



**RESEARCH ARTICLE**

**Impact of Conducive Work Environment on the Performance of Civil Servants - A Case Study of Delta State Ministry of Information**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study examined the impact of a conducive work environment on the performance of civil servants - a case study of Delta State Ministry of Information. Variables employed are; the effect interior-environment factors on goal alignment and the effect of visual distraction on the Social Recognition of Civil Servants. The study adopted a descriptive survey method. The source of data was primary data and it was collected through questionnaires. The data were analyzed using ANOVA. The result reveals that the interior environment factor has a positive and significant effect on the goal alignment of civil servants given that  $\beta=0.527$  and  $p\text{-value}<0.05$ . Visual distraction has a positive and significant effect on the social recognition of civil servants given that  $\beta=0.4429$  and  $p\text{-value}<0.05$ . we concluded that a conducting working environment is helpful increasing civil servants' level of performance in the ministry. We recommended that government should initiate continuous training programs for line top bosses on developing a conducive working environment in the ministry.

**Keywords:** Conducive Work Environment; Performance; Civil Servants

**1. Introduction**

It goes without saying that performance cannot be judged without the workers putting in the effort, regardless of whether or not the work atmosphere is suitable. In an article titled "Civil Service Administration and Effective Service Delivery for Development," Olugbenga Faseluka claims that the Civil Service is the primary means through which the government implements and administers public policies and programs. This means that implementing government policies and initiatives that benefit the public would be impossible without the Civil Service's workforce of Civil Servants. The Civil Service is the heart of government, as it is the institution in charge of formulating and implementing government policies and programs on a systemic level. As a result, the success or failure of government policies and initiatives is mainly determined by the Civil Service's capacity to accurately perceive, internalize, and implement them. This explains why the Civil Service is sometimes referred to as the government's "cardinal pivot" for development endeavors.

Despite the civil service's critical role, there has been widespread unhappiness with job attitude and performance among public servants. Work-related challenges have been recognized as the source of 86 percent of performance issues. Before the advent of the central secretariat, most public offices across the country, including Delta State, were in poor condition and lacked basic work tools such as computers, office furniture, paper, pen, pin, and stapler, among other

things, as well as poorly ventilated offices, epileptic lighting systems, excessive noise (noise pollution), and rodent-infested offices.

It is now necessary to pay close attention to the enhancement of work environments in relation to employee attitudes as essential performance elements. This begs the question of what the government has done, is doing, or should do to create a favorable working climate. It also begs the question of whether or not the terms of employment in terms of compensation and other fringe perks are met. Only by answering these questions will a paradigm shift from the norm of the Civil Service, which is often linked with low performance, be erased.

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The gesture made lately by the Okowa-led administration in Delta State, South-South Nigeria, is an important example to be seen and a substantial move to solve the performance challenge. In order to establish a suitable working atmosphere, the administration developed and inaugurated the Prof. Chike Edozien Secretariat, a multi-billion-dollar ultra-modern state central secretariat in Asaba, Delta State's capital. The phrase "workplace" or "working environment" refers to the working conditions in which an individual is employed. The ill building syndrome is generally linked to the workplace environment, which is sometimes caused by insufficient ventilation or off-gassing of chemicals employed during construction.

Physical circumstances, such as office ventilation systems, and equipment, such as computers and printers, are included in this assessment. Employee performance was significantly influenced by the physical office environment.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Structures, furnishings, layout, surroundings, and the physical state in which workers perform their daily tasks are all part of the work environment. It has a significant impact on employee performance. As a result, individuals who work in a good environment put up more effort to succeed, resulting in higher productivity, than those who work in an unhealthy or poor work environment, which exposes them to discomfort, injuries, insecurity, job discontent, ultimately lowering the outcome. These viewpoints emphasize the relevance of a Conducive Work Environment as a significant component that influences workers' perceptions and behaviours (for this study, Civil Servants) as well as their performance.

