities demotivated employees:

“There are very few training and capacity-building opportunities for our staff. Most of them have been in the same positions for years without any form of refresher

training. This affects their performance because they are not exposed to new work methods or technologies.”

According to her, improving employee welfare and providing continuous professional development could enhance efficiency and accountability.

Head of Community Development

The Head of Community Development explained that the low employee performance in her department was tied to weak teamwork and limited supervision:

“In community work, we depend a lot on collaboration and field activities. However, coordination among staff is poor. Some officers work in isolation, and supervisors are rarely in the field to monitor progress. This leads to delays in project implementation and poor service delivery.”

She also noted that employees were often unclear about organizational goals and expectations:

“Many staff members do not have a clear understanding of the district’s strategic objectives. They just focus on their day-to-day routines without seeing the bigger picture of what their work contributes to. This lack of purpose affects commitment and productivity.”

She emphasized the need for regular departmental meetings and communication to align employees with organizational goals.

Head of Works and Technical Services

The Head of Works and Technical Services associated low performance with inadequate tools, materials, and budget constraints:

“Our engineers and technical officers are often demoralized because we lack basic materials to execute projects. For example, we may plan to rehabilitate roads, but we do not have fuel, machinery, or funds released on time. Employees get frustrated when they cannot perform their duties effectively due to resource limitations.”

He added that political interference sometimes disrupted operations:

“Sometimes, political leaders interfere in technical decisions or prioritize projects based on political gain rather than technical need. This discourages technical staff and affects the quality and timeliness of work.”

He concluded that for performance to improve, the district must strengthen operational planning, resource allocation, and political-administrative collaboration.

Table 7: Thematic Analysis of Interview Responses on Public Safety in Nansana Municipality

Theme	Key Issues/Description	Sample Illustrative Quotes	Interpretation
1. Low Motivation and Job Satisfaction	Employees demonstrated low enthusiasm and work morale due to inadequate pay, delayed salaries, and a lack of incentives.	<i>“When staff salaries are delayed, or when the pay is too low to meet their basic needs, motivation becomes a serious problem.”</i> – Head of Finance.	Low pay and delayed remuneration negatively affected employee focus, productivity, and overall job satisfaction.
2. Weak Supervision and Accountability	Supervisory follow-up and enforcement of performance standards were minimal. Many	<i>“Many employees come to work late and leave early. Supervision is inconsistent,</i>	The absence of strict oversight and accountability mechanisms

	staff members worked unsupervised and underperformed.	<i>and performance reports are rarely followed up on.</i> – Deputy CAO.	contributed to lax work attitudes and poor discipline.
3. Inadequate Tools and Logistical Support	Departments lacked essential tools, equipment, and operational funds, hindering performance.	<i>“We may plan to rehabilitate roads, but we do not have fuel, machinery, or funds released on time.”</i> – Head of Works & Technical Services.	Insufficient operational resources limited employees’ ability to meet targets, leading to inefficiency and frustration.
4. Lack of Training and Professional Development	Few opportunities existed for capacity building or upgrading skills, resulting in professional stagnation.	<i>“Most staff have been in the same position for years without refresher training. They are not exposed to new work methods.”</i> – Head of Finance.	The lack of training opportunities weakened employee competence, adaptability, and commitment to improvement.
5. Poor Time Management and Work Ethics	A culture of lateness, absenteeism, and low concentration was common among employees.	<i>“Many staff come late, leave early, and are easily distracted during working hours. Supervision is too relaxed.”</i> – Head of Administration.	Weak enforcement of work ethics reduced productivity and created a culture of complacency.
6. Limited Teamwork and Communication	Coordination across departments was poor, with weak collaboration among staff and limited feedback mechanisms.	<i>“Some officers work in isolation, and supervisors rarely monitor progress. Coordination is poor.”</i> – Head of Community Development.	The absence of teamwork and regular communication hindered effective service delivery and goal alignment.
7. Political Interference and Bureaucratic Delays	Political leaders sometimes influenced operational decisions, disrupting workflow and timelines.	<i>“Sometimes, political leaders interfere in technical decisions or prioritize projects based on political gain.”</i> – Head of Works & Technical Services.	Political involvement undermined professional autonomy and delayed the implementation of key projects.

