

The Impact of Job Satisfaction on Workers' Performance in University of Abuja, Nigeria.

JOSEPH DANKARO PHD¹, SAMSON GODSWILL ESEMA PHD²

^{1,2}*Department of Sociology and Anthropology. Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Abuja*

Abstract- In Nigeria, the study of job satisfaction has been a recurring issue in Organizational Studies due to its linkages with staff performance and productivity as well as commitment to the organizations, especially universities where inadequate remuneration, heavy workload, infrastructural inadequacies and limited career development are some of the major concerns related to staff morale and effectiveness in universities. This study focused on the study of the influence of Job satisfaction on the performance of workers of the University of Abuja, Nigeria. The study used mixed method research design approach which included quantitative and qualitative methods to get a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Structured questionnaires were used to gather primary data from academic and non-academic staff while in-depth interviews were used to capture workers' lived experiences and perceptions. Both qualitative data (direct reported speech) and quantitative data (simple percentage) were used in the analysis to identify the themes that emerged and the staff stories. The study indicated that important aspects of job satisfaction like salary, promotion possibilities, working environment, management style and interpersonal relations have significant effect on the efficiency, timeliness, commitment and service delivery of workers. The qualitative evidence also confirmed that the poor satisfaction can lead to low morale, poor productivity, absenteeism and poor service quality. The study has concluded that job satisfaction is one of the important factors that influence the performance of workers in the University of Abuja. It suggests that the management should focus on the welfare of the employees, transparent systems of promotion, participatory management processes and better working conditions, which would improve productivity and effectiveness of the institution.

Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Workers' Performance, University Administration, Staff Welfare

I. INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction is a well known component that affects employees' attitudes, behaviours and performance in organizations. Workers' performance in the modern organizational context, especially in knowledge-driven organizations like universities, is strongly linked to their satisfaction with several facets of their work. It is essential that universities have academic and non-academic personnel to fulfill their primary responsibilities: teaching, research and community service. Staff feel committed, creative and productive when they believe their jobs are fulfilling, fair and supportive. On the other hand, poor performance, customer service and industrial relations problems may be indicators of dissatisfaction.

Studies in recent years have illustrated that job satisfaction is a multi-dimensional phenomenon of compensation, job security, promotion opportunities, work environment, leadership style, and interpersonal relationships (Spector, 2022; Robbins & Judge, 2023). The public universities in Nigeria are characterised by complex socio-economic and administrative setting which can either facilitate or impede the satisfaction of public university workers. Some areas of concern identified in the study include the irregular promotion exercises, perceived inequities in reward systems, inadequate facilities and limited involvement of workers in decision making processes (Akanbi&Itiola, 2021; Omodan, 2022). These challenges are given more significance in the context of the strategic importance of universities in national development and human capital development.

As a federal university, the University of Abuja is a big force in Nigeria's education sector. But like other public institutions of higher learning in the country, it is being subjected to pressures of growing staff population, scarce funding and higher demands for

performance and accountability. Such environments may impose restrictions that reduce workers' job satisfaction, but they must perform at their best. It is therefore important to study the relationship between satisfaction and performance in this context, in order to create effective policies and to manage the university effectively.

The connection among job satisfaction and the performance of workers has been understood based on certain theories, such as Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Social Exchange Theory. Based on these views, organizations that satisfy the intrinsic and extrinsic needs of their employees will see these employees in turn improve their performance and loyalty (Herzberg et al., 2019; Cropanzano et al., 2022). This is supported by empirical studies conducted in recent times, which show that happy university workers are more dedicated to the objectives of the university, better teachers and efficient administrators (Onyekachi & Adeyemi, 2023).

Although there is emerging research on the job satisfaction and job performance, there is a need for institution-specific studies that reflect local context and staff perceptions. Current research uses mainly quantitative approaches and this might not be enough to capture the workers lived experiences. This study examines this gap by using a mixed method approach which looks at the influence of job satisfaction on workers' performance in the University of Abuja. The use of simple percentages and direct reported speech equates with the provision of both statistical trends and rich qualitative insights in an effort to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the issue within the Nigerian university system.

Research Questions

The study was guided by three research questions:

- i. What is the level of job satisfaction among workers at the University of Abuja?
- ii. How does job satisfaction influence workers' performance in the University of Abuja?
- iii. What specific aspects of job satisfaction most significantly affect workers' performance in the University of Abuja?

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are significant to university management, policymakers, and scholars. For management, the study provides empirical evidence to guide staff welfare policies and performance-enhancement strategies. Policymakers in the education sector may use the findings to design frameworks that promote staff satisfaction and productivity in public universities. Academically, the study contributes to the literature on job satisfaction and performance by providing institution-specific evidence from a Nigerian federal university and demonstrating the value of a mixed-method analytical approach.

