



Impact of Public Service Motivation on employee's Adaptive Behavior; An empirical evidence from Nigeria Public Sector

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Abstract

Despite the high importance attached to the employee's adaptive behavior as a dimension of performance, there are shortage of research in this regard. This paper, therefore, intends to examine empirically the impacts of the four dimensions of public service motivation (PSM) on the employee's adaptive performance in the Nigeria's public sector. Stratified random sampling method was used select 336 participants. Data was collected through a questionnaire and analyze with PLS SEM. The detail about the results, implication and limitations are discussed at the end

Keywords: Adaptive Performance (AD), Public service motivation (PSM), Public sector.

Introduction;

Although adaptive performance was not among the initial dimensions of individual work performance by Compell et al, (1990), but the current rapid advancement in technology, fusions and merger and the globalization of various organizations, as well as environmental dynamics, require employees that are ready to adapt new ways of doing things through knowledge, skills and abilities (Pulakos, Arad, Donovan, & Plamondon, 2000). Huang, Ryan, Zabel, and Palmer (2014), identified three separate important aspects of adaptive performance first aspect, deals with an employee's work behavior that is geared towards meeting the unforeseen or changing work demands. Second part is related to how the new skills and knowledge will be applied to the new job challenges and third aspect emphasizes on the exchange of unacquainted work roles and establishing new interactive relationship experiences of newcomers at the point of entering the organization. Adaptive performance is categorize into eight dimensions such as Handling Emergencies or Crisis Situations, Handling Work Stress, Solving Problems Creatively, Dealing with Uncertain/Unpredictable Work Situations, Learning Work Tasks, Technologies, and Procedures, Demonstrating Interpersonal Adaptability, Demonstrating Cultural Adaptability, Demonstrating Physically Oriented

Adaptability, and based on these dimensions he developed a job adaptive inventory(Short title, JAI) (Pulakos et al.,2000). Adaptive performance, therefore, plays a vital role towards ensuring that organizations meet the millennium challenges (Sonnentag, & Frese, 2005; Sonnentag, Volmer, & Sychala, 2008).

However, in spite of the importance of this dimension of performance, researchers have argued that, less emphases was given to adaptive performance when compared with other types of performance, such as task and contextual performance (Sonnentag,et al, 2008; Tabiu, Pangil, & Othman, 2018). Owing to the importance of adaptive performance to both individual worker and the organization, there is need to expand the horizon of this dimension. Notwithstanding, research findings on adaptive performance have been surfacing in many different fields for more than twenty years ago (Tabiu, et al 2018). See, for example, contextual factors that promote Adaptive performance (Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007;Stewart & Nandkeolyar, 2006). The Adaptive performance requirements of jobs (Pulakos et al., 2000), Training, Job Autonomy and Career Planning as Predictors of Employees 'Adaptive Performance (Tabiu et al 2018), training techniques that can enhance Adaptive Performance (Bell & Kozlowski, 2002; Joung, Hesketh, & Neal, 2006), and Research has also theoretically and empirically differentiate between Adaptive and other performance dimensions (Allworth, & Hesketh, 1999; Griffin, et al., 2007; Johnson, 2001; Shoss, et al, 2012). Other areas studied includes personality traits (Huang, et al, 2014; Neal, Yeo, Koy, & Xiao, 2012; Pulakos, et al, 2002), leader-member exchange (Sweet, Witt, & Shoss, 2015), cultural intelligence (Şahin, & Gürbüz, 2014) prior experience (Griffin, & Hesketh, 2003) and transformational leadership (Charbonnier-Voirin, El Akremi, & Vandenberghe, 2010) among others.

On the other hand, Perry and Wise (1990) suggested that, for better comprehension of how public servants are motivated, this is due to the



particularity and complexity of the sector and as well help administrators/managers to better motivate their workers (Cun, 2012). The concept of public service motivation (PSM) was therefore introduced with the aim to explain the differences between public and private employees in terms of motivation (Perry, & Wise, 1990). That is, public employees are said to be more concern for the community and desire to serve the public interest, and they are more likely to be branded by an ethic that valued intrinsic more than the extrinsic rewards (Crewson, 1997; Kim, 2009).

