

## Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction on the Relationship between Managerial Incentives and Academic Staff Performance of Selected Federal Colleges of Education in Northern Nigeria

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### Abstract

*Inadequate managerial incentive is one of the major causes of poor performance by academic staff in higher institutions. The current study examined the mediating role of job satisfaction on the relationship between managerial incentives and academic staff performance in Federal Colleges of Education in Northern Nigeria. The study employed descriptive survey research design. Population of the study was 1,967 academic staff in the selected Federal Colleges of Education in Northern Nigeria. The sample size of the study was 433 respondents selected from the population. Closed-ended structured questionnaire was used to source for primary data. The copies of questionnaire were issued by hand. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability Coefficients were used to measure the reliability of instrument. Data was processed using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings showed that recognition, work environment, training and job satisfaction have positive significant effects on academic staff performance. The study revealed that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between recognition and academic staff performance. The study also found that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between work environment and academic staff performance. But job satisfaction did not mediate the relationship between training and academic staff performance. The implication of the findings of the study is that the management of Federal Colleges of Education will benefit by providing adequate and suitable managerial incentives to academic staff that deserve and desire them to enhance their job satisfaction since satisfied academic staff perform better and contribute to the total success of the institution. The study therefore, recommended that the management of the selected Federal Colleges of Education should continue to provide more recognition, comfortable work environment and provide adequate training to boost the academic staff morale and their level of satisfaction, which in turn results to optimum performance.*

### Keywords

academic staff performance; managerial incentives; recognition; work environment; training and job satisfaction



## I. Introduction

Abundance of resources such as infrastructure or physical facilities are made meaningless without the support of qualified human resources that directly ensure the continuity of operations in the institutions. Academic staff is the most determining factor in achieving institutional objectives (Eyanuku, 2021). Within the framework of the professionals, good academic staff performance mirrors the ability to contribute through

their jobs leading to the achievement that is in accordance with the goals of the institution (Muda, Rafiki & Harahap, 2014). In present dynamic economy, institutions require more well-qualified, dedicated and capable academic staff in order to perform and prosper in the intense work environment (Ayesha, 2015). Academic staff performance is critical to the success of education institutions and the institutions should therefore endeavour to give incentives in order to increase job satisfaction and their academic performance (Eyanuku, 2021).

Academic staff play vital role in the educational institutions. Their impacts are felt in the lives of all students from different backgrounds, including those students with varying levels of understanding, abilities and those from families that exhibit wide range of cultural and linguistic diversities. Academic staff are educators or instructors saddled with the responsibility of educating students by grooming and helping them to discover their talents (Rahman, Nabi, Akhter, Saeed & Ajmail, 2011). In addition, academic staff are also expected to possess the knowledge of the subject matter they teach and to always prepare to answer questions and make lectures interesting and attractive for students. In fact, academic staff is considered as one of the most important determinants of quality of education (Goldhaber & Hansen, 2010). Academic staff are recognised as indispensable human resource and, indeed, a single most important element in the academic institutions, more importantly than the quality of equipment and materials (Yusuf & Dada, 2016).

Managerial incentives are those methods used by institutions to make academic staff willingly want to put in their best in what they do. Managerial incentives are those means used by institutions to motivate academic staff to work with high spirit and also as financial and non-financial methods of satisfying the individuals' moral and material desires (Alfandi & Alkawsaneh, 2014). An academic staff who enjoys managerial incentives has his/her goals aligned with those of the institution and directs his/her efforts to that course (Salem, Abdul, Khairunneezam & Othman, 2017). There are two types of managerial incentives that determine academic staff performance (Al-Nsour, 2012); the financial and non-financial incentives. But this study concentrates on non-financial incentives such as: job satisfaction, recognition, work environment and training.

## **II. Review of Literatures**

### **2.1 Concept of Academic Staff Performance**

Academic staff performance is defined as the timely, effective, and efficient completion of mutually agreed-upon tasks by employees in accordance with the institution's policies and procedures (Vikas & Hitesh, 2016). Academic staff performance in institutions of higher learning has been studied by various researchers (e.g., Abba & Mugizi, 2018; Hamilton, 2019), who have discovered that academic staff roles include; classroom teaching, supervision, research, innovation, publication, consulting, service to the university and society, among other things. Moreover, according to Mushemeza (2016) the importance of high-quality academic staff was a reality in terms of designing relevant programs and courses as well as teaching, examination, and supervision of students' research projects.

