

Journal of
Education and Practice
(JEP)

**Institutional Factors and Academic Staff Job Performance in Public
Universities in Southwest, Nigeria**



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Institutional Factors and Academic Staff Job Performance in Public Universities in Southwest, Nigeria

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigated the relationship between institutional factors and academic staff job performance in Southwest, Nigeria. The study examined the level of academic staff job performance in public universities. The study also examined the extent to which the institutional factors are favourable in the Universities. The study specifically examined relationship between institutional factors such as physical facilities and staff workload.

Methodology: The study adopted descriptive research design of the survey type. The population of this study consisted of 12,844 Academic Staff of public universities in Southwest, Nigeria. The sample of this study consisted of 90 Heads of Departments and 900 academic staff of public universities. Multi-stage sampling procedure involving simple random sampling technique, stratified random sampling technique and proportionate random sampling technique were used in the selection of the sample for the study. Two instruments tagged ‘Institutional Factor Questionnaire (IFQ) and the Academic Staff Job Performance Questionnaire (ASJPQ)’ were used to collect data from the respondents.

Findings: A reliability coefficient of 0.78 was obtained for the Institutional Factor Questionnaire and 0.76 was obtained for the Academic Staff Job Performance Questionnaire. The data collected were analysed using percentages, frequency count, Mean, Standard Deviation and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. All hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that level of academic staff job performance was high in public universities in Southwest, Nigeria. It also revealed that status of institutional factors was favourable. Institutional factors variables such as physical facilities and staff workload largely determined academic staff job performance in public Universities in southwest, Nigeria.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Policy and Practice: In view of the fact that the status of institutional factors was favourable in public universities in southwest, Nigeria, owners of public

institutions in Southwest Nigeria should prioritize adequate physical infrastructure to improve the quality of teaching and research. Also, academic personnel should be assigned assignments based on competency and not overworked.

Key words: *Academic Staff, Job Performance, Physical Facilities, Staff Workload*

Introduction

University education plays an important role in the social, economic, political and cultural development of a nation. The university system in Nigeria cannot achieve its goals and objectives without committed and dedicated academic staff. The issue of academic staff job performance in the universities has attracted the attention of the public, educators and other stakeholders in education. Therefore, for the university system to achieve the purpose of producing highly skilled labour to meet the socio-economic needs of the nation, the commitment and dedication of the academic staff must be given special attention.

Observations have shown that academic staff seem not prepared adequately for classroom activities, thereby making them not to use appropriate methods. It appears academic staff do not regularly attend seminars, conferences and workshops to enhance their research work. It seems academic staff do not periodically present public enlightenment programmes. They seem not appear to be participating in community self-help project and consultancy services. Academic staff in Southwest Universities seem not to be investigating much into series of problems relevant to social needs. Academic staff research work has to be credible through making publication in journals and presentation of papers at national and international conferences. Academic staff are also expected to engage in technical reports, consultancy services, contribution in textbooks, review of research articles and contributing to knowledge through publication of books. It is through these means that their regular research work and findings could be revealed.

Community services provided by academic staff could be in form of membership in community associations; this will enable them to contribute to the affairs of the community to achieve the planned objectives. They may share their knowledge by organizing seminars on skill acquisition for the less privileged or organizing seminars on adult literacy; this will assist them to positively influence the society/community in which they are part. Academic staff could also offer scholarship and service learning to the members in the community, which would make them relevant and invariably make them to positively impact on the society/community.

Institutional factors appear to be the prominent problem militating against the academic staff job performance. Institutional factors are those factors that influence teaching, research and community services. Institutional factors refer to all the variables within the school system that can make or mar academic staff job performance. In this study, the selected institutional factors that can determine academic staff job performance include physical facilities and staff workload.

