



# Analysis of the Causes and Consequences of Weak Interaction Between Planning, Management and Employee Performance in Public Institutions

<sup>1</sup>Bassey Ekpenyong Anam, <sup>2</sup>Okokon Ekpenyong Ita & <sup>3</sup>Emmanuel Peter Isek

<sup>1,2&3</sup>Institute of Public Policy and Administration,  
University of Calabar, Calabar

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## Abstract

Effective interaction between planning and management is essential for improved employee performance, organisational efficiency, and successful public service delivery. However, weak coordination between these functions continues to undermine performance outcomes in public institutions, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria. This study examines the causes and consequences of weak interaction between planning, management, and employee performance in public institutions. The study adopts a qualitative research design and relies primarily on secondary data obtained from textbooks, peer-reviewed journal articles, government publications, and relevant policy documents in public administration and human resource management. Thematic analysis was used to identify patterns relating to institutional coordination, administrative processes, and workforce performance outcomes. Findings reveal that structural fragmentation, poor communication systems, bureaucratic rigidity, political interference, weak leadership, inadequate capacity building, and limited use of management information systems are major factors responsible for weak interaction. The study further shows that these deficiencies negatively affect employee performance, leading to poor motivation, low productivity, ineffective service delivery, project delays, weak accountability, and reduced public trust in government institutions. The study concludes that strengthening coordination mechanisms, improving communication systems, investing in capacity building, and integrating technology into planning and management processes are essential for enhancing employee performance and institutional effectiveness in the public sector.

**Keywords:** *Planning, Management, Employee performance, Public institutions, Coordination, Human resource management, Public sector performance*

*Corresponding Author:* Bassey Ekpenyong Anam

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## **Background to the Study**

Public institutions are established to deliver efficient services, implement government policies, and promote socio-economic development. Central to achieving these objectives is the effective interaction between planning and management functions. Planning provides the strategic direction and allocation of resources, while management ensures implementation, coordination, and performance monitoring. When both functions operate in harmony, public institutions are better positioned to achieve high levels of employee performance and service delivery efficiency. However, in many developing countries, including Nigeria, there exists a persistent disconnect between planning and management processes. This disconnect often manifests in policy implementation gaps, inefficient resource utilisation, and weak institutional performance. According to the World Bank (2022), many public sector inefficiencies in developing economies are linked to poor coordination between planning frameworks and administrative execution structures.

In Nigeria, public institutions frequently experience delays in project execution, duplication of responsibilities, and weak accountability systems due to fragmentation between planning units and operational management structures (Anam, 2013). This situation raises concerns about the effectiveness of public administration systems in translating plans into measurable outcomes. The problem is further compounded by political interference, bureaucratic bottlenecks, and inadequate technological integration in management systems. As a result, employee performance is negatively affected, leading to low productivity, reduced motivation, and poor service delivery outcomes.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of this study is to examine the causes and consequences of weak interaction between planning, management, and employee performance in public institutions.

Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Identify the causes of weak coordination between planning and management in public institutions;
2. Examine how weak interaction affects employee performance in public institutions;
3. Assess the institutional and administrative consequences of poor planning-management coordination;
4. Explore the role of leadership, communication systems, and technology in public sector coordination; and
5. Propose strategies for improving integration between planning and management functions.

## **Literature Review**

### **Conceptual Review: Planning, Management, and Employee Performance**

Planning in public administration refers to a systematic and deliberate process of defining organisational objectives, identifying priorities, determining strategies, and allocating resources to achieve set goals. It is essentially a forward-looking function that provides direction for public institutions and ensures that policies are guided by clear targets, timelines,

and expected outcomes. In public sector contexts, planning also involves policy formulation, budgeting frameworks, and development programming, all of which shape institutional performance outcomes. Management, on the other hand, is concerned with the practical execution of plans through the organisation, coordination, supervision, and control of human, financial, and material resources. It ensures that planned objectives are translated into actionable tasks and that institutional processes operate efficiently and effectively. According to classical management theory, management serves as the bridge between planning and operational outcomes, ensuring that strategic intentions are converted into measurable results.

Employee performance refers to the degree of efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity with which employees execute assigned responsibilities within an organisation. It reflects how well workers meet job expectations in terms of quality, timeliness, and output. Armstrong (2020) argues that employee performance is shaped by several interrelated factors, including clarity of job roles, availability of resources, leadership quality, motivation systems, organisational structure, and feedback mechanisms (Anam 2013). In this context, the interaction between planning and management becomes critical because planning defines *what should be done*, while management determines *how it should be done*. When both functions are well integrated, employee performance improves due to clear direction, adequate resource allocation, and effective supervision. Conversely, weak interaction creates ambiguity, inefficiency, and poor performance outcomes in public institutions.