Based on the above backdrop, we can presume that public servants will place a high value on adaptive behavior. Moreover, the impact of PSM on both job and organizational performance has become a hot researched topic in the field of public administration, because several studies have explored the structure of PSM and dealt with the relationship between PSM and various outcome constructs (e.g., (Brewer, Selden, & Facer II, 2000; Brewer 2010; Petrovsky 2009; Ritz 2009). However, despite a growing body of literature suggesting that PSM may enhance performance, the majority of the studies focused only on in-role and pro-social behavior aspects of performance (task and contextual), the adaptive behavior aspect seem neglected research wise. Similarly, only few empirical studies have been carried on public service motivation, particularly in the Nigeria public sector.

This study, therefore, tries to extend the literature on adaptive performance by investigating the impacts of PSM on adaptive performance. It intends to contribute to understanding how the four dimensions of PSM enhance employee's adaptive performance, especially in the third world countries. The study is divided into five major parts. Section one is the introduction, in part two, related literatures were reviewed, this was followed by a detailed explanation of the method adopted in conducting the research which includes population, procedures and measures used. Section four was dedicated to research findings and discussion, conclusions. While, implications and limitations of the study were contained in the last section.

Review of Literature

Adaptive performance is the extent to which an individual or group of individuals become accustomed to changes in the environment or work role (Griffin, Neal & Parker, 2007). It can also be defined as the changing behaviors and attitudes of workers in an organization to suite the demands of the new situation, events and the environment (Pulakos, Arad Donovan & Plamondon, 2000).

Adaptive performance is an element of performance that reveals, obtaining improved abilities in relations to change in an organization. Additionally, adaptive performance also concerns with the increasing interdependence and ambiguity of work systems and the consistent change in the nature of worker performance in an organization. Johnson, (2003) Johnson argued that, dealing outstandingly with changing work settings, unpredictable situations and knowledge of new tasks; processes and technologies characteristically reflect adaptive performance. Adaptive performance discloses activities that are associated with the skill acquirement of an individual worker (Shoss, Witt, & Vera, 2012). Adaptive performance is concerned with adjusting to a new technique by workers due to the changes in an organization (Shoss *et al.*, 2012). Zajac, Kraatz, & Bresser, (2000), establish that, adaptive determinations at the organizational level increase individual and firm performance to the level to which they bring into line a company/ organization's plan with what is required to be successful. This form of performance, therefore plays an important role towards improvement of overall performance of employees which can determine the success of organizations.

Public Service Motivation

The most common cited definition of PSM is the Perry and Wise (1990) definition, which described PSM as an individual's tendency to respond to motives primarily in public institutions and organizations (Mann, 2006). Syamsir, (2014), views PSM as general humane motives to serve the interest of a community of people, a state, a nation or humanity. Kim and Vandenabeele, (2010), perceives PSM as the "a motivational strength that persuades individual to perform meaningful in public organization. Vendenabeele, (2007), also define PSM as the belief, values and attitudes that go beyond self-interest or organizational interest that concern the interest of a larger political entity and that motivates individuals to act accordingly whenever appropriate. Although there are some kinds of variations in definitions of PSM by scholars, the common focus is on the desire and intention to do well for people and promote the well-being of the society.

PSM was built on three theoretical bases as outlined by Perry and Wise (1990) which includes rational, norm-based, and affection. The rational aspect has to do with co instance of individual's interest with a particular public policy, norm based is concern with the question of loyalty of individual to government and public interest, while affection