### **Objective of the Study**

The study's main objective is the impact of a Conducive Work Environment on the Performance of Civil Servants - A Case Study of Delta State Ministry of Information. The specific objectives are;

- i. To examine the effect Interior-Environment Factors on goal alignment of Civil Servants
- ii. To investigate the effect of visual distraction on the Social Recognition of Civil Servants

### **Statement of the Hypotheses**

- i. Interior-Environment Factors have no significant effect on goal alignment of Civil Servants.
- ii. Visual distraction has no significant effect on the Social Recognition of Civil Servants

## **2. Review of Related Literature**

### **2.1 Conceptual Review**

#### **Working Environment**

The word "work environment" is used to describe the overall settings in which employees operate (Irma and Setyo, 2020). Physical conditions such as workplace temperature, equipment/instruments, computers, work processes or procedures, and so on make up the work environment. According to Olugbenga (2015), the nature of the building has an impact on the work atmosphere. Insufficient building syndrome can also be caused by poor ventilation or off-gassing of chemicals used during construction, as well as the accumulation of molds and mildew. The work environment is artificial, and he uses it to his advantage. Wrongful manipulation endangers people's performance and productivity by making the setting dangerous.

Riyanto, (2019) argues that a work environment is a place and the surrounding conditions where employees perform routine work. The work environment is an overall supporting aspect of both company facilities and infrastructure whose conditions affect employees in carrying out their work. Frian and Fransiska (2018) go on to say that the work environment is made up of all the factors that surround employees that must be dealt with and that act as triggers for the quality of their job. According to Bushiri (2014), quotations from Seyo Riyanto (2017), the work environment, which is split into physical and nonphysical work environments, is one of the variables that influences the process of employee performance development.

#### **Performance**

Workers' performance refers to how they behave in the workplace and how successfully they carry out their responsibilities (Thompson, 2019). Standard attitudes such as timeliness, ability to take on difficulties, work delivery, efficiency, fulfilling organizational targets and goals, compliance with basic standards and ethics, ability to work under pressure and extra hours, and so on could be used to assess the behavior. The environment and attitude influence whether employees of the ministry's staff perform optimally or poorly in carrying out their jobs.

Employee performance will improve to its maximum potential if the employee is comfortable in his working environment and has access to suitable office facilities. In support of this viewpoint, Ishmael (1999) quotes Pauline

Rennie Peyton (2003), who claims that a pleasant work environment is a conducive atmosphere where people can optimize their potential to meet organizational goals.

Experts have found that the work environment, both in terms of facilities and infrastructure, as well as the interaction between employees and business culture, has a significant impact on employee performance (Anazodo and Okoye, 2012).

Employees will operate more effectively in a favorable work environment because they will feel at ease and supported by the organization. Employees' tension and boredom at work might be reduced by this relaxing mood. A conducive work environment is considered highly vital to be considered by the company in order for employees' performance to achieve the optimal point as desired by the firm in accomplishing performance and goals that are targeted by the organization (Ipinlaiye, 2001).

It's critical to keep everyone oriented toward your collective goals, or company-wide objectives, once teams and individuals have gotten into the practice of creating goals. This is where performance management's goal alignment feature comes into play. Individual, team, and corporate goals should be defined, tracked, and completed with ease using your performance management system (Thompson, 2019). This gives individuals a better idea of how each set of goals connects to the next, ensuring improved clarity and alignment. The process of giving employees the skills to build meaningful relationships with one another is known as social recognition, or simply "recognition."

### **Interior-Environment Factors**

There is also a great deal of care for the workers' and employees' well-being, which is closely tied to their working environment. On a similar note, most workers work long hours in the office building, thus having a decent working environment is critical to ensuring that it does not affect and influence their wellness and lead to poor work performance and productivity. On the other hand, it was determined that an open-plan workplace has the most noise and sound disruption, whether it is caused by employees chatting or noise from the environment, which has an impact on both wellness and performance (Mohd et al, 2015).

### **Visual Distraction**

Visual distractions and physical privacy, in addition to noise and auditory considerations, are important factors to consider while creating the workplace environment. Visual distraction and acoustic insulation are said to have an impact on employee productivity and well-being (Ismail, N.A., 2015). Visual distraction from lighting effects, background vocals, and poor lighting conditions, on the other hand, is known to affect workplace performance. It is suggested that two factors, speech, and visual privacy, are affected by the height of the working partitions or cubicles and that both factors can be determined by the height of the working partitions or cubicles. That the visual features of lighting and daylight design should be considered.

Because visual comfort is multi-dimensional, light and sunlight glare must be regulated, and contrast patterns should be moderated. The open plan design is also seen to be a possible source of visual issues. Although an open plan system was established to improve collaboration, it also produces distraction when compared to a traditional office setting (Ismail 2015).