It appears that one of the most significant factors that hinder lecturers' job performance is physical facilities. Physical facilities are a plethora of resources that aid the teaching and learning process. These include a fully equipped library with up-to-date books and online resources, advanced computerized laboratories, high-speed internet, teaching aids, and international journal subscriptions. It cannot be overstated how critical it is to have physical facilities available to ensure high job performance. When necessary facilities are established within various universities for

academic staff to use prudently in order to accomplish their institutions' predetermined goals and objectives, their level of job performance may be enhanced. Academic staff require a variety of facilities to conduct their daily activities effectively, including offices, teaching materials, lecture theatres, laboratories and libraries. When employees have an unfavourable opinion of their working environment, they are more likely to be absent, suffer from stress-related sickness, and perform poorly on the job. On the other hand, institutions with a friendly, trusting, and secure atmosphere, enhanced productivity, communication, creativity and financial health are likely to have employees with a favourable perception and excellent job performance (Ali, Ali and Adan, 2013).

Inadequate physical facilities appear to dictate the academic staff's efficiency and effectiveness in terms of job performance. The academic staff in Nigerian Universities, since 14th February 2022, through their umbrella trade union, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has been on strike which has lasted for more than six months, over their demand for building infrastructure, upgrading libraries, hostels, and lecture theatres so that students would not be having lectures through windows and would not also be sitting on the floor during lectures. (Sunday Guardian Newspaper of August 7, 2022). These factors, among others, appear to contribute to the academic staff's subpar performance in Southwest universities.

Physical facilities can be used to impact employee work performance positively. Thus, physical amenities can be employed to exert a beneficial influence in this regard. Additionally, the efficiency of any university system is highly dependent on how human resources, including academic staff, are motivated and given with a suitable and congenial work environment. In essence, adequate facilities contribute to the job performance of academic employees. High job performance boosted by supporting and adequate physical facilities may be viewed as a distinguishing trait contributing to the institution's overall excellence. Asiabaka (2008) asserts that teachers require office space, conference rooms for collaborative planning and facilities for developing educational presentations. When available, these facilities contribute significantly to the achievement of educational goals and objectives by meeting the physical and emotional needs of staff and students. Bassey and Bassey (2008) emphasized that when teachers perceive a high level of resource availability and utilization in the classroom, they will also perceive a high level of teacher-job efficiency across all facets of school life, including actual teaching, classroom management, motivational ability, pupil assessment and subject matter preparedness. Arogundade (2009) investigated the association between the work environment and academic staff performance in universities in Southwest Nigeria. The study studied the association between a few selected work environment components and academic staff performance in institutions. The study discovered that academic staff performance was highly connected to physical facility provision. Poor working conditions can have a negative impact on academic staff, resulting in absenteeism, decreased effort, decreased effectiveness in the classroom, low morale, decreased job satisfaction and decreased motivation.

Physical facilities, such as books, library facilities, classroom furniture, laboratories and workshops are often found to be drastically inadequate in the majority of Nigerian schools. For instance, Adegbesan (2007) emphasized that, unfortunately, school facilities are insufficient and some are not available within the school system, while those that are available are in poor condition due to the government failing to provide adequate funding to maintain the available facilities and meet educational challenges. Despite the critical role academic staff plays in achieving educational objectives, providing physical facilities has remained a significant barrier, and teaching variables alone are neither sufficient nor acceptable for effective job performance. According to Arogundade and Bolarinwa (2011), academic staff members were frequently required to work in dangerous and unhealthy settings such as decaying physical facilities, outdated libraries, stinking abandoned classrooms and damaged furniture. Buildings, grounds, utilities and equipment often comprise the majority of an entity's capital assets. However, facilities are typically constructed or selected to meet the requirements of the organization's operational processes. The characteristics of facilities typically reflect the occupying organization's and occupants' specific needs; thus, as a significant portion of the resources used to convert input to output within office-based organizations, facilities can have a significant impact on organizational performance (Hasbullah, Isma'il and Wan-Yusoff, 2010). Physical facilities include structures, land, compounds, equipment, tools and space, while non-physical facilities include consultancy, catering, security, supply, relocation and events, all of which must be planned, designed, documented, resourced, furnished or delivered and monitored. While the quality of facility services is critical to business in institutions and organizations worldwide, it is especially critical in locations where the customer impact is immediate, such as retail locations and hospitals.