Conceptual Review

Job satisfaction is an individual's subjective feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction regarding his or her job, which are based on the individual's experiences and expectations with the job. Workers' performance, however, refers to the level of effectiveness with which workers execute the duties given to them to attain the organization's goals. From a conceptual standpoint, job satisfaction can affect performance in three different ways: motivation, psychological well-being, and organizational commitment. Fairness, recognition and support are factors that motivate workers to give their best by showing discretionary behaviors that increase performance (Robbins & Judge, 2023). This relationship can be seen in the teaching effectiveness, research productivity, efficiency in administration and quality of services in a university environment.

Remuneration and Reward Systems

The payment and incentives are one of the key factors of job satisfaction, especially in public institutions such as universities. Remuneration is not only wages and salaries, but also allowances, bonuses, pensions and all other compensation provided to the employee as a reward for the work he/she performed. Today, research in the field of organizations has been directed to the importance of fair and competitive compensation in enhancing employees' feelings of worth, equity, and motivation, which consequently results in improved employee performance (Spector, 2022). In the university environment, where productivity in the cognitive sphere and administrative effectiveness are emphasized, the lack of, or delayed compensation or payment may lead to a deterioration

of employee morale and employee motivation to achieve institutional goals.

Empirical studies in developing countries recently have shown that job involvement and productivity are more likely to be high when an employee believes that his or her wages are fair in comparison to his or her effort and qualifications (Akanbi&Itiola, 2021; Oyeniran&Akindele, 2023). Conversely, low income levels have been linked to absenteeism, moonlighting and reduced effort, particularly at public universities where there is a higher prevalence of other sources of income. The expectancy theory conceptually implies that employees are motivated to put in more effort when they are confident that their efforts will lead to the achievement of desired outcomes (Vroom, 1964; Robbins & Judge, 2023). Thus, the motivational connection between input and output is diminished when the reward system is not in line with the employees' expectations.

In the Nigerian Universities, problems of stagnant salaries, delayed payment of allowances, delay in implementing negotiated wage agreement etc. have been reported as sources of dissatisfaction of university staff (Omodan, 2022). These difficulties have an impact on workers' finances, as well as their psychological affiliation with the institution. According to Herzberg et al. (2019), conceptually, remuneration can be used as both a hygiene factor and a motivator in that, if salaries are insufficient, dissatisfaction is the result, but if salaries are adequate and timely, then satisfaction is produced and this will have an indirect effect on performance. Consequently, reward/remuneration systems are a fundamental sub-theme to understand the job satisfaction of workers and their performance in the University context.

Working Conditions and Work Environment

The second sub-theme that was considered in conceptualizing job satisfaction is the working condition and the broader working environment. Working conditions include the physical conditions, availability of working tools, organization of the work, occupational safety and general comfort. It's viewed as office buildings, lecture rooms, laboratories, libraries, together with information technology facilities and administration sources in universities. A positive work climate has been found to have a positive effect on

employees' psychological health, job satisfaction and work productiveness (Demerouti et al., 2022).

Recent studies showed that workers exposed to poor facilities, overcrowding in their offices, inadequate facilities for instructional or administrative purposes often get stressed and frustrated and consequently their performance is negatively affected (Onyekachi&Adeyemi, 2023). On the other hand, the workers having favorable and supportive environment can work efficiently and enjoy their work. This can be explained with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model which posits that a combination of high job demands and low job resources is linked to burnout and low performance, while high job resources is linked to engagement and performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2018; Bakker et al., 2023).

Besides the shortage of new facilities in the public universities, the ratio of staff to students is another common issue which affects the perception of their working environment among the staff of the public universities of Nigeria. The more staff feel that management is not concerned about such conditions, the more discontent they feel and the less productive they are. The work environment is defined as a contextual factor as it can either enable or constrain employees to translate skills and motivation into performance. Thus, improving welfare is not only about the welfare of the workers, but can also be a tool to improve the performance of the company. In this sub-theme, environmental and organizational support to sustain high-level performance and job satisfaction of university workers is emphasized.

Promotion and Career Development

One of the key aspects of satisfaction is the opportunity for promotion and career development, especially in knowledge-intensive environments like universities. Career development involves providing training, mentorship and opportunities for development within the organization, while promotion is an opportunity for improvement within the organizational structure, which may include greater financial compensation, responsibilities and status. According to modern HR literature, the clear, fair and achievable career advancement opportunities are the main reasons for the employees being satisfied and productive (Noe et al., 2022).

