

# Job Satisfaction and Job Performance among University Staff in Nigeria

Benjamin Bunye Agubosim, Dr. Mohd Mursyid Arshad, Dr. Siti Noormi Alias, Azadeh Moosavi

Educational Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia

Email: m\_mursyid@upm.edu.my, sitinoormi@upm.edu.my, Adeh20120@gmail.com

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v12-i2/17669>

DOI:10.6007/IJARPED/v12-i2/17669

**Published Online:** 25 June 2023

## Abstract

Job satisfaction among employees requires both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that need adequate attention by stakeholders to build institutional goals and performance. This study was conducted using qualitative research methods based on case studies and using the intrinsic and extrinsic factors of job satisfaction as the context for the collection of research data. A total of 20 staffs were interviewed consisting of Store's Manager, Communications Director, Technical Officer, Librarian, Audit officer, Transport Manager, Security officer, Public relations officer, 2 Information Technology officer's, Accountant, Graphic designer, Front desk executive, Personal assistant to the Head of department (marketing), Secretary (school of marketing), procurement officer, Administrative assistant, Secretary in Assistant registrar's office, Administrative secretary, and Photographer. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews supported by relevant information from participant observation, document analysis and field notes. The data was then analyzed and given codes, categories and sub-themes to develop main themes to answer each research question. In conclusion, job satisfaction among staffs can help increases performance of staffs.

**Keywords:** Job Satisfaction, Job Performance, University Staff, Nigeria

## Introduction

Human resource management is the ability of managers to influence conditions within the company to maximize the return on investment from the organization's human capital and minimize financial risk (Alam & Mukherjee, 2014). Accordingly, the critical look into the employees' working conditions, the kind of group emotional climate, and the adopted leadership style are key factors to enhance employee job satisfaction.

A primary need of humans is a job to meet their daily needs life also feeling satisfied with the job leads the employee to feel confident among family and affects job performance (Sahito & Vaisanen, 2020). Universities today are encountering by the challenge to catch the fundamental goals. In this regards, creative and a satisfied employee are of significance.

job satisfaction is beneficial for the company by minimizing recruiting and training expenses. According to Abuhashesh et al (2019), satisfied employees perform their tasks better, and long-term employees usually have a greater level of skill and expertise, both of which lead to increased performance. Then, it is crucial for educational management and government to

understand and address the fundamental items that enhance staff satisfaction and, consequently, performance in the public universities. In a university system, the non-academic departments include; bursaries, library, medical staff, exams and records, private secretaries, cleaners/messengers, administrative staff, account, and security employees among others (Adejare et al., 2020). Particularly in state and federal universities in Nigeria, many of these departments are incredibly ineffective at supporting the university system in achieving its declared objectives and purposes (Iwuoha, 2018). For instance, there is a lengthy history of manipulation of student results and the creation of academic transcripts for students in the exams and records department of Nigerian Universities. The depth of this inefficiency is such that foreign universities or organisations will email the exams and records department to inquire about a student's

academic standing without receiving a response. Additionally, after a student has completed the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), the tests and records department will discover that the student has a missing result when the student returns to obtain his or her academic transcript. This problem of non-academic staff inefficiency has gotten out of hand and affected the university's reputation both domestically and internationally. The absence of appropriate training and development and job dissatisfaction are considered to be the causes of the inefficiency among non-academic staff units such as tests and records, works and bursaries among others.

Today's institutions need to pay close attention since the non-academic staff agitations are getting more intense as the institutions' global environment gets more complex and unpredictable. Thus, enhancing the performance of universities, satisfaction of non-academic staff is equally important as academic staff. Additionally, Abolade (2018) argued that lack of job security as a factor in employee satisfaction can lead to conflict, especially when it comes to labour turnover. Neme & Ineme (2016) claim that individuals are psychologically capable of exploring and utilising organisational resources available to them in order to have a good impact on the organisation when they are rightly positioned, and that's when job satisfaction begins. At the University of Uyo-Nigeria, the authors looked into how self-efficacy, personality, and demographic factors influenced job satisfaction among non-teaching staff members. They contend that demographic factors may significantly predict job satisfaction. According to Jayeola et al (2021), it is essential to comprehend how the personalities of non-academic staff members affect their performance on the job considering the significant role that higher education plays in national development. This is due to the possibility that academic personnel may struggle to effectively manage universities' internal organisations (Baltaru, 2019). According to Adekanmbi et al (2020), members of the non-academic staff union (NASU) at the University of Ibadan in Nigeria who lead healthy lifestyles will be more satisfied with their jobs than counterparts who lead unhealthy or unsatisfactory lives. The same is true for members of the NASU who report having a high level of organisational trust. These attitudes coupled with strikes leads to student's preference of universities outside Nigerian. A report from the World Education Services (2017) highlights that, Nigeria has the most students overseas compared to any other African country, and outbound mobility numbers are growing at a rapid pace. According to data from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS).