Additionally, the researcher noted that workload appears to be a factor in academic staff members' subpar job performance. Academic staff with multiple workloads seem to perform below expectations as a result of being loaded with too many assignments that could not be completed by a single individual during a given time frame. Based on the researcher's observation and interactions with members of the academic staff during the period of the study in some universities, there seems to be increase in workloads of some academic staff. Many students were allocated to academic staff to teach as a result of massive enrolment of students for higher education, which has generated a lot of misnormals in the institutions and at the same time affected the job performance of the academic staff. According to NUC (2004), an academic staff member should educate thirty students and supervise five others with respect to project, but it appears that this is not the case in Southwest Nigeria's universities. Academic staff members were allocated academic and administrative responsibilities concurrently without direction or training, resulting in an increase in their workload. Adhikari *et al.*, 2012) discovered that academic personnel were overstressed as a result of their excessive workload.

Su and Wood (2012) concluded in their study that academic staff in the universities are under increasing pressure to perform a broader range of tasks concurrently. For example, in

addition to increased teaching, they are expected to perform additional administrative tasks and publish more to meet research excellence targets. Thus, workload is the sum of all the obligations assigned to academic personnel. This may be scholarly or administrative in nature, or a combination of the two. As a result of this, academic staff tend to consistently struggle to teach well, conduct research effectively and provide community services successfully. Perhaps the combination of administrative and academic labour is so massive that it results in diminished or non-performance of academic staff members' teaching and research responsibilities. Suffice to saying that if an academic staff spends more time on administrative tasks, he or she may be unable to dedicate adequate time to teaching.

It is one thing to work, and quite another to work effectively. Under normal circumstances, when a worker is assigned a reasonable amount of work, the worker is likely to succeed; nevertheless, when the workload is excessive in quantity or quality, the worker is almost certain to fail. It is not surprising that Ingvarson et al., (2005) reported that practically all instructors describe their workload as heavy, and that during specific peak periods when their workload exceeds their abilities to handle, their teaching effectiveness suffer. Indeed, they asserted that excessive effort, which results in stress, results in a loss of concentration, which impairs performance. Ekechukwu (2009) found that stress and excessive workload result in inefficiency and death in accordance with this finding.

Additionally, labour overload might result in workers engaging in deviant behaviour. Lateness, absenteeism, poor decision-making, poor judgment, nagging, sleeping on the job, insults, threats, sabotage, physical aggression and burnout are all examples of deviant behaviours. Excessive labour in terms of quantity and quality that requires thought can also result in restlessness and insomnia as a result of the effort required to complete the duties. Additionally, it may result in role conflict, irritation, emotional weariness, cynicism and diminished personal success, all of which are burnout indicators (Ekechukwu, 2009).

The study conducted by Osaat and Ekechukwu (2017) on academic staff at the University of Port Harcourt managing workload discovered that excessive workload results in stress, which results in lack of concentration to perform, deviant behaviour among academic staff, which results in poor relationships with students, doing too many other tasks concurrently, which results in occasional absences from class, and too many tasks result in stress, which reduces job efficiency, competence, and efficiency. Additionally, the study discovered that excessive workload results in burnout, leaving academic personnel physically and mentally drained and unable to perform their duties. This results in chronic stress, which also results in depression and other related ailments among academic personnel, rendering them unable to execute their jobs.

It appears that where the institutional factors are favourable, academic staff job performance will be high but, where the institutional factors are less favourable, job performance seems to be low. It is against this background that, this study examines the relationship between

institutional factors and academic staff job performance in public universities in South West Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The declining job performance of academic staff in universities in southwest, Nigeria has been a major concern to stakeholders in education. Some academic staff appear not attending classes regularly. It has been observed that some lecturers seem not covering the course contents, some are observed not to have good control of class during teaching. Some academic staff appear not to have mastery of the subject matter, some academic staff seem not to keep proper records of academic performance. Some appear not to be interested in carrying out research; some were found not to be interested in extra-murals and consultancy services, while all these may have a negative effect on their job performance.