In the University system, the most vital thing for the academic as well as non-academic employees is that promotions are made timely, opportunities for further education are present and training programs are available (Chukwueme, 2026). From the empirical evidence, perceived stagnation and perceived unmerited promotion are shown to lead to job dissatisfaction in public institutions (Adebayo & Ogunsina, 2021; Oyeniran & Akindele, 2023). According to concept of equity theory, the perception of inequity by the employees can lead to dissatisfaction, reduced effort and withdrawal attitudes and behaviours as they compare their outcome with others and their input (Adams, 1965; Robbins & Judge, 2023).

Moreover, the latest studies show that career opportunities have a positive effect on employees' perception of employability and organizational commitment, which in turn can positively affect their performance (De Vos et al, 2021). In the university context, employees whose job it is to develop research and attend conferences and workshops and develop skills are more likely to be innovative, efficient, and loyal. The concept of promotion and career development can be associated with self-motivating factors that make employees feel that the organization is committed to their career development. When these opportunities are lacking or not utilized on a regular basis, job satisfaction is lowered and the job's outcomes suffer. Hence, the theme of this sub-theme emphasizes the need for strategic career management practices and its relationship to job satisfaction and workers' performance (Chukwuemeka, Alhassan, & Kenchuks, (2025).

Leadership Style and Interpersonal Relationships

The social and relationship aspect of job satisfaction comprises interpersonal relationship and leadership style. Relationships between employees and with their supervisor are interpersonal relationships and how the manager or administrator leads, motivates and relates to employees is called leadership style. It has been demonstrated many times in modern organisations that a supportive, transparent and participative approach to leadership is a positive predictor of job satisfaction and performance (Northouse, 2022).

University environments that require collegiality and collaboration benefit from leadership practices that promote trust, communication and inclusion of workers while enhancing their morale and commitment. In particular, transformational leadership has been shown to be related to greater job satisfaction and discretionary performance behaviors, as the leader inspires employees through a powerful vision and the acknowledgment of individual contributions (Banks et al., 2022). But poor leadership (authoritarian and inconsistent) can result in dissatisfaction, conflict and disengagement.

Staff interpersonal relationships also have a significant influence on job satisfaction. Positive peer relationships provide emotional support, sharing of knowledge, and a sense of belonging to help buffer the negative effects of work stress and resources scarcity (Duffy et al., 2021). The collegial relationships at Nigerian universities are likely to buffer the dissatisfaction arising from structural problems and the positive work behaviour of the employees is likely to be in reaction to this supportive treatment in accordance with social exchange theory (Cropanzano et al., 2022). The idea of leadership and interpersonal relationship affects job satisfaction in the aspects of which they form an idea of fair, respect and organizational support for employees. Good social relations boost the likelihood of workers demonstrating commitment, co-operation and high performance.

Methodology

The research design for this study was a mixed method approach which involved both quantitative and qualitative methods. A mixed-method approach was deemed to be appropriate for combining both quantitative and qualitative data and thus getting a comprehensive and more nuanced picture of the workers' perceptions and experiences. The study population included both the academic and Non-academic staff of the University of Abuja. The sample size for this study was determined to be 250 respondents with stratified random sampling technique to ensure adequate sampling of different staff categories and departments.

Two instruments were used to gather primary data, namely: a structured questionnaire and an interview guide. The questionnaire consisted of five-point Likert scales to evaluate job satisfaction and workers' performance (salary, promotion, working environment, and leadership). Qualitative data was collected using in-depth interviews with purposive sample of staff members to obtain detailed information about the relationship between job satisfaction and performance.

Frequency distribution and simple percentage analysis were used in quantitative data analysis while thematic interpretation of direct reported speech was used in analyzing qualitative data. The ethical issues of informed consent, confidentiality and voluntary participation were adhered to throughout the research process.

Data Analysis and Presentation

This section presents the analysis of data collected from workers of the University of Abuja. The analysis combines quantitative data derived from questionnaire responses and qualitative data obtained from in-depth interviews. The quantitative data are analyzed using frequency distribution and simple percentages, while the qualitative data are analyzed using direct reported speech to provide contextual depth and explanatory insights.

What is the level of job satisfaction among workers at the University of Abuja?

