

Motivation, Non-Academic Staff' Job Performance and Tertiary Education in Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper discussed the concept of motivation, non-academic staff, non-academic staff job performance and motivational strategies that can be used to improve the job performance of non-academic staff of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The paper used secondary data and the data were collected from online publications and print materials from libraries. The paper concluded that motivation is important in the realization of tertiary education goals in Nigeria and therefore tertiary institution administrators should adopt the various motivational strategies in the system. Specifically, the paper suggested the following motivational strategies; payment of salaries and allowance, provision of infrastructure facilities, promotion, effective capacity building, provision of conducive working environment, appreciation, recognition, commendation and praise, involvement of staff in decision making, The adoption of these motivational strategies by various administrators of tertiary institutions can help to improve the job performance of the non-academic staff in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Keywords: Non-academic staff, motivation, tertiary education, Nigeria

Introduction:

Tertiary education is an education designed for post-secondary education. Tertiary education is a social agent of progress and development in a society that aids technological advancement. Tertiary education is designed to help in the development of nations by providing the high as well as the middle-level manpower needed for social, economic and political advancement through the programmes of teaching, learning, research and community services. This places tertiary education at the apex of the ranking of educational institutions and is designed to accommodate knowledge acquisition and production. Tertiary education is institutions of higher learning that provide facilities for teaching and research and are authorized

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to grant academic degrees such as bachelor, master and doctorate (Ogunode et al., 2021; Ogunode et al., 2023c).

Tertiary education is regarded as the highest peak of education. It is the education that is anchored on teaching, research and community services. Higher education is designed to operate in a peaceful environment (Ogunode & Adanna, 2022; Ogunode et al., 2023). National Policy on Education FRN (2013) defined tertiary education as the education given after basic education in institutions such as universities and inter-university centres, the Nigeria French Language Village, Nigeria Arabic Language Village, the National Institute of Nigerian Languages, institutions, Innovation Enterprise Institutions (IEIs), and Colleges of Education, Monotechnics, Polytechnics, and other specialized institutions such as Colleges of Agriculture, Schools of Health and Technology and the National Teachers' Institutes (NTI).

The goals of the Tertiary Education National Policy on Education according to FRN (2013) shall be to: contribute to national development through high-level manpower training; provide accessible and affordable quality learning opportunities in formal and informal education in response to the needs and interests of all Nigerians; provide high-quality career counselling and lifelong learning programmes that prepare students with the knowledge and skills for self-reliance and the world of work; reduce skill shortages through the production of skilled manpower relevant to the needs of the labour market; promote and encourage scholarship, entrepreneurship and community service; forge and cement national unity; and promote national and international understanding and interaction.

The realization of tertiary education depends on the availability of qualified and motivated academic and non-academic staff. Ogunode et al. (2020) defined non-academic staff as those professionals handling various non-teaching services in higher institutions. Student welfare workers, secretaries, caretakers and cleaners form part of the non-academic professionals. Non-academic staff members are employees who work within higher institutions and are contributing significantly to the success of higher education. Non-academic staff possesses a wealth of institutional knowledge, charisma and drive to ensure that the universities' missions, visions and objectives are attained. The contributions of non-academic staff highly impact the student's experience in the university environment. The cardinal programme of the universities includes producing manpower, conducting research and undertaking community service, the non-teaching staff assists with research, teaching and community development. The university systems function because of the professionals who provide complementary roles other than teaching and research (Ogunode et al., 2020). The academic staff and non-academic staff are both important in the attainment of university goals (Ogunode et al., 2021; Ogunode & Adamu, 2021; Ogunode & Okwelogu, 2022)

The non-academic staff or administrative staff is senior non-academic or senior administrative staff who occupies different positions and play different roles in the university. Non-academic staff members are strong members of higher institutions. The non-academic staff handles the day-to-day administration and operations of the university. The non-academic staff performs mainly administrative as well as technical duties. The non-academic staff occupies important offices in the university environment. The non-academic staffs function in the following departments within the university: The registry, maintenance, vice-chancellor's office, deputy vice-chancellor's office, bursary, student affairs, human resources/establishments, cafeteria, security, venture and bookshop among others (Ogunode, Jegede, Abubakar & Martina, 2020; Madukoma & Opeke, 2013). The roles of the non-academic staff in the administration and management of the universities cannot be overstated because they function in all the units,

departments and faculties (Ogunode et al., 2020). Ezeigbo (2016) observed that all colleges, faculties, departments and units have administrative staff members whose importance in the proper functioning of the university cannot be over-emphasized. The job performance of the non-academic staff in tertiary institutions is vital to the attainment of tertiary education goals.