Perhaps the academic staff job performance in Nigerian universities is falling due to institutional factors in the institutions. It appears as though academic personnel lack access to the physical facilities necessary to execute their jobs effectively. Academic staff appear to be overworked.

If this situation is allowed to continue, it may frustrate the objectives and goals for which universities have been set up or established. Thus, the study investigated institutional factors and academic staff job performance in Southwest Nigeria universities.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- i. To what extent are the institutional factors variables favourable in public universities in Southwest Nigeria?
- ii. What is the level of lecturers' job performance in public universities in Southwest Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were also formulated to guide the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between institutional factors and academic staff job performance in public universities in Southwest Nigeria.
2. There is no significant relationship between physical facilities and academic staff job performance.
3. There is no significant relationship between staff workload and academic staff job performance.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study. The population for this study consisted of 12,844 academic staff of all the 18 public Universities in Southwest, Nigeria (NUC, 2020). The sample for the study consisted of 90 Heads of Departments and 900 academic staff of public universities in Southwest Nigeria. The subjects were drawn from 6 public universities (Federal & State) across the 3 selected states using multi stage sampling procedure. At the first stage, simple random sampling technique was used to select three out of the six states in Southwest. The second stage involved the use of stratified random sampling technique to select 6 Universities (3 Federal and 3 State owned universities) from each of the selected states. At third stage, proportionate random sampling technique was used to select 90 Heads of Departments from the sampled 6 Universities. At the final stage, proportionate random sampling technique was used to select 900 academic staff from the sampled 6 Universities. Two instruments were used to collect data for the study. They were: Institutional Factors Questionnaire (IFQ) and Academic Staff Job Performance Questionnaire (ASJPQ). The Institutional Factors Questionnaire (IFQ) has two sections. Section A was used to seek information on the demographic data of the respondents. Section B consisted of items which were used to elicit information on institutional factors, Academic Staff Job Performance Questionnaire (ASJPQ) has two sections. Section A of ASJPQ was used to seek for demographic data of the respondents. Section B consisted of items which were used to elicit information on academic staff job performance. Likert type 4 point rating scale of preference was used for IFQ as follows; Strongly Agree (SA) = 4, Agree (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. Section B of ASJPQ was based on Likert 5 point rating: Excellent (5), Very Good (4), Good (3), Fair (2) and Poor (1).

Experts in Educational Management and Tests, Measurement and Evaluation were consulted in order to ascertain the content and face validity of the instruments. Reliability of the instruments was ascertained using the test-retest method, fifty copies of the IFQ and six copies of ASJPQ were administered twice on the same respondents within an interval of two weeks in two public universities, which were not be part of the actual study. The two results were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Institutional Factors Questionnaire has a reliability coefficient of 0.78 while a reliability coefficient of 0.76 was obtained for Academic Staff Job Performance Questionnaire.

The researcher personally administered the instruments with the help of six trained research assistants. The researcher's personal contact and visit to the respondents assisted in ensuring quick administration of the instruments and ease of retrieval. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentage frequency counts, mean and standard deviation to answer research questions, Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

RQ1: To what extent are the institutional factors favourable in public universities in Southwest Nigeria?

In order to answer this question, frequency counts and percentage scores on items 1-14, Section B of the Institutional Factors Questionnaire (IFQ) were computed. The average responses on all variables were obtained together with the mean scores of each. The average mean score was used to rate the institutional factors as either favourable or unfavourable. Mean score below the criterion mean of 2.50 was rated as unfavourable while mean score above the criterion mean were rated as favourable. Hence, favourable job-related variables ranged from 0.00-2.49 while unfavourable ranged from 2.50-4.00. The summary of the result obtained is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Extent of favourability of institutional factors in public universities in Southwest Nigeria