Table 1: Level of Job Satisfaction among Workers

Level of Job Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very Satisfied	38	15.2
Satisfied	74	29.6
Moderately Satisfied	56	22.4
Dissatisfied	54	21.6
Very Dissatisfied	28	11.2
Total	250	100.0

Table 1 shows the general level of job satisfaction of the workers of the University of Abuja is generally moderate to low. A significant proportion (32.8%) reported being on average, or very, dissatisfied with their jobs while 44.8% said they were satisfied with

their jobs or very satisfied. The pattern of distribution indicates that while there are positive perceptions of some aspects of work, there is still considerable dissatisfaction amongst staff. The discovery is in tandem with recent research that suggests structural and administrative problems are some of the factors that limits job satisfaction among public universities in Nigeria (Onyekachi&Adeyemi, 2023; Omodan, 2022).

interview responses from one senior academic staff member who said:

I like to teach and interact with the students, but there are some problems such as delayed promotion, poor facilities etc. that make me less satisfied.

Likewise, one non-academic employee commented, *"The employment is secure, but the level of motivation is low as welfare is not taken seriously."*

Intrinsic satisfaction from the nature of work in the university is being jeopardized by extrinsic dissatisfaction, which is consistent with Herzberg's Two Factor Theory which states that there are two kinds of factors that affect job satisfaction, namely motivating and hygiene factors (Herzberg et al., 2019). How does job satisfaction influence workers' performance in the University of Abuja?

Table 2: Influence of Job Satisfaction on Workers' Performance

Perceived Influence of Job Satisfaction on Performance	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very High Influence	82	32.8
High Influence	76	30.4
Moderate Influence	54	21.6
Low Influence	26	10.4
No Influence	12	4.8
Total	250	100.0

As shown in Table 2, a combined total of 63.2% of respondents indicated that job satisfaction has a high or very high influence on their performance. Only 15.2% perceived little or no influence. This result demonstrates a strong perceived linkage between job satisfaction and performance outcomes such as commitment, punctuality, efficiency, and quality of service delivery. The finding supports organizational behavior literature which consistently establishes job

satisfaction as a key predictor of employee performance and productivity (Robbins & Judge, 2023; Spector, 2022).

One respondent remarked:

“When you feel appreciated and your efforts are recognized, you naturally want to do more for the university.” Another interviewee stated, *“Low morale affects how committed you are; sometimes people just do the bare minimum because they feel neglected.”*

These narratives reinforce the social exchange perspective, which posits that employees reciprocate favorable treatment with positive work behaviors, while dissatisfaction leads to withdrawal and reduced effort (Cropanzano et al., 2022)

What specific aspects of job satisfaction most significantly affect workers’ performance in the University of Abuja?

Table 3: Aspects of Job Satisfaction Affecting Workers’ Performance

Aspect of Job Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Salary and Allowances	78	31.2
Promotion and Career Advancement	64	25.6
Working Conditions	52	20.8
Leadership and Management Style	36	14.4
Interpersonal Relationships	20	8.0
Total	250	100.0

Table 3 reveals that salary and allowances (31.2%) and promotion and career advancement (25.6%) are the most significant aspects of job satisfaction influencing workers’ performance. Working conditions also emerged as a notable factor (20.8%), while leadership style and interpersonal relationships, though important, were perceived as less influential. This pattern reflects the realities of public sector employment in Nigeria, where economic and career-related concerns often outweigh relational factors (Akanbi&Itiola, 2021; Oyeniran&Akindele, 2023).

Interview data strongly reinforced these findings. An academic staff member stated,

“You can tolerate many things, but when promotions are delayed for years, it affects your motivation to publish and attend conferences.”

A non-academic staff respondent added,

“The salary is not enough considering the workload, and this affects how committed people are to their duties.” However, another respondent observed, *“Good relationships with colleagues help us cope, even when management policies are discouraging.”*

These responses highlight that while interpersonal relationships serve as coping mechanisms, material and career-related factors remain the most powerful determinants of performance. This is consistent with recent studies emphasizing the dominant role of extrinsic rewards and career progression in shaping employee performance in higher education institutions (Noc et al., 2022; Bakker et al., 2023).

Conclusion

Employees of the University of Abuja had a moderate level of job satisfaction, and issues concerning remuneration, promotion and working conditions were found to be a great concern. It also showed that job satisfaction has a significant and positive relationship with the performance of workers; employees who are satisfied in their work tend to be more committed, productive and service-oriented. The study also revealed that salary and allowances, promotion and career development, and good working conditions come out to be the most important of all the factors of job satisfaction that affect performance. Thus, improvement of these critical factors of employee welfare is important in boosting the employees' motivation, organizational commitment and effectiveness of the University of Abuja as a whole.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends that:

1. the University of Abuja improve remuneration and ensure timely promotion exercises to enhance staff motivation.
2. Management should also adopt participatory leadership styles that allow staff involvement in decision-making processes.
3. Improving physical working conditions and providing regular training opportunities will further enhance job satisfaction and performance. Finally, institutional mechanisms for recognition

and feedback should be strengthened to reinforce positive work behaviors.

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