Job performance is the result of individual or group work that shows the level of achievement of job qualifications in organizations that aim to meet organizational goals (Al-Omari & Okasheh, 2017). Meanwhile, performance is defined as employees' behaviour at work. An employee's performance is individual because each employee has different levels of ability to perform their duties. Individual performance can be seen and measured if a person or group of employees can meet the success standards set by the company (Fogaça et al., 2018).

Job performance of academic staff refers to all non-teaching services done at a particular time. The job performance of academic staff matters in tertiary institutions because without their services the academic staff cannot go far in the attainment of teaching, researching and provision of community services.

Performance is something, a single person does. The performance of teachers in schools is highly affected by motivation. Teachers are motivated their performance automatically reaches towards high level. In schools, teacher's performance can be mapped well through arranging training programs for the teachers and they will get motivated and their confidence will also increase. Motivation has a direct and positive effect on job performance when we properly account for effort (Inayatullah & Jehangir, n. d.).

Many factors determine the job performance of the academic staff in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Some of these factors include leadership style, institution climate, personal factors and motivation packages. The non-academic staff in Nigerian tertiary education is poorly motivated and this has manifested in their job performance.

Concept of Motivation:

Motivation is the force that influences an individual to give his or her best in institutions and the realization of goals. Motivation is the drive that influences an individual to achieve the maximum output for himself or an institution (Josiah et al., 2023). Motivation is defined as a driving force that compels an individual to take some actions to achieve certain goals. The motivational level of everyone is different just like the perception and the attitude of everyone are different. For example, a person feels hungry, and as a response that particular person eats so the feelings of hunger get diminished (Inayatullah & Jehangir, n.d).

Motivation in this paper can be defined as a force capable of pushing and pulling an individual toward a particular direction and attainment of goals. Motivation is a drive that influences an individual to carry out tasks for him and for others (Olabisi et al., 2023). Motivation is very important in influencing employees to accomplish individual as well as organizational goals. This inner drive motivates the employees to form and exhibit purposive behaviour to achieve specific and unmet needs. This little encouragement on the part of the organization enables them to accomplish their goals efficiently by acknowledging employees' work and effort, providing them good work environment, considering their needs and forming pleasant job designs. The motivation increases performance (Inayatullah & Jehangir, n. d.).

Motivation is perceived as an invisible force that compels and inspires individuals towards one direction or action for greater productivity. Motivation is the force that propels an individual to carry out specific functions without complaint (Ogunode et al., 2023a). Motivation

plays an important role in the organization because it increases the productivity of employees and the goals can be achieved efficiently. The behaviour of employees can be changed through motivation in any organization. From situation to situation, the level of motivation differs within an individual (Robbins et al., 2005). Motivation also takes part in an important role for teachers because it helps to achieve their targets efficiently. Teacher motivation is very important. It improves the skills and knowledge of teachers because it directly influences the student's achievement (Mustafa & Othman, 2010).

Motivation in this paper refers to the force driving an individual towards the attainment of certain goals or achievements. Motivation is an invisible drive that influences the action of an individual towards a particular goal. Motivation can be viewed as a force that is propelling an individual to carry out some tasks or production.

Motivational Strategies to Enhance Non-academic Staffs Job Performance in Tertiary Institutions

There are many strategies managers of tertiary education in Nigeria can use to improve non-academic staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Some of these motivational strategies include the following:

- i. Payment of Salaries and Allowance:** Tertiary education administrators can explore prompt payment of salaries and allowances to motivate the non-academic staff of tertiary institutions and enhance their job performance. Salaries and allowances are very important to staff and paying it on time motivates them to work more for the institutions. A study by (Nadeem et al., 2011) on how social and economic conditions of teachers affect their performance disclosed that low salary, lack of facilities, the status of teachers in society, teachers' mental health and morale, the stress of work, relation with staff and head teachers, working environment are all factors that have a strong impact on female teachers performance. The level of motivation of teachers is reduced when there are poor social and economic conditions in the place where the schools are located. Peter (2017) and Ogunode (2020) recommended the use of prompt salaries and allowance payment strategies to boost staff morale and job performance in higher institutions. The findings of the study of Malik (2010) indicated that "faculty members at the University of Balochistan in Pakistan are motivated as a result of eight motivating factors which are living in a safe area, good salary, promotion and growth in the organization, interesting work, conducive working condition, sympathetic help with personal problems, appreciation of work done and personal loyalty to employees. After he ranked the importance of these motivational factors he found that living in a safe area and a good salary is key to higher employee motivation. Velnampy (2007) carried out a study and the result reveals that "the perceived level of motivation of the employees in both public and private sectors is high. The factors influencing motivation, wages and salaries, physical working conditions, job descriptions, dependency, friendly working atmosphere, interpersonal relationships, prestige and work assignment, incentives and bonuses, work facilities, security, power, challenge and advancement and personal growth are the most important factors of motivation." Increment in salaries will motivate

academic staff to remain and be a committee to work in the institutions (Ogunode & Atobauka, 2021; Ogunode & Ndayebom, 2022).