S/ N	Institutional factors	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total Score	Mean Score	Decision	Copies of Questionnaire Returned
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%				
1	Physical facilities	40	44.3	19	21.76	12	14.25	17	19.76	262	2.92	Favourable	899
2	Staff workload	30	33.6	33	37.21	17	19.65	8	9.54	184	2.05	Unfavourable	900

Table 1 demonstrates the relative importance of institutional elements in Southwest Nigerian universities. The results suggest that 403 (44.83 percent) strongly agreed that physical facilities were favourable, 196 (21.76 percent) agreed, 128 (14.25 percent) disagreed and 172 (19.76) strongly disagreed. 302 (33.60%) strongly agreed that staff workload was favourable, 335 (37.21%) agreed, whereas 177 (19.65%) disagreed and 86 (9.54%) strongly disagreed on staff workload.

RQ2: What is the level of academic' job performance in public universities in Southwest Nigeria?

In order to answer this question, frequency counts and percentage scores on items 1-35 in Section B of the Academic Staff Job Performance Questionnaire (ASJPQ) were computed. The average responses on teaching, research and community services were obtained together with the mean scores of each. The average mean score was rated as Low, Moderate or High. Mean score that falls below the criterion mean of 3.00 was rated as Low. Moderate level was determined by the criterion mean (i.e. 3.00) while High level was determined by scores above the aggregate average mean score. The result obtained is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Level of academic staff job performance in public universities in Southwest Nigeria.

S/ N	Job Perform ance	Excellen t		Very Good		Good		Fair		Poor		Tot al sco re	Me an Sco re	Decisi on
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%			
1	Teaching	62	6.92	338	37.54	240	26.70	97	10.83	162	18.02	2738	3.04	High
2	Research	72	8.01	344	38.23	293	32.50	93	10.32	98	10.59	2899	3.22	High
3	Communi ty services	108	12.03	340	37.72	293	32.60	73	8.09	86	9.56	3011	3.35	High
Total		242	26.96	1022	113.49	826	91.8	263	29.24	346	38.53	8648	9.61	High
Average		81	8.97	341	37.83	275	30.6	88	9.75	115	12.84	2883	3.20	

Table 2 showed the level of academic staff job performance in Southwest, Nigeria. The result showed that 62 (6.92%) of the respondents rated academic staff job performance as Excellent in teaching, 338 (37.54%) rated it as Very Good while 240 (26.70%), 97 (10.83%) and 162 (18.02%) of the respondents rated it as Good, Fair and Poor respectively. On research, 72 (8.01%) rated academic staff job performance as Excellent, 344 (38.23%) rated it Very Good while 293 (32.50%), 93 (10.32%) and 98 (10.59%) rated it Good, Fair and Poor respectively. 108 (12.03%) of the respondents rated academic staff job performance Excellent, 340 (37.72%) rated it Very Good while 293 (32.60%), 73 (8.09%) 86 (9.56%) rated it Good, Fair and Poor respectively on community services.

The table depicted that the academic staff were rated moderate in teaching with an average mean score of 3.04(60.8%), they were rated high in research and community services with average mean score of 3.22(64.4%) and 3.35(67%) respectively. In all, the level of academic staff job performance was rated high with an average mean score of 3.20(64%). Hence, the level of academic staff job performance was high during the period investigated.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. There is no significant relationship between institutional factors and academic staff job performance in public universities in Southwest Nigeria.

The IFQ and ASJPQ Section B scores were generated and analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance. Table 3 showed the outcome.

Table 3: Relationship between institutional factors and academic staff job performance

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-cal	p-value
Institutional Factors	900	159.47	21.47		
Academic staff job performance	900	108.82	18.79	0.269*	0.000

*P<0.05

Table 3 shows that the r-cal is significant at p<0.05 level of significance. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected (p-value 0.05). Thus, institutional factors impacted academic staff job performance.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between physical facilities and academic staff job performance in public universities in Southwest Nigeria.