### **Civil Service**

Nations all around the world are fighting to improve their lives through excellent governance and a responsible civil service for effective and efficient service delivery. Nigeria is one of these countries (Anazodo and Okoye, 2012). Anywhere in the world, the Civil Service plays a critical role in implementing government policies and activities. Even after many reforms and restructurings, the performance of the civil service in most developing nations in general, and Nigeria in particular, falls far short of expectations in carrying out its tasks.

One of the many definitions of the Civil Service is "the body of men and women engaged by the Federal and State governments in a civil capacity and non-political career basis principally to render and faithfully give effect to their decisions and implementation" (Ipinlaiye, 2001). A civil servant, on the other hand, is a government employee who works for a government department or agency on public-sector projects. Civil servants work for the federal and state governments and report to them, not to a political party (Wikipedia).

## 2.2 Theoretical Review

Many theories are advanced to clarify the link between work environment and employee performance. The study is grounded on two theories and they are the two-factor Theory and also the Affective Events Theory.

### The Two Factor Theory

Herzberg proposed the two-factor theory in 1959. Motivation and hygiene variables, according to Herzberg, are two sets of characteristics that influence employees' attitudes and levels of performance. He said that motivation factors are internal variables that may promote employee job happiness, whereas hygiene factors are external aspects that help prevent employee dissatisfaction. The idea is that the environment in which a job is performed has an impact on employee performance. Internal job aspects are important driving elements for workers, according to Herzberg's theory. Workers require time to plan their operations and evaluate their work, according to him. The idea's content has been universally regarded as useful in pushing employees to provide their best in the workplace.

### Affective Events Theory (AET) or Emotive Events Theory

Howard M. Weiss and Russel Cropanzano proposed the hypothesis in 1996. Employees' internal influences and their reactions to situations that occur in their work environment that affect their performance, structure, commitment, and job happiness are explained by the theory of the emotive event. It claims that both good and negative emotional situations at work have a significant psychological impact on workers' job satisfaction. This suggests that the worker's behavior reflects emotional responses triggered by the work environment. They claim that AET is limited to events and measures that occur within the organization, based on empirical observation and theory. It means that positive and negative events or things that happen at work have an effect on the well-being of staff and therefore affect their performances.

## 2.3 Empirical Review

Abdul and Tahir (2015) examined the impact of working environment on employee's productivity: a case study of banks and insurance companies in Pakistan. The primary goal of their research is to determine the impact of the workplace on employee productivity. Organizations such as banks and insurance companies were chosen to perform the research. To obtain feedback from the target audience, a closed-ended questionnaire was created, and several statistical approaches were employed to draw results from the collected data. It was discovered that factors such as supervisor support, coworker relationships, training and development, appealing and quick incentives and recognition plans, and an adequate workload at the workplace all contribute to the development of a working environment that has a positive impact on an employee's level of productivity in the workplace.

Christian (2015) investigated the effects of the work environment on employee productivity in government organizations in Obuasi Municipality. The staff of the Obuasi Municipal Assembly were given 100 surveys. A 78 percent response rate was achieved. Multiple regression and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data collected from the employees. The productivity of the Municipal Assembly was determined to be statistically significant for each of the components that form the work environment.

Chika and Dominic (2017) investigated the effect of the work environment on employee productivity using Edo City Transport Service. The goal was to see if the nature of the workplace contributed to low productivity, absenteeism, or tardiness among employees. According to the findings, a positive work atmosphere might help boost employee morale and productivity. Employees will experience a feeling of belonging if the office is clean, quiet, well-organized, well-lit, and ventilated. This will motivate them to work efficiently and productively.

Hope et al. (2018) examined the nature of the relationship that exists between the physical working environment and employee performance in selected Brewing Firms in Anambra State. The work was based on the philosophy of human relations. The study used a survey research method. The study's population was 550 people, and the sample size was 233. The sample size was calculated using the Taro Yamane formula, and the questionnaire was distributed using Bowley's proportion allocation formula. The hypotheses were tested using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation statistics. In the companies studied, there was a significant link between ergonomics and job satisfaction, according to the findings. According to the study, equipment and machinery should be designed to suit the workers,

who should be manning them by the management of the focused enterprises, and they should also take employee health into account when placing machinery, as this would reduce worker hazards and error rates.