- ii. **Provision of Infrastructural Facilities:** The provision of adequate infrastructural facilities is another strategic idea tertiary education administrators in Nigeria can use to motivate the non-academic staff to be more committed to office work. Infrastructural facilities are resources that are essential for day to day running of the offices. The availabilities of these facilities aid the non-academic staff's job performance and motivate them to work more. Ogunode & Jegede (2021) and Abubakar et al. (2022) carried out a study and discovered that adequate infrastructural facilities, instructional resources, positive human relationships and good welfare packages are the factors that motivated staff to work more in the organization. The study carried out by Chukwuemeka, & Manafa (2020) to examine principals' motivational strategies for improving teacher job performance in public secondary schools, the findings revealed among others that principals use principal leadership behaviour, welfare packages and provision of a more conducive environment as motivational strategies to influence teacher job performance. Osakwe (2014) noted that adequate productivity and performance in the teaching-learning process depend so much on the motivation of academic staff. In other words, the efficiency of academic staff depends, to a large extent, on motivational factors (work environment, promotion opportunities, autonomy, professional development, safety and; security, empowerment and authority etc.). The dispositions, attitudes, feelings and emotions of academic staff toward their job play a vital role in determining their performance, productivity and behavior. These, in turn, determine the success and academic achievement of the students.
- iii. **Promotion:** The promotional strategy is a very good strategy to be adopted by tertiary education administrators to improve the job performance of non-academic staff in tertiary institutions. Promotion is a form of an institution's method of motivating staff in organizations. When the promotion is done when is supposed to be done, staff is happy and show more commitment to office work but when the promotion is delayed, staff is frustrated and their productivity is affected. Studies by Osakwe (2014) and John (2010) revealed that organizations that promote their staff as at when due and pay their promotional allowance performed better than organizations that don't promote their staff as at when due and payment are not effected when due. Another study by Mark (2015) showed that staff that enjoyed smooth organizational promotion and other benefits are more committed than staff that don't enjoy organizational allowances and promotions regularly. By increasing salaries, and promotions the academic staff feel more comfortable working and, with a feeling of improving their performance (Abubakar et al., 2022).
- iv. **Effective Capacity Building:** An effective capacity building programme is another strategy tertiary institutions managers can adopt to improve non-academic staff job performances in institutions across the country. Capacity building programme helps the staff to improve their skills and knowledge. Capacity building programme plays an important role in the institutions because it

increases the staff productivity and upgrades their skills so that the goals of the institutions can be achieved efficiently. The behaviour of employees can be changed through effective capacity-building programmes in higher institutions. Studies by Peter (2017) and Ogunode & Adamu (2021) disclosed that institutions that engage their staff in continuous professional development perform better than organizations that do not engage their staff in training programmes. Capacity building programmes have been described as one of the best motivational strategies available in organizations to improve staff capacity and organization general performance. Osakwe (2014) ascertained that educational institutions that provided teaching staff with training programmes have great student achievement. Noordin & Jusoff (2009) and Muindi (2011) found that academic staff job satisfaction has a significant relationship with their job performance and the academic performance of their students. Attitudes of academic staff are affected, in part, by workplace conditions such as a positive and safe environment, a supportive administration, career progression, commensurate salary, a supportive work team, and the appeal of the job itself. So, university authorities should provide professional development forums (seminars, workshops, conferences, etc.) and encourage academic staff to participate. Ogunode & Abubakar, (2021) and Yahaya et al. (2019) recommended that educational administrators and managers should ensure that academic and non-academic staff are exposed to constant training to improve the general performance of the schools.