In testing this hypothesis, scores on items 1-7 in Section B of IFQ and all items in Section B of ASJPQ were calculated and analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance. The result obtained was presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Relationship between physical facilities and academic staff job performance

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-cal	p-value
Physical facilities	900	18.75	4.35		
Academic staff job performance	900	108.82	18.79	0.475*	0.000

*P<0.05

Table 4 shows that r-cal (0.475) is significant at 0.05 level of significance. The result is significant (p-value < 0.05) and the null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, there was a significant relationship between physical facilities and academic staff job performance.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between staff workload and academic staff job performance in public universities in Southwest Nigeria.

In order to test this hypothesis, scores on items 8-14 in Section B of IFQ and all items in Section B of ASJPQ were calculated and analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) at 0.05 level of significance. The result obtained is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Relationship between staff workloads and academic staff job performance

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-cal	p-value
Staff workloads	900	20.64	4.43		
Academic staff job performance	900	108.82	18.79	-0.336*	0.000

*P<0.05

Table 5 shows that r-cal (-0.336) is significant at 0.05 level of significance. The result is significant (p-value < 0.05) and the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, there was a significant negative relationship between staff workloads and academic staff job performance.

Discussion of the Findings

The results show that the level of academic staff job performance was high in the public universities during the period investigated. This implies that teaching, research and engagement in community services by academic staff were on the high side. This is contrary to the insinuation that staff in the academic category are not doing enough on their statutory responsibilities.

It was discovered that the status of the institutional factors were favourable in public universities in Southwest, Nigeria. This implies that the available physical facilities were favourable to make academic staff perform their responsibilities in the public universities. This finding could be attributed to the ceaseless agitation for improvement by the labour union over the years which have brought about some levels of improvement in the status of this variable.

The findings suggested a favourable relationship existed between physical facilities and academic staff job effectiveness. This means that the quality of lecturers' instructional activities, research outputs and community service may be related to the availability of suitable lecture rooms, an electronic library, laboratories, a library, lecturer offices and ICT facilities. This relationship could be explained by the fact that these types of facilities serve a critical role in assisting academic staff in generating, acquiring and sharing knowledge, which enables them to conduct their tasks efficiently. This finding is consistent with Ali, Ali and Adan (2013), who asserted that when employees have a negative perception of their work environment, they are more likely to be absent, suffer from stress-related illness, and exhibit low levels of job performance and commitment, whereas organizations with a friendly, trusting and safe work environment experience increased productivity, communication, creativity and financial health. Similarly, the findings corroborated Arogundade's (2009) assertion that work performance of academic staff was highly related to physical facility supply.

There was a negative and significant relationship between staff workload and academic staff job performance. This means that when workloads are high, job performance is lowered or poor, and when workloads are low/reduced, job performance is increased. This conclusion implies that academic staff teaching activities, knowledge generation, and transfer are associated with the number of courses taught, the number of scripts marked, the volume of administrative obligations assigned to them, and the number of students in their classes. This finding could be explained by lecturers' exposure to a variety of other tasks that frequently interfere with their dedication to their primary responsibilities of teaching, research and community service. Additionally, while a regular workload enables a person to do more, when the workload is excessive, performance can be discouraging. This finding is consistent with Osaat and Ekechukwu (2017) findings that a high workload results in stress, which impairs performance, deviant behaviour among staff, which results in a poor relationship with students, doing too much work at the same time results in occasional absence from class, and too much work results in stress, which impairs job efficiency.

Conclusion

It can be concluded from the study that academic staff in public universities in southwest, Nigeria are performing their statutory functions as expected. More importantly, it was established that the institutional elements influence the quality of instruction, innovation and community services. An improvement in academic staff job performance in public universities would be proportionate to an improvement in physical facilities and workload.

Recommendations

In view of the findings from this study, it was recommended that:

- Owners of public institutions in Southwest Nigeria should prioritize adequate physical facilities to improve the quality of teaching and research of academic staff.
- Management of the public universities should ensure that responsibilities are assigned to academic staff based on competence and without over stressing them. This can be achieved when there is compliance with minimum standard on academic staff - student ratio and reduction in other assignments that can bring about too much work on the academic staff.

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