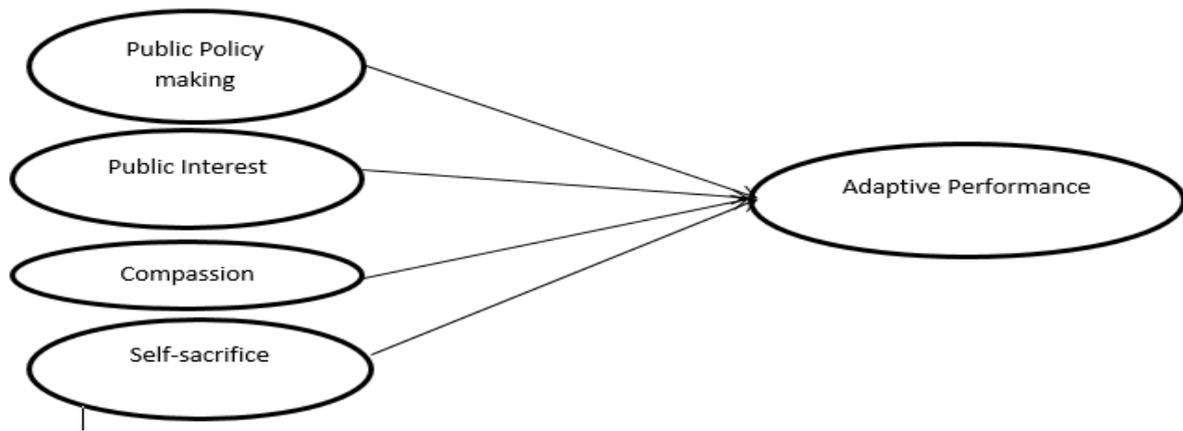
is more of individual desire to help others. Perry and Wise used the above theoretical bases to construct a measurement scale (Andersen, 2009). PSM is structured along six dimensions; Attraction to public policy making, commitment to public interest, civil duty, social justice, compassion and self-sacrifice. However, Perry (1996) reduced it to four by using data from a survey of 376 respondents from public sector backgrounds. The four dimensions are attraction to public policy making, commitment to public interest, civil duties, compassion and self-sacrifice. Attraction to public policy making was on the assumption that public policy co-inside with individual personal interest, compassion has to do with expression of love for others, commitment to the public interest deals with how loyal one is to the society, and self-sacrifice is about the desire to help others.

Public Service Motivation and Adaptive performance

Based on the findings Jacobson, (2011) Jacobson, PSM plays a significant role as far as the survival of organizations is concerned, due to the fact that it offers a knowledge on how workers can be motivated, how they can be recruited and how to retain employees, it also provides a mirror for viewing the nature of public sector incentives as well as strategies for measuring public servants behavior and this explains why PSM has a close link with Human Resource Management constructs. Some scholars even suggested that, PSM studies should be included in the public administration curricula and to educate public administrators/managers and human resources professionals on the basic tenants of PSM (Isah, Namahe & Abubakar, 2017). The study of Alonso and Lewis, (2001) examine the relationship between PSM and job performance in the federal service using multiple regression and logic analyses. Mixed results were revealed on whether PSM influence grades and performance ratings. It also provides evidence that employees who anticipated to receive a material return for excellent performance attained higher grades and performance ratings. The result further reveals that there is negative relationship between material

rewards and performance mattered to those with high PSM. It was also proved empirically that PSM and pro social behaviors were not related with public-sector choice (Lee & Choi, 2013). Their findings further show that job security was the main reason why college students envisioned joining the public sector in Korea. Jacobson (2011) explored the influence of organizational action on the development and enhancement of PSM. The study employed qualitative method to collect data from the mid-level managers of two federal agencies. The result show that majority of the participants agreed that, pragmatic reasons was what make them to pursue public sector employment. The result further reveal that workers notion about PSM changes over time particularly as they rise from lower to higher position. Bright (2005) investigated public employees with high levels of public service motivation who are they, where are they, and what do they want. The study investigated the influence of PSM on personal characteristics, management level, and monetary inclinations of public employees. At the end of the study it was discovered that public service motivation is positively related to the gender, education level, management level, and monetary preferences of public employees. This research focused on the relationships between the four dimensions of public service motivation and adaptive performance. We, therefore, hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between the four dimensions of public motivation and employee's adaptive performance. Precisely:

- H1. There is a significant relationship between public policy making dimension of PSM and employees' adaptive performance
- H2. There is a significant relationship between the public interest dimension of PSM and employees' adaptive performance
- H3. There is a significant relationship between the compassion dimension of PSM and employees' adaptive performance.
- H4. There is a significant relationship between the self-sacrifice dimension of PSM and employees' adaptive performance.



Objectives

As mentioned earlier, the main objective of this study is to empirically investigate the impacts of the four dimensions of public service motivation on employee's adaptive performance. In line with the broad objective, the specific objectives are to examine the relationship between public policy making dimension of PSM and employees' adaptive performance, to examine the relationship between the public interest dimension of PSM and employees' adaptive performance, to evaluate the relationship between the compassion dimension of PSM and employees' adaptive performance and to investigate the relationship between the self-sacrifice dimension of PSM and employees' adaptive performance.