### **2.2 Concept of Managerial Incentives**

Managerial incentives refer to any and all of the methods, both financial and non-financial, that institutions use to positively encourage academic staff in a way that increases their productivity rate and improves their overall performance. In order to

achieve the institutional goals, incentives are used to motivate academic staff to work more efficiently. Furthermore, the absence of appropriate incentives may have a negative impact on the hardworking employee's performance; it may also have a negative impact on their productivity at work, which reduces the likelihood of the institution achieving its ambitious goals (Palmer, 2012). Incentive is a concept that encompasses both financial and moral values, and they serve as a focal point for a variety of activities in modern organizations and work environments (Alfandi & Alkawsawneh, 2014).

#### **a. Recognition**

In order to ensure that academic staff members perform to their full potential, recognition is the most widely used and powerful tool in educational institutions (Vikas & Hitesh, 2016; Sun, 2013). Recognition is defined as the expression of gratitude, appreciation, or approval for positive accomplishments or behaviours on the part of an individual or a group (Alam, Saeed, Sahabuddin & Akter, 2013). Employee recognition, according to Nyakaro (2016), refers to the act of recognizing or drawing special attention to the actions, efforts, behaviour, or performance of an employee. Thanks notes, pins, plaques, award ceremonies, gift vouchers, staff photographs in the institution newsletter, and inclusion on the institution's wall of fame are just a few examples of non-monetary incentives that Vikas and Hitesh (2016) identified as effective ways to express gratitude.

#### **b. Work Environment**

The health and well-being of employees is the primary concern of the workplace environment. It is a concept that encompasses the physical aspects of work, as well as the psychosocial and organizational environments in which people work (Christopher & Khann, 2015; Sell & Cleal, 2011). According to Ruchi and Surinder (2014), the work environment is defined as the physical, mental, and social environment in which employees collaborate and perform their jobs, with the results of their work being analyzed for improved effectiveness and increased performance. An attractive and supportive work environment can be defined as one that attracts individuals to an organization, encourages them to remain as employees, and provides them with the resources they need to perform their jobs effectively (Asigele, 2012).

#### **c. Training**

The goal of training is to improve one's way of thinking, skills, and ability to analyze and solve problems, ultimately resulting in peak performance in the workplace (Amir & Amen, 2013). Training is the systematic process by which educational institutions provide development and quality enhancement to new and existing academic staff (Nda & Fard, 2013). Training is defined as a systematic approach to learning and development that helps individuals, groups, and organizations improve their performance (Khawaja & Nadeem, 2013). As a result, it is the series of activities undertaken by institutions that result in knowledge or skills acquisition for the purpose of growing, thereby contributing to the well-being and performance of human capital, institutions, and society as a whole. Training in institutions is the key to unlocking the potential for growth and development opportunities that will allow you to gain a competitive advantage in your institution (Rama & Nagurvali, 2012).

#### **d. Job Satisfaction**

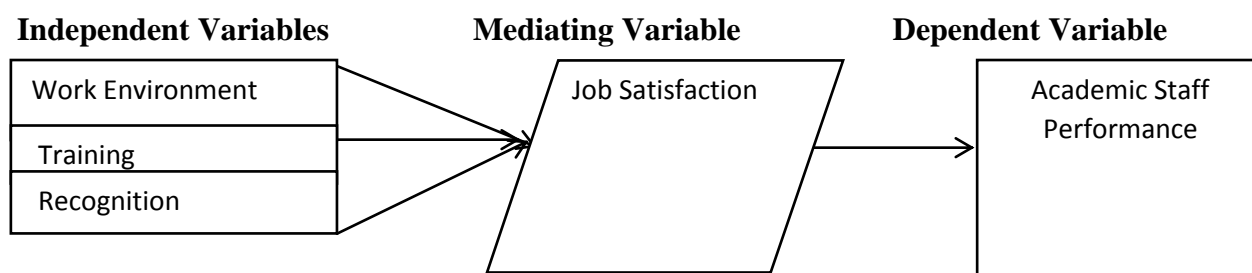
A variety of academics have defined the term job satisfaction in different ways. Performing a job that one enjoys, doing it well, and feeling satisfied for one's efforts were the criteria for job satisfaction according to Mteteleka (2017). Job satisfaction, according

to Owusu (2014), is defined as the pleasurable feelings that arise as a result of an employee's perception of meeting their desired level of needs.