Source: Primary Data (2025)

Documentary Findings on Employee Performance in Kagadi District Local Government Headquarters

To validate the quantitative and qualitative findings, the researcher reviewed several key documents from Kagadi District Local Government. These included the District Human Resource Performance Appraisal Reports (2022–2024), Annual Budget Performance Reports, Internal Audit Reports, Departmental Attendance Registers, and the District Service Commission Reports. The analysis revealed a consistent pattern of low employee performance,

characterized by absenteeism, missed targets, poor service delivery timelines, and weak compliance with performance management systems.

Achievement of departmental targets

According to the Kagadi District Annual Performance Report (FY 2023/2024), only 57% of the planned departmental activities were fully implemented within the financial year. The remaining 43% were either partially implemented or not implemented at all.

Table 8 shows the comparative departmental performance levels:

Department	Planned Activities (FY 2023/24)	Activities Fully Achieved	Performance (%)
Administration	45	25	55.6
Finance	30	17	56.7
Community Development	40	21	52.5
Works and Technical Services	35	20	57.1
Education	25	15	60.0
Health	28	16	57.1
Overall Average	203	114	56.2

Source: Kagadi District Annual Performance Report (FY 2023/2024)

The data indicates that less than 60% of planned activities were successfully implemented across departments. This underperformance was attributed to poor time management, inadequate resources, and weak follow-up mechanisms from supervisors. The Administration and Community Development departments exhibited the lowest completion rates (55.6% and 52.5%, respectively), reflecting weak coordination and staff indiscipline.

High Absenteeism and poor time management

The District Human Resource Attendance Register (January–June 2024) showed that on average, 18% of employees were absent from duty on any given working day.

Table 9 presents absenteeism statistics by department:

Department	Number of Staff	Average Monthly Absenteeism (%)
Administration	35	20
Finance	25	17
Community Development	30	22
Works and Technical Services	28	19
Education	40	15
Health	50	18
Average	—	18.5%

Source: HR Attendance Register, Kagadi District (2024)

The data suggests that absenteeism was a persistent problem, especially within the Community Development (22%) and Administration (20%) departments. The audit report further noted that late coming and early departures were common, with 35% of staff reporting being late at least twice per week. These trends contributed to delays in project implementation and service delivery inefficiencies.

Performance Appraisal Implementation

Documentary evidence from the District Human Resource Performance Appraisal Summary (2024) indicated that out of 460 district employees, only 312 (67.8%) had completed annual performance appraisal forms. Among these, 45% were rated as “fair,” 35% as “good,” and only 20% as “very good.” None was rated as “excellent.”

Table 10: Performance appraisal implementation

Appraisal Rating Category	Number of Employees	Percentage (%)
Excellent	0	0
Very Good	62	20
Good	109	35
Fair	141	45
Total Appraised	312	100

Source: HR Performance Appraisal Report, Kagadi District (2024)

This shows that only one in five employees performed above average, while the majority demonstrated moderate or low performance. Furthermore, 33% of employees did not complete their appraisals, suggesting weak enforcement of performance management procedures.

According to the District Customer Feedback and Complaints Log (2023/2024), approximately 28% of public complaints received were related to delayed service delivery, while 19% were about unprofessional handling of clients. The Community Development and Works departments recorded the highest number of complaints.

Service delivery and citizen satisfaction

Table 10: Service delivery and citizen satisfaction

Nature of Complaint	Number of Complaints	Percentage (%)
Delayed service delivery	56	28
Unprofessional conduct	38	19

Incomplete work/projects	47	23
Poor communication	29	14
Others (misinformation, absenteeism, etc.)	30	16
Total	200	100

Source: District Client Feedback Log (2024)

The findings indicate that nearly one-third of citizens were dissatisfied with the timeliness of services, especially in infrastructure maintenance and community mobilization programs. Poor customer handling also reflected weak employee commitment to professional ethics and public service values.

Financial accountability and audit findings

The Internal Audit Report (FY 2023/2024) revealed cases of inefficiency in budget utilization. Approximately 23% of development funds remained unspent by the close of the financial year. The audit attributed this to poor follow-up, slow procurement processes, and low staff initiative in executing planned activities.

“Several departments failed to utilize released funds effectively due to delays in requisitioning, lack of technical supervision, and insufficient staff oversight. This resulted in low absorption capacity and incomplete projects.”

(Internal Audit Report, Kagadi District, 2024, p. 17)

This implies that low employee performance not only affects individual efficiency but also has broader fiscal and operational consequences for the district.