This situation gives room for high rate of absenteeism, low job commitment and engagement which if not tackled can bring down the whole system to its knees. It is crucial to clearly convey the reward system to employees along with their specific jobs in order to avoid

misunderstandings and incorrect perceptions among them. This will help employees feel motivated and satisfied, which is something that is desperately needed in the workplace. There is no doubt that job satisfaction has enjoyed enormous popularity both among the theorists and practitioners during the last century. It is to this fact that this study now intends to explore the factors influencing job satisfaction of non-academic staff in Lagos State University. The selection of a public university in Lagos State is due to the fact that it is one of the highly urbanized regions of Nigeria with proliferation of higher institutions. There is certainly a need to assess the effects of job satisfaction on work-related attitudes and performance.

#### Literature

Several studies have explored the factors influencing job satisfaction among workers in public universities, including both academic and non-academic staff. Rudaleva and Mustafin (2017) noted that employees spend a significant amount of time in the workplace, making it crucial to examine this area, especially among young non-academic staff. Job stress has been identified as a significant factor impacting employee job satisfaction (Kazmi et al., 2017; Maartje, 2018). In Nigeria, Ekienabor (2016) studied job stress and its relation to employee productivity among academic employees in Nigerian universities, finding a significant impact of job stress on employee productivity.

Research by Sharmilee et al (2017) analyzed the influence of job stress on employee performance. While time pressure and role ambiguity were found to negatively impact employee performance, workload and lack of motivation did not have a significant influence. These results highlighted the importance of rewards and monetary compensations in motivating employees and promoting retention. However, in some cases, stress did not show a significant influence on job satisfaction. For instance, Saqib et al (2013) explored factors influencing job satisfaction of teachers in District Sialkot, Pakistan, and found no significant impact of stress on job satisfaction. Similarly, a study by Jelastopulu et al (2013) on nursing staff revealed an inverse relationship between work stress and job satisfaction.

Salary, a crucial aspect of job satisfaction, has been extensively researched, but the findings have been diverse. For example, Young et al (2014) found that while salary increase did not lead to increased satisfaction, Halizab et al (2017) reported that pay and benefits had no significant influence on job satisfaction among employees at Zenith Corporation.

Corporate governance has been recognized as a key factor influencing job satisfaction in various industries but has received limited attention in academic institutions. Nmai and Delle (2014) examined the predictive relationship between corporate governance and employee job satisfaction in a Ghanaian telecommunications company, finding a positive and significant impact of corporate governance on job satisfaction. Menner and Menninger (2018) investigated the effect of an increase in shareholder rights on employee satisfaction, revealing a negative correlation. In Nigeria, Adeogun et al (2017) studied the perceived effect of governance change on employees' job satisfaction in the Ogun State Ministry of Agriculture, identifying promotional policy and organizational rules as the major aspects affected by governance changes.

Despite these various studies, research on job satisfaction among non-academic staff in Nigerian public universities has predominantly focused on library workers, leaving a gap in understanding the factors influencing job satisfaction among other non-academic staff members. Further exploration into this area can provide valuable insights for promoting job satisfaction and overall well-being among these employees.

### **Method**

This study employed qualitative research methods to conduct a thorough analysis of job satisfaction factors, job fulfillment among staff, and their impact on workplace performance. The data collection involved observing the activities of the staff, with their consent and permission, to gain valuable insights. Participant observation was also used as part of the data collection process, which aligned with the research question. Through this method, the researcher could personally assess the accuracy of the information provided by the participants during interviews and experience the actual atmosphere of their work.