### 2.3 Empirical Review

A lot of literatures have been reviewed from different authorities on managerial incentive related factors and academic staff performance. for instance (Elijah, 2021; Rwothumio, Mbirithi, & Itolondo, 2021; Omar, Selo, & Rafie, 2020; Hamilton, 2019; Chukwuma, 2019; Afolabi, Abiola, Olaiya, & Emeje, 2020; Agba & Ocheni, 2017; Sulaiman, Abdisamad, Oluwatosin & Malik, 2020; Eyanuku, 2021, Okolocha, Akam & Uchehara, 2021; Thevanes & Jathurika, 2021; Lewis, Olowo, & Okotoni, 2020). However, the findings of the reviewed previous studies may not be generalized because of the scope and geographical factor. Thus, this study is unique and tends to contribute to knowledge by investigating the mediating role of job satisfaction on the relationship between managerial incentives and academic staff performance in Federal Colleges of Education in Northern Nigeria.

### 2.4 Research Model



*Figure 1. Research Model*

The model in figure 1 represents the framework of the study. The independent variables are work environment, training and recognition predicting the dependent variable academic staff performance. Job satisfaction is the mediating variable of the study.

## III. Research Methods

This present study employed quantitative research approach to assess the mediating role of job satisfaction on the relationship between managerial incentives and academic staff performance. The unit of analysis of this study is the academic staff while the population of the study is 1,967, which is the total number of academic staff in the selected Federal Colleges of Education in Northern Nigeria. The sample size of the study was 443 respondents selected from the population. The primary data was sourced through the issuance of close ended structured questionnaire to the respondents by hand. The questionnaire was designed with 5 point likert scales and 47 items. Cronbach alpha coefficient and Composite Reliability Coefficients were used to examine the reliability of the instruments used. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression as can be seen from the tables.

## IV. Discussion

### 4.1 Results

#### a. Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics showing the number of returned and usable copies of questionnaire, the mean and standard deviation are represented in table 1.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Training	433	2.80	0.74
Recognition	433	3.93	0.55
Work environment	433	3.58	0.66
Job satisfaction	433	3.02	0.44
Academic staff performance	433	3.33	0.63

The descriptive statistics for academic staff performance, training, recognition, work environment and job satisfaction are in table 1. All these variables were measured using a five-point Likert scale. From the table a mean of 2.80 and standard deviation of 0.74 were recorded for training and this is above the average (2.5) of the likert scale used in the study. Also, a mean of 3.93 and standard deviation of 0.55 were recorded for recognition which is also higher than the average. This is an indication that the academic staff are having high concern for the recognition provided by the college. For work environment, a mean of 3.58 and standard deviation of 0.66 were recorded. This is above the average and this implies staffs are developing high concern for the environment they work. Job satisfaction had a mean of 3.02 and a standard deviation of 0.44 and this indicates that academic staff expectations from their job are perceived satisfactory. In the study, a mean and standard deviation of 3.33 and 0.63 respectively were recorded for the academic staff performance. This means that the academic staffs perceive their performance to be high.

#### b. Test of Hypotheses

In this section all the study hypotheses are tested using the structural model. The study tested the hypotheses for the direct relationship and mediated relationship.

#### c. Test of Hypotheses for Direct Relationships

Before testing for the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between training, recognition, work environment, job satisfaction and academic staff performance, it is important to determine the direct effect of training, recognition, work environment and job satisfaction on academic staff performance. This will help test  $H_{01}$ ,  $H_{02}$ ,  $H_{03}$  and  $H_{04}$ . Thus, Table 2 is presented.

**Table 2.** Direct Path Coefficient

Hypotheses	Relationship	Beta	Std Dev	T Statistics	P-Value	Decision
H <sub>1</sub>	RE -> ASP	0.101	0.044	2.330**	0.020	Rejected
H <sub>2</sub>	WE -> ASP	0.244	0.063	3.901***	0.000	Rejected
H <sub>3</sub>	TR -> ASP	0.100	0.035	2.851***	0.004	Rejected
H <sub>4</sub>	JS -> ASP	0.357	0.035	10.060***	0.000	Rejected