- v. **Provision of a Very conducive working environment:** The provision of a very conducive working environment is another motivational strategy tertiary institutions can explore to improve the job performance of non-academic staff in higher institutions. When the staff is provided with adequate working resources, very conducive offices with constant light, internet services and adequate security, their job performance will improve in the institutions. Chandrasekar (2011) did a study that investigated workplace environment impacts on employee morale, productivity and job performance both positively and negatively. If the workplace environment is not liked by the employees they get de-motivated and their performance is also affected. People working with poorly designed work timings, unsuitable authorities or duties, lack of appreciation, and lack of personal decision-making opportunities are not satisfied. They feel stress on themselves and it impacts on employees' job performance. Also, Davidson (2005) found that bad working conditions have adverse effects on teacher's performance. It could be improved by providing benefits to them. Therefore, job performance is that function which is based on motivation. There should be motivation in schools to achieve better teachers' job performance. The provision of a conducive environment enhances the job performance of academic staff through adequate funding (Ogunode & Onyekachi, 2021; Ogunode et al., 2023b).
- vi. **Appreciation, Recognition, Commendation and Praise:** Appreciation, recognition, commendations, award-giving and praises have been recommended by Peter (2017) for vice-chancellors, Rector of polytechnics and provosts of colleges of education, deans of faculties, heads of departments and directors of

units in higher institutions as motivational strategies that are effective and they can improve staff commitment to work and improve the general performance of the institutions. Biswas & Giri (2017) pointed out that “by motivational communication, by making employees feel better at work, by appreciating ‘the power of inclusion’ and by sharing a vision with employees would not only create a productive employee and a pleasant transaction but also would generate self-confidence, self-discipline, cooperation, improve efficiency and strengthen bonds in the long run.” Njambi (2014) did a study and discovered that intrinsic factors such as appreciation of employees by the organization, the degree of skill requirement, the influence of employee view of the job, employee perception on skill development, and the perception of contributing to the firm’s growth were the most highly cited intrinsic factors influencing employee motivation. The least cited intrinsic factors influencing employee motivation include constant feedback on employee performance, employee empowerment and anatomy and employees’ responsibilities. Inamullah’s (2008) results of their study revealed that “constructive criticism, maintaining discipline, good working conditions, guidance and appreciation, financial incentives used by heads were most effective motivation techniques in the opinion of teachers, and the majority of teachers opined that good relationship with head, friendly and sympathetic behaviour of head enhances the performance of the teacher.” Dieleman et al. (2003) indicated that “motivation is influenced by both financial and non-financial incentives. The main motivating factors for workers were appreciation by managers, colleagues and the community, a stable job and income and training. The main discouraging factors were related to low salaries and difficult working conditions.”

- vii. **Involvement in Decision Making:** Involvement of staff in the decision-making process within the institutions is another strategy tertiary institution administrators can use to motivate the staff and improve their job performance in the higher institutions across the country. Osakwe (2014) did a study and found out that non-management academic staff agreed that the 10 items they responded to are motivational factors that give them job satisfaction. The factors are good salary and conditions of service, prompt and regular promotion, recognition and feedback, increased job security/enrichment, professional development programmes, empowerment and authority, good working environment, challenging and varied work, participation in decision-making, and research grants. The findings of studies about participation in decision-making which stated that participation in decision-making influenced lecturers’ job motivation and morale, underline the importance of getting lecturers involved in the decision-making process (Hoy & Miskel, 1992; Osaigbovo & Peretomode, 2015). Osaigbovo et al. (2015) observed that in Nigerian universities, the need for lecturers to participate in decision-making at all levels, that is, at the Council, Senate, Faculty, Departmental and Committee levels, has become imperative for several reasons. In the first place, it will be appreciated that the educational standards of lecturers are probably higher these days. To these lecturers, it may be discovered that money alone does not give them the satisfaction they need. Authority to make decisions may be more valued by them. Hewitson (1978) and

Osaigbovo et al. (2015) concluded that “increased teacher participation in decision making is accompanied by greater ego involvement, greater identification with organizational goals and higher levels of motivation and satisfaction.”

Conclusion:

This paper critically looked at the concept of motivation, non-academic staff, non-academic staff job performance and motivational strategies that can be used to improve the job performance of non-academic staff of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The paper concluded that motivation is important in the realization of tertiary education goals in Nigeria and therefore tertiary institution administrators should adopt the various motivational strategies available to improve job performance of non-academic staff. The paper pointed out; that the payment of salaries and allowance, provision of infrastructure facilities, promotion, effective capacity building, provision of conducive working environment, appreciation, recognition, commendation and praise, and involvement of staff in decision making as motivational strategies that various administrators of tertiary institutions in Nigeria can use to improve the job performance of the non-academic staff in their tertiary institutions across the country.

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