Participants and procedures

The populations of this study were 336 public servants from ministries in the North western zone of Nigeria. The participants were chosen based on stratified random sampling, this to ensure equal representation, to allow equal chance of selection and to minimize bias. Based on the participant's gender, male respondents are more in number 236 (70%) as compared to the female which constitute 100 (30%). In terms of age of the participants, the demographic data shows that, 237 workers (70.3%) have ages from 31-50, while 74 employees are within 20-30 (22.3%) age bracket and 25 participants were between 51 (7.4%) and above. This signifies that, the majority of the participants are energetic ages. With regard to qualification, the result reveals that, the majority of the workers 164 (50%) possessed a Diploma, 94(27.9%) of them have a BSc/HND qualification. 40(11.9%) participants are secondary certificates holders, while 20 (5.9%) are masters holders and 3 (0.9%) respondents possessed a PhD. On the issue of work experience, the statistics disclosed that 23 (6.8%) workers have less than one year experience,

41(12.2%) have one to five experiences, while 237(70%) have worked for six to ten years and 35 (10.4%) workers have eleven years and above working experience. This is clearly shown in Table 1 below.

Variables and Measures

The study comprised of Adaptive Performance the dependent variable, while the Public Service Motivation (PSM) dimensions were the independent variables. The data were collected through the use of Questionnaire which was administered personally by the researchers by the assistance staff officers from the various ministries. Adequate time was given to the respondents as well as some reminders to respond to the survey. This study measured Adaptive Performance with 8 item scale adapted from the previous works of (Koopmans, Bernaards, Hildebrandt, Schaufeli, De Vet, & Van der Beek, 2013). The measuring items for the four dimensions of Public Service Motivation were adapted from the past studies Perry and Wise (1990). All the variables were measured using a five point scale ranging from 1- strongly disagree, to 5-strongly agree.

Method of data analysis

This study, carried out multivariate analysis to assess data using a Smart-PLS version 3.2.7 and to examine the model and to test the research hypotheses. The PLS-SEM modelling method was employed in the study due its potentiality to assess the entire outer model and evaluate the relationship between the causal variables and their respective measurements (Hair, Anderson, Babin, & Black, 2010). PLS-SEM algorithms (see figure 2) were used to assess the outer model and PLS-SEM bootstrapping mechanism was engaged to evaluate the structural model.



Results

Validity and Reliability of Measures

Since all the variables in the present study are reflective, we start by evaluating the reliabilities and validity of the construct items (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012; Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014). As can be seen in Table 2 below, the algorithm results indicated, all the constructs have achieved reliabilities and validity in terms of loadings, the average variance extracted (AVE), composite reliability (CR) (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2013). Furthermore, study also assessed the R² of the independent and dependent variables (see Table 2). The results reveal moderate R² values which signify meaningfulness of the results for interpretation (Ringle et al., 2015).

To establish that, this study is not affected by the problem discriminant validity, the Fornell, and Larcker, (1981) criterion was used to assess construct discriminant validity. In this respect, the variable correlations and square root of AVE observed (Tabiu, et, al, 2018). Table 3 revealed that, the AVEs are shown on the slanting side (in bold) and the squared inter-construct correlations are displayed on the diagonal side of the table. It can be seen that, the respective AVEs are greater than the squared inter-constructs correlations; as such the requirements for discriminant validity is achieved.

Structural Model

Structural model was evaluated using the R-squared values and path coefficients (Ringle, Wende, & Becker, 2015). The study employed PLS-SEM bootstrapping are used 500 subsamples to determine the path coefficient significance (Figure 3). Table 4 presents the results of the test of hypotheses through the path coefficients of determination, t-values as well as the p-values. In hypotheses H1 it was predicted that a positive relationship existed between the PMS dimension of PSM and AP, results indicates a negative relationship between PMS and AD ($\beta = -0.043$, $t = 0.618$, $p < 0.269$); hence, H1 is not supported. Hypotheses H2 which presumes that a positive relationship existed between the PI dimension of PSM and AP the result reveals a significant positive relationship between PI and AD ($\beta = 0.145$, $t = 1.791$, $p < 0.037$); thus H2 is supported. Similarly, hypotheses H3 that predict a positive relationship between the PS dimension of PSM and AP is supported ($\beta = 0.163$, $t = 2.401$, $p < 0.008$); equally, hypotheses H4 which claims that a positive relationship existed between the SS dimension of PSM and AP, the study result shows

a significant positive connection between SS and AD ($\beta = 0.603$, $t = 10.169$, $p < 0.000$) thereby accepting H4.