During the observation, the researcher diligently took field notes, recorded information in a notebook, and captured videos of the staff working to aid document analysis. Writing field notes while observing and recording activities in the field is known to enhance data quality (Tessier, 2012).

The data was collected through semi-structured interviews with key informants, specifically young non-academic staff members from Lagos State University. To strengthen the study's findings, the researcher also conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with departmental heads, employing data triangulation. Additionally, observation, field notes, and document analysis were used.

The informants in this study were high-performing individuals among 20 young non-academic staff members at Lagos State University, aged between 25 and 40, with more than 2 years of work experience at the university. The selected staff comprised various roles, including administrative, security, librarian, accounts, transport, information technology, procurement, photographer, public relations, and department heads.

To ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the informants, all relevant information related to them, such as their identity, location of data collection, and organizational affiliation, was kept confidential using pseudonyms. The researcher received cooperation from the departmental heads, who provided relevant verbal information, which was recorded for analysis. Additionally, feedback on job satisfaction and workplace conditions was obtained from the participants.

The interviewers were composed of 12 males and 8 females. Among the interviewees, 12 were married, while 8 were unmarried. The age distribution of the twenty interviewees was as follows: 7 in their twenties, 10 in their thirties, and 3 in their forties. In terms of academic background, fourteen of the respondents held a bachelor's degree, two had a master's degree, three had a Higher National Diploma (HND), and one possessed a secondary school certificate. The participants' working experience at the university ranged from two and a half years (the lowest) to nineteen years (the highest).

| Informant      | Age    | Designation  | Education           | Work Experience |
|----------------|--------|--|---------------------|-----------------|
| Stores         | 34yrs  | Store's Manager  | BachelorDegree      | 4yrs            |
| Communications | 40 yrs | Communications Director                                  | Masters             | 10yrs           |
| Technical      | 34yrs  | Technical Officer  | HND                 | 3yrs            |
| Library        | 33yrs  | Librarian  | Bachelor Degree     | 2.8yrs          |
| Audit          | 29yrs  | Audit officer  | Masters             | 4yrs            |
| Transport      | 40yrs  | Transport Manager  | Bachelor Degree     | 4yrs            |
| Safety         | 38yrs  | Security officer   | Secondary Education | 10yrs           |
| IT 1           | 28yrs  | Information Technology officer                           | Bachelor Degree     | 2.6yrs          |
| IT 2           | 40 yrs | Network and system administration)                       | Bachelor Degree     | 9yrs            |
| Accounts       | 35yrs  | Accountant   | Bachelor Degree     | 3.5yrs          |
| Designer       | 28yrs  | Graphic designer   | HND                 | 3yrs            |
| Front office   | 32yrs  | Front desk executive                                     | Bachelor Degree     | 4yrs            |
| PA             | 35yrs  | Personal assistant to the Head of department (marketing) | Bachelor Degree     | 6yrs            |
| Secretary 1    | 25 yrs | Secretary (school of marketing)                          | Bachelor Degree     | 3yrs            |
| Secretary 2    | 30     | Secretary in Assistant registrar's office                | Bachelor Degree     | 4yrs            |
| Secretary 3    | 30     | Administrative secretary                                 | Bachelor Degree     | 4yrs            |
| Procurement    | 28 yrs | Procurement Officer                                      | BachelorDegree      | 3yrs            |
| Admin          | 26yrs  | Administrative assistant for HR                          | Bachelor Degree     | 3yrs            |
| Photo          | 29yrs  | Photographer   | HND                 | 2.5yrs          |
| Relations      | 31yrs  | Public Relations   | BachelorDegree      | 3.5yrs          |

## Results

Research Question 1: What is the perception of job satisfaction among high-performing young non-academic staff in a public university in Nigeria?

This research aimed to explore the participants' understanding of job satisfaction. The findings were derived from semi-structured interviews and document analysis, including experiences of job satisfaction shared by informants and participant evaluations, along with field notes to enhance the identification of key themes.

55% of respondents described job satisfaction as "having the necessary resources to work effectively," while 30% believed it was derived from "engaging in work they are passionate about and finding satisfaction in accomplishing assigned tasks." Another group (15%) defined job satisfaction as "meeting clients' expectations."