### **Causes of Weak Interaction Between Planning and Management**

Existing literature identifies several structural, administrative, and behavioural factors responsible for weak coordination between planning and management in public institutions.

1. One major factor is structural fragmentation, where planning units and implementation departments operate as separate entities with limited coordination. This separation often leads to misalignment between policy formulation and execution, resulting in inconsistent priorities and inefficiencies (Olowu, 2002). In many public institutions, planning departments design policies without adequate input from operational managers, thereby creating implementation gaps.
2. Another critical factor is bureaucratic rigidity, which is characterized by excessive rules, hierarchical procedures, and slow decision-making processes. Bureaucratic systems often reduce flexibility and delay implementation, making it difficult for managers to adapt plans to emerging realities.
3. Political interference also plays a significant role in weakening planning-management interaction. In many developing countries, including Nigeria, political actors influence planning priorities, budget allocations, and project selection, sometimes overriding technical and professional considerations. Adebayo (2021) notes that such interference distorts planning outcomes and reduces administrative efficiency.
4. Furthermore, poor communication systems and weak interdepartmental coordination contribute significantly to institutional inefficiency. Inadequate information flow between planning and management units leads to misunderstandings, duplication of efforts, and delayed decision-making.
5. Another important factor is inadequate capacity building and weak leadership, which

limits the ability of managers to interpret plans effectively and translate them into operational outcomes. Leadership deficiencies also affect coordination, motivation, and performance monitoring.

6. Finally, the limited adoption of Management Information Systems (MIS) and digital planning tools reduces the capacity for real-time monitoring, evaluation, and feedback. Without technological integration, institutions struggle to track performance indicators and adjust implementation strategies effectively.

### **Consequences for Employee Performance**

Weak interaction between planning and management has far-reaching consequences for employee performance in public institutions, particularly in terms of motivation, productivity, and service delivery efficiency. According to Ijewereme (2023), unclear planning structures and poor coordination significantly reduce employee motivation and productivity in the public sector. When employees receive inconsistent or conflicting directives, they experience confusion regarding job roles, expectations, and performance standards. This lack of clarity weakens commitment and reduces efficiency (Anam, 2013).

Olowu (2002) further argues that institutional inefficiencies arising from weak coordination led to delays in service delivery, poor accountability mechanisms, and ineffective public service outcomes. In such environments, employees are often unable to perform optimally due to lack of clear guidance and inadequate supervisory systems.

In addition to this, several operational consequences can be identified:

1. Duplication of tasks and wastage of resources: Poor coordination often leads to multiple units performing similar functions without synergy, increasing inefficiency and cost.
2. Delays in project execution: Weak alignment between planning schedules and management action slows down implementation timelines.
3. Reduced organisational efficiency: Institutions fail to achieve set targets due to misalignment of roles and responsibilities.
4. Weak performance monitoring systems: Inadequate feedback mechanisms make it difficult to assess employee output effectively.
5. Declining public trust in government institutions: Poor service delivery resulting from internal inefficiencies reduces citizens' confidence in public institutions.

The literature demonstrates that weak interaction between planning and management creates a chain reaction that begins with poor coordination and ultimately manifests in low employee performance and institutional inefficiency.

### **Empirical Discourse**

Empirical literature provides strong evidence that weak interaction between planning and management is a persistent constraint to public sector performance, particularly in developing economies. The World Bank (2022) reports that inefficiencies in public sector planning and implementation processes remain one of the major bottlenecks to development effectiveness in

Sub-Saharan Africa. These inefficiencies are often reflected in budget under-execution, delayed project completion, and weak alignment between national development plans and sectoral implementation strategies. The report further notes that countries with fragmented planning and execution structures tend to experience lower service delivery outcomes and reduced value for money in public investments.

Similarly, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2021) emphasizes that weak coordination between planning institutions and administrative/implementation systems significantly undermines public sector performance. According to UNDP findings, where planning agencies operate in isolation from management structures, policies tend to remain “on paper,” with limited translation into tangible service delivery outcomes. This gap between formulation and execution contributes to institutional inefficiency, reduces accountability, and declined public trust in government institutions (Anam, 2025).

In the Nigerian context, empirical studies and policy reports consistently show that weak integration between planning agencies and implementing Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) contributes to widespread project inefficiency. Many public sector projects experience delays, cost overruns, or outright abandonment due to poor coordination between budget planning units and implementing departments. For example, infrastructure and social development projects are often initiated without adequate synchronization between capital budgeting frameworks and operational management capacity, leading to implementation bottlenecks (Anam, 2025).