Discussion

The study aims to empirically examine the relationship between the four dimensions of public service motivation and Adaptive Performance in Nigeria public. PLS-SEM was used as the tool for analysis. The PLS-SEM analysis found empirical evidence to suggest positive and significant association among the latent constructs as depicted by hypotheses H2 to H4 tested at two-tailed at $p < 0.010$ and $P < 0.001$ levels of significance. Hence, the outcome of hypotheses H2 to H4 were statistically significant as such accepted. However, the empirical result shows that, negative relationship exist between PMS dimension and AD (H1). The results were in harmony with the findings of past related studies (Petrovsky & Ritz, 2014; 2013; Kim, 2005; Wardlaw, 2008; Taylor, 2008; Leisink & Steijn 2009). Therefore, Public service motivation can play a very significant role in determining adaptive behavior of employees which in the long run leads to organizational performance.

Conclusion

The study surveyed the role of public service motivation in the employees' adaptive behavior in some public organizations in the northwestern zone of Nigeria. Data were collected through questionnaires, tested and the results show strong support for a significant connection between three dimensions of public service motivation (PI, PS, and SS) and employees adaptive performance (AP). However, the empirical evidence reveals that PMS dimension is not significant in the context of this study. But this does not mean that, the dimension is not important as a determinant of employees' adaptive performance. The result suggests that PSM public service motivation serves as a vital tool for the survival of organizations. This is due to the fact that, it provides skills and knowledge on how employees can be motivated, how they can be enrolled and how to retain employees. In addition, it also provides a mirror for viewing the nature of public sector incentives as well as strategies for measuring public servants behavior. Based on this we can conclude that public service motivation has a close link with P Human Resource Management constructs. Therefore, administrators/ managers should be educated on the basic tenants of PSM. Owing the fact that, this study treated adaptive performance as a unidimensional construct, future studies may look at it multidimensionally.