### 3. Methodology

A descriptive method was utilized in the study, which was based on a sample survey. Because the survey approach allows the researcher to add as many variables as they wish, it was chosen. Questionnaires and interviews were used to gather the primary data for the study.

The test-retest method was used to assess the instrument's reliability. This will be performed by distributing 10 copies of the prepared questionnaire to the study's sample and then redistributing the identical questionnaire to the respondents after a certain amount of time has passed. The group's responsibilities were consistent after the exercise. Cronbach's Alpha was utilized to measure the consistency of the reliability. The overall grade was 0.788. To enable descriptive statistics analysis, the questionnaire responses were classified and entered into the SPSS software. Data were collected, coded, sorted into frequencies, and put into tables for ease of reference. To evaluate the hypotheses, the data were examined using ANOVA and student t-tests as statistical tools. The Delta State Ministry of Information was the subject of the investigation. Two thousand six hundred and fifty civil personnel (2650) were included in the study. The study employed Freund and William's statistic formula to find the appropriate sample size.

### Model Specification

The SEM framework is used to transform several driving behavior indicators into latent variables and explore interrelations between goal alignment of a civil servant, social recognition of civil servant, interior environment factor, and visual display.

We construct three latent variables, i.e., interior environment factor and visual distraction. The model parameters include coefficient and p-values of explanatory variables which aims to define the significance of the variables about the performance of civil servants.

The econometric model for the SEM is specified in equations (1 & 2)

$$GACS_1 = \alpha + \alpha_1(IEF) + \mu_{i1} \dots \dots \dots (1); \quad SRCS_1 = \alpha\alpha_1(VD) + \mu_{i1} \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

Where:

- GACS = Goal alignment of civil servants,
- SRCS = Social recognition of civil servants,
- IEF = Interior environment factor,
- VD = Visual distraction,

The measurement equations concerning the above construct equations are defined below.

$$\begin{aligned} &ief_{1i} = f_1ief_i + w_1; & ief_{2i} = f_2ief_i + w_2; & ief_{3i} = f_3ief_i + w_3; \\ &ief_{4i} = f_4ief_i + w_4; & srCS_{1i} = f_5srCS_i + w_5; & srCS_{2i} = f_6srCS_i + w_6; \\ &srCS_{3i} = f_7srCS_i + w_8; & srCS_{4i} = f_8srCS_i + w_9; & gacs_{1i} = f_9gacs_i + w_{10}; \\ &gacs_{2i} = f_{10}gacs_i + w_{11}; & gacs_{3i} = f_{11}gacs_i + w_{12}; & gacs_{4i} = f_{12}gacs_i + w_{13}; \\ &vd_{1i} = f_{13}vd_i + w_{14}; & vd_{2i} = f_{14}vd_i + w_{15}; & vd_{3i} = f_{15}vd_i + w_{16}; \\ & & & andvd_{4i} = f_{16}vd_i + w_{17}; \end{aligned}$$

Where =  $f_1, \dots, f_{16}$   
 are the factor score or loadings and  $ief_1, \dots, vd_4$  are the instruments or structured questionnaires?