\*\*\* p < 0.01; \*\*p < 0.05; \*p < 0.1

From Table 2, it can be deduced that recognition has a positive significant effect on academic staff performance (Beta = 0.101, t-value = 2.330 and P value = 0.020) at 0.05 significant level. This means a unit change in recognition will lead to 10.1% change in academic staff performance. As a result, hypothesis one that states that recognition has no significant impact on academic staff performance is rejected. Similarly, work environment has positive significant effect on academic staff performance (Beta = 0.244, t-value = 3.901 and P value = 0.000) at 0.01 significant level. This means that as work environment increases by one unit, staff performance increases by 24.4%. Thus, our second null hypothesis that states that work environment has no significant effect on academic staff performance is also rejected. Also, training was discovered to have positive significant effect on academic staff performance (Beta = 0.100, t-value = 2.851 and P value = 0.004) at 0.01 significant level. This implies that a unit change in training leads to 10% change in academic staff performance. Job satisfaction also has positive significant effect on academic staff performance ((Beta = 0.357, t-value = 10.060 and P value = 0.000) at 0.01 significant level. A unit change in job satisfaction leads to 35.7% change in academic staff performance. This means that our fourth hypotheses were also rejected.

#### d. Coefficient of Determination for Direct Relationships

The R-square ( $R^2$ ) is the measure of the predictive accuracy of a model, which is calculated as the squared correlation between the endogenous (dependent variable) construct's actual and predicted value (Hair *et al.*, 2013). The  $R^2$  value of the endogenous variable of the direct relationships model is presented in Table 3. Chin (1998) proposed that  $R^2$  values of 0.67, 0.33, and 0.19, to be considered as substantial, moderate, and weak respectively in the PLS-SEM modeling.

**Table 3.** Coefficient of determination

Construct	R Square ( $R^2$ )
Staff performance	0.319

Going by the result presented in table 3, it can be seen that the r square value stood at 0.319 which implies that 31.9% variation in academic staff performance is explained by recognition, work environment, training and job satisfaction while the remaining 68.1% is explained by other factors not included in this model. For the direct relationship (without mediator), all the exogenous variable explain 31.9% variance in the endogenous variable. Going by the provision Chin (1998), the r square can be considered weak.

#### e. Test of Hypotheses for Mediated Relationships

**Table 4.** Test of Significance for Mediating Relationship

Hypotheses	Relationship	Beta	SE	T statistics	P-Value	Decision
H5	RE -> JS -> ASP	0.027	0.0021	12.688***	0.000	Rejected
H5	WE -> JS -> ASP	0.136	0.0163	8.323***	0.000	Rejected
H7	TR -> JS -> ASP	0.006	0.020	0.300	0.760	Accepted

\*\*\*p < 0.01; \*\*p < 0.05; \*p < 0.1

Based on the results presented in the table 4, job satisfaction mediate the relationship between recognition and academic staff performance ( $\beta=0.027$ ,  $t= 12.688$  and P value = 0.000) at 0.01 significant level. Going by this result, the fifth hypothesis of the study, job

satisfaction does not significantly mediate the relationship between recognition and academic staff performance is rejected. Also, the finding proved the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between work environment and academic staff performance ( $\beta=0.136$ ,  $t = 8.323$  and  $P$  value = 0.000) at 0.01 significant level. Consequently, the sixth hypothesis of the study, job satisfaction does not significantly mediate the relationship between work environment and academic staff performance, is also rejected. However, there is an absence of such mediating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between training and staff performance.

#### **f. Coefficient of Determination for Mediating Relationships**

As in the previous model for the direct relationships, the coefficient of determination or assessment of the R-square level (Hair *et al.*, 2013) for the mediation relationships model was assessed in order to determine the level of variance explained by the exogenous variables on the endogenous variable. Thus, this model concerns only the endogenous variable (ie, academic staff performance). However, the  $R^2$  value is presented in table 5.

**Table 5.** Coefficient of determination - R squared

<b>Construct</b>	<b>R Square</b>
Academic Staff performance	0.302

With the inclusion of mediator in the model, a reduction in the R square was discovered. The r square value for academic staff performance is 0.302 which implies that by intervening for job satisfaction as a mediator, 30.2% variance in the academic staff performance is explained by all the independent variables while 69.8% are explained by other factors not considered in this study. This r square is by Chin (1998) considered weak.

#### **4.2 Discussion**

Staff recognition was discovered to have positive significant effect on academic staff performance without controlling for job satisfaction. Going by the result, staff are highly sensitive to their recognition by the employers. The colleges of education nowadays should consider recognition as a motivating tool for academic staff performance. Going by position of expectancy theory, staff recognition constitutes a factor capable of boosting academic staff performance. This might be responsible for the positive impact recognition has on academic staff performance. Thus, as staff continue to develop positive perceptions toward their recognition by the employers, performance will continue to increase. This finding is consistent with the findings of (Chukwuma, 2019; Ndungu, 2017; Alam *et al.*, 2013; Richa & Amrinder, 2015).