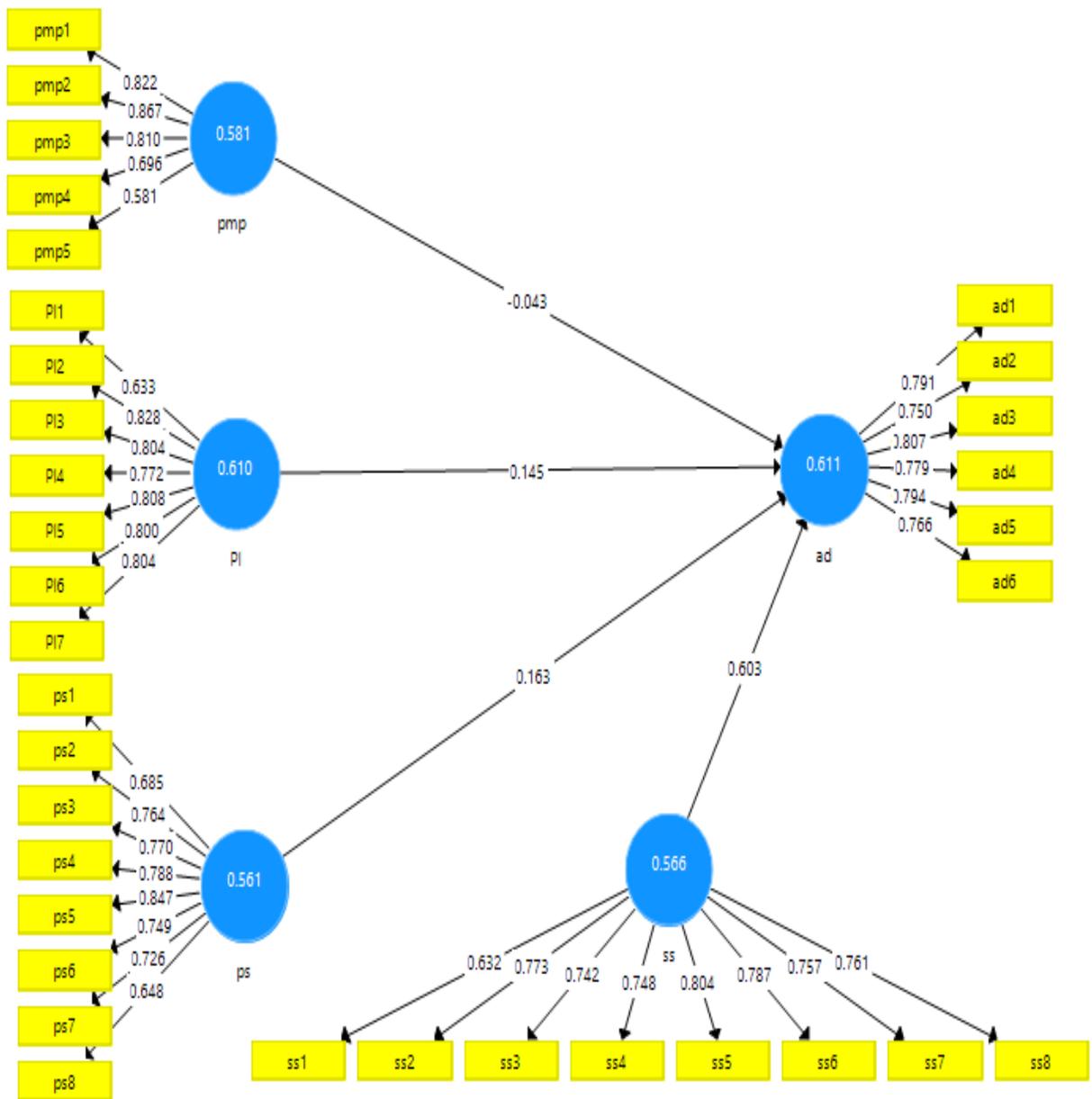


Figure 2. Results of Algorithm
Source: Prepared by the researchers

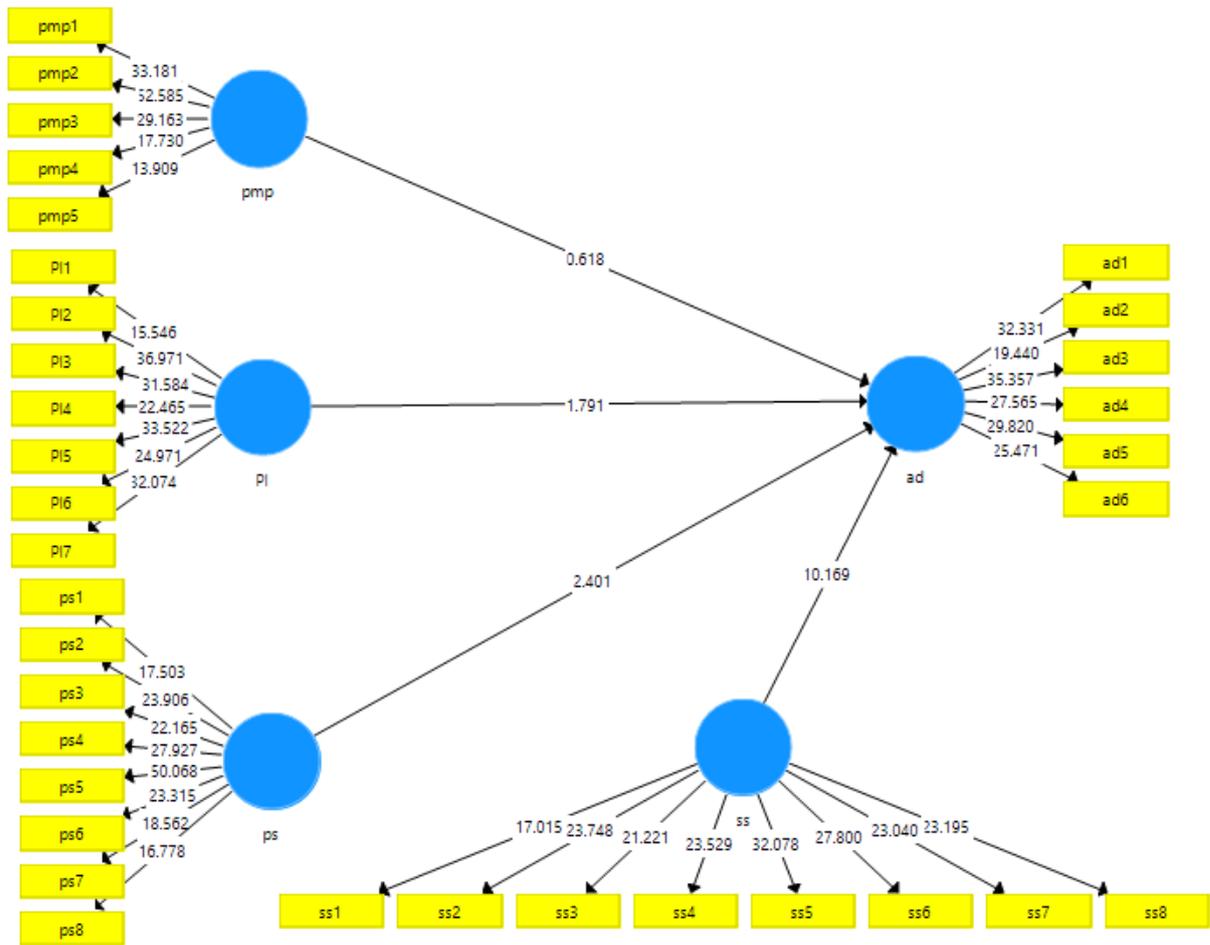


Figure 3. Structural Model
Source: Prepared by the researchers'

Table 1
Demographic Profile of Respondents

S/N	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage
1	Gender	Male	236	70
		Female	100	30
2	Age	20-30 years old.	74	22.3
		31-50 years old.	237	70.3
		51 years and above.	25	7.4
3	Qualification	Sec Cert	40	11.9
		Diploma	164	50
		Bsc/HND	94	27.9
		Masters	20	5.9
		PhD	3	0.9
4	Work Experience	Less than one year	23	6.8
		One to five -1-5 years	41	12.2
		Six to Ten -6-10 years	237	70
		Eleven -11 years and above	35	10.4

**Table 2.** Results of the Measurement Model

Constructs	Items	Loadings	CR	AVE	R2
Adaptive Performance	AD1	0.791	0.904	0.611	0.690
	AD2	0.750			
	AD3	0.807			
	AD4	0.779			
	AD5	0.794			
	AD6	0.766			
Public Policy Making	PMS1	0.822	0.872	0.581	
	PMS2	0.867			
	PMS3	0.810			
	PMS4	0.696			
	PMS5	0.581			
Public Interest	PI 1	0.633	0.916	0.610	
	PI 2	0.828			
	PI 3	0.804			
	PI 4	0.772			
	PI 5	0.808			
	PI 6	0.800			
	PI 7	0.804			
Compassion	PS1	0.685	0.911	0.561	
	PS2	0.764			
	PS3	0.770			
	PS4	0.788			
	PS5	0.847			
	PS6	0.749			
	PS7	0.726			
	PS8	0.648			