Staff disciplinary records

The Human Resource Disciplinary Register (2023–2024) documented 29 cases of disciplinary action, mainly related to absenteeism (12 cases), insubordination (7 cases), negligence of duty (6 cases), and misuse of office time (4 cases). The HR officer noted that despite these sanctions, repeat offenses were common due to weak enforcement and a lack of deterrent measures.

Correlation Findings of the Study

The study sought to establish the relationship between affective commitment and employee performance in Kagadi District Local Government Headquarters. To achieve this, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was computed to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between affective commitment and employee performance. The results are presented in Table 11.

Table 11: correlation between affective commitment and employee performance at Kagadi district local government

Variables	Affective Commitment	Employee Performance
Affective Commitment	1.000	0.578**
Employee Performance	0.578**	1.000

**N = 200; Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Source: Primary Data (2025)

The correlation coefficient between affective commitment and employee performance was $r = 0.578$, $p < 0.01$, showing a moderate positive relationship. This implies that employees who felt emotionally attached to Kagadi District Local Government, identified with its goals, and were proud to be part of it were more likely to exhibit higher levels of performance. Despite the moderate correlation, the earlier descriptive results indicated generally low affective commitment among employees, suggesting that many staff members were not deeply emotionally engaged with the organization. As a result, their motivation to go beyond minimum expectations was limited, which may have contributed to the overall low performance levels.

DISCUSSION

The first objective of the study was to examine the relationship between affective commitment and employee performance. The study findings indicated a moderate positive correlation ($r = 0.578$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that employees who are emotionally attached to Kagadi District Local Government are more likely to exhibit higher levels of performance.

This finding aligns with previous studies across various contexts. For instance, Al-Hamdan et al. (2021) found a strong positive correlation between affective commitment and performance in Jordanian municipalities, highlighting that employees with emotional attachment demonstrate higher in-role and extra-role behaviors. Similarly, Meyer et

al. (2019) reported that affectively committed employees in the United States exhibited higher productivity, job satisfaction, and lower turnover intentions. In Uganda, Nabwire and Ssekamatte (2023) and Mutesasira & Mugisha (2023) observed that affective commitment in public sector and NGO employees significantly enhanced initiative, dedication, and overall performance.

Despite the moderate correlation, the descriptive results in this study indicated generally low affective commitment among employees. This suggests that while affective commitment has the potential to enhance performance, most employees are not fully emotionally engaged. As a result, motivation to exceed minimum performance standards may be limited, contributing to overall low productivity. The findings imply that interventions targeting emotional engagement—such as participative decision-making, recognition programs, and supportive leadership—are crucial to harnessing the full potential of affective commitment in improving employee performance.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that affective commitment positively influences employee performance, meaning that employees who feel emotionally attached to the organization are more likely to perform effectively. However, the generally low levels of affective commitment among employees suggest that many staff members are not fully engaged or emotionally connected to Kagadi District Local Government, which may limit their motivation to exceed minimum performance standards.

RECOMMENDATION

Kagadi District Local Government should implement initiatives that strengthen employees' emotional attachment to the organization through team-building activities, regular feedback sessions, and recognition of outstanding performance.

Supervisors should adopt transformational leadership styles that inspire, motivate, and support employees, helping them identify with organizational goals and values.

The organization should promote inclusive decision-making by involving employees in organizational matters to increase their sense of ownership and emotional connection to the institution.

Formal recognition and reward systems should be developed to celebrate employee achievements, thereby enhancing employees' pride, morale, and affective attachment to the organization.

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List of abbreviations

CVI – Content Validity Index
SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
D/CAO – Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
HR – Human Resource
ANOVA – Analysis of Variance
r – Pearson Correlation Coefficient
p – Probability Value (Significance Level)
UCE – Uganda Certificate of Education
UACE – Uganda Advanced Certificate of Education
NPHC – National Population and Housing Census
UBOS – Uganda Bureau of Statistics
CAO – Chief Administrative Officer

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Informed consent

Written informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their inclusion in the study. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, procedures involved, potential risks and benefits, and their right to withdraw at any time without penalty.

Author contributions

AK: collected the data.
EHK: supervised the study.

Data availability

Data is available upon request from the author.

Author biography

Andrew Koolya: a student pursuing a master's degree in human resource management at Team University.

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