Work environment has positive significant effect on academic staff performance. The more academic staff in these colleges of education develop positive perceptions toward the work environment, the more their performance increase. Most colleges of education seek to improve the standard of their products and to do this, a favourable working environment like adequate furniture, amenities, space, ventilation, security, staff involvement in decision making, and good relationship with staff and employers are needed. This might be responsible for work environment having positive effect on academic staff performance. This finding supports the study of (Afolabi *et al.*, 2020; Nasidi *et al.*, 2019; Naharuddin & Sadegi, 2013; Nanzushi, 2015; Agba & Ocheni, 2017; Oyewole *et al.*, 2019). In addition, the study findings support the Two Factor Theory which points out that the environment in which the job is performed motivates the staff to perform better.

Based on the findings of this study, staff are also seen to be developing positive perceptions toward training provisions of the colleges. Training was found to have positive significant effect on academic staff performance. This implies that training enables the academic staff to; acquire more skills and knowledge to carry out their tasks, improve their problem solving skills, improve their ways of thinking and analyzing, improve their decision making skills, ensures growth and development, maximizes their potentials and make them to work effectively and efficiently, thus making it imperative for academic staff to continually improve on their performances. This finding is consistent with the findings of (Elijah, 2021; Rwothumio et al., 2021; Sulaiman et al., 2020; Paul & Audu, 2019; Olokundun et al, 2018; Bibi et al, 2018; Afaq, et al., 2016) as the authors found positive significant effect of training on staff performance.

Lastly on the direct relationships, job satisfaction has a positive significant effect on academic staff performance. This means that as academic staff become more satisfied with their jobs or when the outcomes of their jobs meet their expectations, performance might increase significantly. Job satisfaction shall improve these academic staff performance significantly. This finding supports the study of (Eyanuku, 2021; Lewis et al., 2020; Yee, 2018; Ahmad & Jameel, 2018; Ndulue & Ekechukwu, 2016).

For the mediating relationship, job satisfaction was discovered to mediate the relationship between recognition and academic staff performance. This implies that if more recognition is given to academic staff, it will result to job satisfaction which consequently might lead to academic staff performance. Alternatively, recognition boost staff performance through job satisfaction. Findings show job satisfaction play a very important role in making academic staff to be more committed to their work and increase their performance. For academic staff to be satisfied with their jobs, they must be given appropriate recognition. This result is in line with results of (Neda & Mojtaba, 2018; Rao et al., 2017; Ferit, 2015) who found job satisfaction to mediate the relationship between empowerment and staff performance.

Similarly, It was discovered that job satisfaction mediate the relationship between work environment and academic staff performance. From the result, it was revealed that academic staff were having positive perception towards the working environment and of course this translates into improved performance. The study also argued that academic staff actively seek meaning through their work and, unless institutions try to provide a sense of meaning, staff tend to leave. Work environment is expected to create a shared sense of destiny with others and to encourage academic staff to emotionally connect with one another to achieve high levels of satisfaction. Therefore, it is evident that academic staff personal perception of their work environment shapes and directs how satisfied a staff is. To have a positive perception, it is important to have a supportive working environment. This finding is in line with the expectation of the study, and similar findings like (Nasidi, et al., 2019; Ferit, 2015; Rao, Bismah, Khurram & Safia, 2017; Neda & Mojtaba, 2018). People who found themselves in a favorable working environment derive satisfaction from such and this ultimately leads to improving performance.

Surprisingly, job satisfaction was discovered not to mediate the relationship between training and academic staff performance. This means that training provisions does not automatically translate to improved performance through job satisfaction. Though, without controlling for the mediator, training significantly predicts academic staff performance, staff satisfaction from their jobs may not be as a result of training provision in the college but other factors such as recognition, work environment among others. The implication of this finding is that colleges of education will benefit by formulating policy regarding training as it relates to academic staff performance. This explains the result obtained from this study.



## V. Conclusion

The study examined the mediating role of job satisfaction on the relationship between recognition, work environment, training and academic staff performance. Based on the findings, the study concludes that recognition, work environment, training and job satisfaction have positive significant effect on academic staff performance. The better the recognition, work environment, training and job satisfaction the more it will increase the academic staff job performance. Also, job satisfaction mediated the relationship between recognition and academic staff performance, work environment and academic performance but did not mediate the relationship between training and academic staff performance.

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