The study revealed various motivational factors contributing to job satisfaction, such as financial and non-financial rewards, opportunities for promotion, passion for work, mentorship, personal development, and access to necessary tools and resources.

Research Question 2: What factors influence job satisfaction among high-performing young non-academic staff in a Nigerian public university?

80% of interviewees emphasized that "salary and timely payment" were primary motivating factors for their job satisfaction. However, despite the significance of salary, 65% of employees expressed dissatisfaction with their current pay.

Non-financial incentives, such as appraisals, recognition, and promotions, were also considered crucial for job satisfaction. The majority of interviewees agreed that promotions played a significant role in motivating them. Overall, salaries, appraisals, and promotions were highlighted as critical factors affecting job satisfaction.

Additionally, positive peer relationships and teamwork were noted as essential components of job satisfaction. Employees appreciated mutual respect, collaboration, and the opportunity to share challenges with colleagues.

Job security and a safe working environment were mentioned as vital factors contributing to job satisfaction. Feeling cared for and valued by the organization positively influenced employee motivation and satisfaction.

Research Question 3: How do high-performing young non-academic staff meet work requirements in a Nigerian public university?

Effective time management was identified as a key element in fulfilling work requirements. The ability to control work schedules, engage in advance planning, and organize tasks efficiently was crucial for meeting organizational goals and ensuring sustainability for both employees and the organization.

Employees' possession of relevant skills, including intrapersonal skills, responsibility, good socialization, and integrity towards work, were seen as determinants of good performance.

To achieve job satisfaction, some participants emphasized the importance of self-empowerment, networking, taking on additional responsibilities, and showing personal initiative in their work.

The provision of training, both technical and soft skills, was highlighted as a significant factor for enhancing job satisfaction and performance among non-academic staff. However, concerns were raised about limited access to training opportunities, especially for non-academic staff due to financial constraints and perceived favoritism towards academic staff. Lastly, the fulfillment of work requirements was influenced by the organizational climate and conditions within different departments. Some participants felt satisfied with their work due to good relationships and supportive environments, while others noted that job satisfaction varied based on their department's conditions.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this research has provided valuable insights into the perception of job satisfaction among high-performing young non-academic staff in a Nigerian public university. The study highlights the complexity of factors influencing job satisfaction, including working conditions, motivational factors, peer relationships, job security, and personal development opportunities. Understanding these elements is crucial for organizations to enhance job satisfaction and create a positive work environment.

Based on the findings, it is clear that improving job satisfaction among non-academic staff requires a holistic and proactive approach. Therefore, the following key recommendations are proposed to promote job satisfaction and overall well-being



**Enhance Working Conditions:** Universities should prioritize providing adequate resources, creating a safe and supportive work environment, and addressing inefficiencies in non-academic staff units. Ensuring a conducive workplace fosters job satisfaction and employee engagement.

**Recognition and Incentives:** Implementing performance-based incentives, rewards, and recognition programs can motivate non-academic staff to excel in their roles and feel valued for their contributions.

**Invest in Training and Development:** Offering comprehensive training and development opportunities will enhance the skills and expertise of non-academic staff, empowering them to take on new challenges and grow professionally.

**Empower Employees:** Granting decision-making autonomy and involving non-academic staff in decision-making processes will foster a sense of ownership and empowerment, leading to increased job satisfaction.

**Address Job Security Concerns:** Ensuring job security and stability for non-academic staff is essential to build trust and loyalty, ultimately reducing turnover rates and promoting job satisfaction.

**Promote Positive Relationships:** Cultivating positive peer relationships and effective communication channels will foster a collaborative and supportive work environment, contributing to job satisfaction.

**Tailor Strategies to Demographics:** Understanding the unique needs and preferences of non-academic staff based on demographic factors will enable universities to implement targeted strategies to enhance job satisfaction.

**Promote Organizational Trust:** Building and maintaining trust between management and non-academic staff is vital for a positive work culture and job satisfaction.

**Recognize Outstanding Performance:** Recognizing and rewarding exceptional job performance will encourage a culture of excellence and motivation among non-academic staff.

By implementing these recommendations, Nigerian public universities can create an environment that nurtures job satisfaction, leading to more motivated, productive, and committed non-academic staff. Ultimately, this will contribute to the overall success and reputation of the institutions in their pursuit of academic excellence and national development.

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