Self-sacrifice	SS1	0.632	0.912	0.566	
	SS2	0.773			
	SS3	0.742			
	SS4	0.748			
	SS5	0.804			
	SS6	0.787			
	SS7	0.757			
	SS8	0.761			

Source: Prepared by the researchers.

Note: AVE = average variance extracted; CR= composite reliability. R2=Coefficient determination

Table 3. Correlation among Constructs and the Square Roots of AVE

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5
Adaptive Performance	0.781				
Public Policy Making	0.704	0.781			
Public Interest	0.708	0.541	0.762		
Compassion	0.691	0.729	0.669	0.749	
Self-sacrifice	0.565	0.617	0.617	0.597	0.752

Source: Prepared by the researchers'.

Note: The bolded values are the square roots of AVE, while other values are the Correlations among the constructs.

**Table 4.** Results of the Hypotheses Tested

Relationship	Path Coefficient	Standard Error	T value	Decision
Public Interest-> Adaptive Performance	0.145	0.081	1.791**	Supported
Public Policy Making -> Adaptive Performance	-0.043	0.069	0.618	Not supported
Compassion->Adaptive Performance	0.163	0.068	2.401***	Supported
Self-sacrifice-> Adaptive Performance	0.603	0.059	10.169***	Supported

Source: Prepared by the researchers.

Note: ***significant at 0.01; **significant at 0.05.

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