#### 4. Analysis of Data and Results

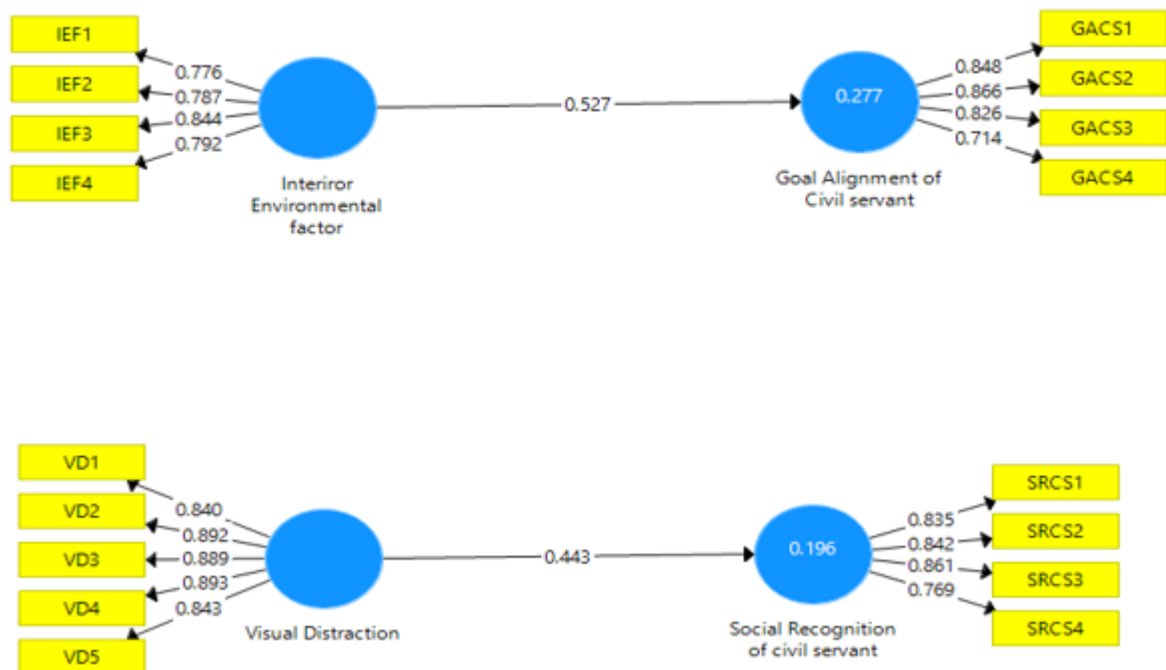
For this study I examined the data using PLS-SEM to assess the effects of institutional social capital on the sustainable performance of microfinance banks in Nigeria. We report results using a level of significance at  $p < .05$ .

**Table 3.1.1: Construct Validity and Reliability**

	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>rho_A</i>	<i>Composite Reliability</i>	<i>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</i>
<b>Interior environment factor</b>	0.813	0.814	0.877	0.665
<b>Goal Alignment of civil servant</b>	0.831	0.842	0.888	0.640
<b>Social Recognition of civil servant</b>	0.848	0.870	0.897	0.684
<b>Visual distraction</b>	0.921	0.922	0.941	0.760

In developing the study variable, several important measures were followed to construct validity and reliability, and content validity. For content validity, different operational was evaluated by studying the existing literature and measurement used that contains multiple items. Both the confirmatory and exploratory analyses confirm the factorability of the variables. Figure 1 represents the factor loading of individual items. All the items in the model exceeded the suggested loading of 0.70. All the constructs are shown in table 3.1.1 that none of the variable composite reliability is less than 0.70 which is above the accepted level. To ensure the convergent validity, the average variance extracted was also checked and showed all variables exceeded the recommended value of 0.50. So, all the variables confirm content validity and reliability.

**The relationship between Interior environment factor and goal alignment of the civil servant with visual distraction and social recognition of civil servant (A case study of Delta State ministry of information)**



**Fig 1: Measurement model**

Figure 1 shows the factor loading of individual items and confirms the confirmatory factor analysis. To evaluate the discriminant validity of the 4-variables used in the study, Heterotrait-and Monotrait (HTMT) and Fornell Cornell analyses were executed.



**Table 3.1.2: Discriminant Validity (HTMT)**

	<i>Interior environment factor</i>	<i>Goal alignment of civil servant</i>	<i>Social recognition of civil servant</i>	<i>Visual distraction</i>
<b>Interior environment factor</b>				
<b>Goal alignment of civil servant</b>	<b>0.633</b>			
<b>Social recognition of civil servant</b>	<b>0.521</b>	<b>0.742</b>		
<b>Visual distraction</b>	<b>0.550</b>	<b>0.580</b>	<b>0.486</b>	

**Table 3.1.3: Fornell-Larcker Criterion**

	<i>Interior environment factor</i>	<i>Goal alignment of civil servant</i>	<i>Social recognition of civil servant</i>	<i>Visual distraction</i>
<b>Interior environment factor</b>	<b>0.800</b>			
<b>Goal alignment of civil servant</b>	0.527	<b>0.816</b>		
<b>Social recognition of civil servant</b>	0.312	0.521	<b>0.827</b>	
<b>Visual distraction</b>	0.225	0.452	0.443	<b>0.872</b>

\*\*\*[Note: values in italic/bold represent the square root of AVE] \*\*\*

As part of the measurement model evaluation, no item was removed from the analysis because of low factor loadings (<0.600) (Grefen and Straub, 2005). To test the reliability of the content, the study used Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability (CR). All the Composite reliability was higher than the recommended value of 0.7 (Wasko and Faraj, 2005). Cronbach’s alpha of each construct exceeded the 0.7 thresholds. Convergence validity was accepted because the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was over 0.5. The results for reliability and validity along with the factor loadings for the items are presented in Table 3.1.4. Discriminant validity was assessed by the Fornell-Larcker criterion and in table 3.1.3, the table shows that the square root of AVE for the construct was greater than the inter-construct correlation. Discriminant validity was also assessed by the heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlation (Henseler et al., 2015), with values below the threshold of 0.90. Hence, discriminant validity is established in Table 3.1.2.