Furthermore, administrative reviews in Nigeria indicate that overlapping responsibilities between planning commissions, budget offices, and line ministries often result in duplication of functions and weak accountability structures. This institutional fragmentation reduces efficiency and negatively affects employee performance, as workers operate under unclear directives, inconsistent planning targets, and inadequate resource allocation systems. The empirical evidence strongly supports the view that weak interaction between planning and management is not merely a theoretical concern but a practical governance challenge that significantly undermines employee performance, institutional efficiency, and development outcomes in Nigeria and similar developing economies.

### **Discussion from Literature**

The literature reviewed clearly indicates that weak interaction between planning and management is a systemic governance problem rooted in institutional design, administrative culture, and structural inefficiencies within public institutions. Across both theoretical and empirical studies, there is strong consensus that when planning and execution functions are separated without effective coordination mechanisms, institutional performance declines significantly. From a systems theory perspective, public institutions function as interdependent units where inputs (planning) must align with processes (management) to produce desired outputs (employee performance and service delivery) (Anam, 2024). However, in many developing country contexts, including Nigeria, this integration is weak, leading to fragmentation and inefficiency.

The analysis shows that when planning is disconnected from implementation structures, employees often operate without clear direction, resulting in role ambiguity, duplication of tasks, and reduced accountability. This finding aligns with Olowu (2002), who argues that fragmented administrative systems in African public sectors weaken coherence in policy execution and reduce institutional effectiveness (Anam, 2024). Furthermore, bureaucratic bottlenecks significantly slow down decision-making processes. Excessive hierarchical approval systems, rigid administrative procedures, and over-centralization create delays that affect timely execution of plans. These delays directly impact on employee performance, as workers are unable to meet performance targets due to systemic constraints rather than individual inefficiency.

Political interference also emerges as a major destabilizing factor. The literature shows that when political considerations override technical planning decisions, institutional priorities become distorted, resource allocation becomes inefficient, and professionalism in public administration is weakened (Adebayo, 2021). This often results in misaligned projects, inconsistent policy direction, and reduced motivation among employees who perceive decision-making processes as unfair or non-merit based. In addition, weak communication systems and poor interdepartmental coordination further exacerbate inefficiencies (Anam, 2024). Without effective information flow between planning units and management structures, implementation gaps widen, leading to duplication of effort and inconsistent policy interpretation across departments.

A significant emerging insight from literature is the growing importance of technology and digital governance systems in bridging coordination gaps. Institutions that adopt Management Information Systems (MIS), e-governance platforms, and integrated planning software demonstrate improved alignment between planning and execution. These systems enhance transparency, real-time monitoring, and performance tracking, which collectively improve employee productivity and accountability (Anam, 2025). The literature strongly suggests that improving coordination between planning and management is not merely an administrative adjustment but a fundamental governance reform necessary for enhancing productivity, institutional coherence, and employee performance in public institutions.

## **Conclusion**

This study examined the causes and consequences of weak interaction between planning, management, and employee performance in public institutions. The study concludes that weak coordination between planning and management is a critical structural weakness that significantly undermines employee performance and institutional effectiveness. The major factors responsible for this problem include structural fragmentation of administrative units, bureaucratic inefficiencies, weak communication systems, limited technological integration, and political interference in technical decision-making processes. These factors collectively disrupt the flow of information, weaken implementation capacity, and reduce the efficiency of public service delivery systems.

Consequently, these institutional weaknesses manifest low employee productivity, unclear job expectations, delayed project execution, weak accountability mechanisms, and declining public trust in government institutions. The study therefore establishes that employee performance in public institutions is not solely determined by individual effort but is strongly influenced by the quality of interaction between planning and management systems. Strengthening integration between planning and management is therefore essential for improving institutional performance and ensuring effective public service delivery in Nigeria and similar developing contexts.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to improve coordination between planning and management and enhance employee performance in public institutions:

1. **Integration of Planning and Management Functions:** Public institutions should structurally integrate planning and management units to ensure seamless coordination between policy formulation and implementation processes.
2. **Strengthening Communication Systems:** Government should develop efficient internal communication frameworks that promote timely information sharing and reduce delays in decision-making across departments.
3. **Capacity Building and Professional Development:** Regular training programs should be implemented for planners, managers, and administrative staff to improve coordination skills, technical competence, and policy implementation capacity.
4. **Reduction of Political Interference:** Political interference in technical planning and administrative decision-making should be minimized to promote professionalism, meritocracy, and evidence-based governance.
5. **Adoption of Digital Management Information Systems (MIS):** Public institutions should invest in digital tools and integrated management systems to improve monitoring, evaluation, transparency, and real-time performance tracking.
6. **Strengthening Performance Accountability Frameworks:** Clear and enforceable performance evaluation systems should be implemented to enhance accountability and improve employee productivity across public institutions.
7. **Organisational Restructuring:** Government agencies should review and restructure administrative systems to reduce duplication of functions, eliminate fragmentation, and improve operational efficiency.

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