**Table 3.1.4: Factor Loadings, Reliability, and Validity**

	<i>Loadings</i>	<i>Cronbach’s Alpha</i>	<i>Composite Reliability</i>	<i>Average variance Extracted</i>
<i>IEF1</i>	0.776			
<i>IEF2</i>	0.787	0.813	0.814	0.665
<i>IEF3</i>	0.844			
<i>IEF4</i>	0.792			
<i>SRCS1</i>	0.835			
<i>SRCS2</i>	0.842	0.848	0.870	0.684
<i>SRCS3</i>	0.861			
<i>SRCS4</i>	0.761			
<i>GACS1</i>	0.848			
<i>GACS2</i>	0.866	0.831	0.842	0.640
<i>GACS3</i>	0.826			
<i>GACS4</i>	0.714			
<i>VD1</i>	0.840			
<i>VD2</i>	0.892	0.921	0.922	0.760
<i>VD3</i>	0.889			
<i>VD4</i>	0.893			
<i>VD5</i>	0.843			

### 3.2 Summary of Structural Model

The structural model reflects the paths hypothesized in the research framework. A structural model is assessed based on the  $R^2$ , and the significance of paths. The goodness of the model is determined by the strength of each structural path determined by the  $R^2$  value for the dependent variable (Briones Penalver et al., 2018), the value for  $R^2$  should be equal to or over 0.1 (Falk & Miller, 1992). The results in Table 3 show that the three  $R^2$  values (CSP) are over 0.1. Hence, the predictive capability is established. The observed  $R^2$  of **(0.512, 0.675)** was recorded for goal alignment of a civil servant and social recognition of a civil servant. This indicates that 51.2% of the variation in goal alignment of a civil servant is caused by the predictor variable known as the interior environment factor while 67.5% of the variation in social recognition of civil servant is caused by the explanatory variable known as a visual distraction. In addition, the model fit was assessed using SRMR. The SRMR was 0.0003 and 0.0011 for the two models, this is below the required value of 0.10 indicating the acceptability of model fit (Hair et al 2016).

**Table 3.2.1: Hypotheses Testing Results**

<i>Hypothesis</i>		<i>Std.Dev</i>	<i>T Statistic</i>	<i>P- Values</i>	<i>2.5%</i>	<i>97.5%</i>
<i>H<sub>01</sub></i>	Interior environment factor -> Goal alignment of civil servant	0.046	11.478	0.000	0.436	0.619
<i>H<sub>02</sub></i>	Physical workplace environment -> Social Recognition of civil servant	0.0502	8.8312	0.000	0.3479	0.5432

Hypotheses were tested to ascertain the significance of the relationship. Hypothesis evaluates whether the independent variable (Interior environment factor, visual distraction), has a significant impact on goal alignment of civil servants (GACS) and social recognition of civil servants respectively (SRCS). The results revealed that **H<sub>01</sub> and H<sub>02</sub>** have a statistically significant impact on the Goal alignment of the civil servant and social recognition of civil servants respectively as shown in table 3.2.1. The interior environment factor has a positive and significant effect on the goal alignment of civil servants given that beta=0.527 and p-value<0.05. Visual distraction has a positive and significant effect on the social recognition of civil servants given that beta=0.4429 and p-value<0.05.

### 5. Conclusion

Based on the finding, we concluded that conducting a working environment is helpful increasing civil servants' level of performance in the ministry with the following factor; Interior environment factor has a positive and significant effect on the goal alignment of civil servants and visual distraction also has a positive and significant effect on the social recognition of civil servant.

### 6. Recommendation

The following recommendation was made based on the findings

- i. The government must initiate continuous training programs for line top bosses on developing a conducive working environment in the ministry.
- ii. Efforts must be made to keep civil servants always inspired. For this motive, the government must offer good incentives and social recognition plans to achieve the organization's goals.



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