

MANAGEMENT MOTIVATION AND ACADEMIC STAFF PERFORMANCE IN FEDERAL COLLEGES OF EDUCATION ACROSS NIGERIA'S SIX GEOPOLITICAL ZONES

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to investigate the impact of management motivation on academic staff performance in selected Federal Colleges of Education in six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. This study used a descriptive survey design. The population of the study was 5424 academic staff in selected colleges of education in six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. The sample size of the study was 373, was obtained using a simplified formula by Yamane in Israel (1992). The unit of analysis of the study was the academic staff who were randomly selected from the chosen colleges of education. The instrument used for data collection was a closed-ended, structured questionnaire. This study adapted items suitable for measuring the various constructs of this study from previous studies. The questionnaire was designed using 5-point Likert scales ratings of "strongly disagree" (1) and "strongly agree" (5). Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability coefficients were used to establish the reliability of the instrument used. A face validity assessment by experts in this area of academic discipline was also conducted. The Data were coded using SPSS version 27.0. The null hypotheses were tested using a multiple regression analysis at a significance level of 0.05. The findings showed that financial rewards, recognition, training and development, work conditions and communication have positive and significant impact on academic staff performance. The study recommended that the management of the selected colleges of education should continue to provide adequate financial rewards, recognition, training and development opportunities, conducive work conditions and effective and timely communication to boost academic staff performance.

Keywords: Management Motivation, financial Rewards, Recognition, Training and Development, Work Conditions, Communication and Academic Staff Performance.

Introduction

Academic faculty are the most important resources for any institution's success. Academic personnel is the most important factor in fulfilling institutional goals (Abubakar, Soba & Yusuf, 2022). The motivation of academic staff in institutions is still one of the most sensitive issues that determines the level of effort that academic staff will put into the institution to commit to good performance. Management motivation is a significant factor in the workplace. It is the internal drive or willingness that motivates employees to perform in ways that advance personal and organizational goals (Josiah, Audu, & Ogunode, 2023). In higher education, inspiring academic personnel is critical. High motivation leads to improved performance, increased commitment, and beneficial contributions to institutional success.

The management plays an important role in encouraging employees. Effective motivation includes both monetary and non-monetary encouragement. Financial benefits; such as salary raises, bonuses, or allowances; can promote performance and convey appreciation (Forson et al., 2021). Non-monetary factors; such as recognition, training and development, a good working environment, and effective communication, all have a substantial impact on academic staff performance. Recognition, whether public or private, improves employee morale and performance (Musa, 2024). Training and development provide academic workers with new skills and knowledge. This not only improves their performance; but also demonstrates that institutions appreciate investment in their development (Zegullaj et al., 2024). A safe, well-designed, and supportive workplace can increase employee engagement and productivity (Iftikhar et al., 2023). Clear communication by leaders, including communicating goals, expectations, and feedback, leads to increased trust and performance (Iftikhar et al., 2023).

Despite these insights, many academic staff report low motivation due to poor performance management, poor recognition, inadequate training, unfavorable working environment, or poor communication (Macdonald, 2023;). Some studies in Nigeria revealed that higher salaries and more opportunities for development, recognition, and supportive leadership had a substantial impact on academic achievement. However, gaps remain in practice (Omale et al., 2022). Consequently, the purpose of this study is to investigate how various management motivating techniques, such as financial rewards, recognition, training and development, work environment, and communication, affect academic staff performance. Understanding the most important characteristics allows institutions to build better processes that improve worker morale, productivity, and overall institutional success.

Statement of the Problem

Academic institutions rely heavily on their professors to provide high-quality instruction and conduct meaningful research. Every educational system's performance is defined by the quality and expertise of its academic staff, who are central to the system and thus play a vital role in societal progress. According to Issah (2023), one of the key causes of poor institutional performance is a lack of employee incentives from management. However, management incentives to achieve goals might affect the connection between an institution and its members, resulting in improved performance. Numerous studies have been conducted on academic staff performance (Kestrim & Engelbert, 2024; Chigo, 2024). According to Ogunode et al., (2023), the Nigerian education system will continue to face low performance by academic professionals. Furthermore, Babangida, Ibrahim, Usman, and Ibrahim (2023) argued that poor performance among academic personnel has a negative impact on student progress.

Several criteria have been proposed to explain why particular academic staff members perform poorly or well at their institutions. Motivation (Ayoko, 2025); financial rewards (Iftikhar et al., (2023); training and development (Josiah et al., 2023); work conditions (Musa, 2024); communication (Olugbo, Obienu, & Amadin, 2023); and recognition (Musa (2024), among others, have all been considered, but none was conducted in relation to selected colleges of education. In addition, several of these characteristics are predicted to have a significant impact on academic staff performance. Furthermore, only a few studies have

included these variables in a single study. Additionally, a comprehensive examination of the literature on management motivation and academic staff performance has frequently incorporated multiple ideas (like theory of Herzberg, 1966; McClelland, 1962; Skinner, 1953). However, this study used Expectancy Theory to investigate the effect of managerial motivation on academic staff performance. Expectancy Theory emphasizes the importance of incentives for academic staff performance. Given the contradictions in the findings of numerous studies, it is critical to explore the impact of management motivation on academic staff performance in selected Federal Colleges of Education in Nigeria's six geopolitical zones.

Research Questions

1. How do financial incentives affect academic staff performance in Nigerian Federal Colleges of Education across six geopolitical zones?
2. How does recognition impact academic staff performance at Federal Colleges of Education in Nigeria's six geopolitical zones?
3. Does training and development impact academic staff performance in Nigerian Federal Colleges of Education across the six geopolitical zones?
4. How do work conditions affect academic staff performance at Federal Colleges of Education in Nigeria's six geopolitical zones?
5. What impact does communication have on academic staff performance in Nigeria's six geopolitical zones?

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to investigate the impact of management motivation on academic staff performance in selected Federal Colleges of Education in six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. However, the specific objectives of the study areas are as follows;

1. To examine the effect of financial rewards on academic staff performance in selected Federal Colleges of Education in six geopolitical zones in Nigeria.
2. To determine the impact of recognition on academic staff performance in selected Federal Colleges of Education in six geopolitical zones in Nigeria.
3. To evaluate the role of training and development in enhancing academic staff performance in selected Federal Colleges of Education in six geopolitical zones in Nigeria.
4. To examine how work conditions influence academic staff performance in selected Federal Colleges of Education in six geopolitical ones in Nigeria.
5. To investigate the influence of communication on academic staff performance in selected Federal Colleges of Education in six geopolitical zones in Nigeria.

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses were formulated in null.

H₀₁: Financial rewards have no significant impact on academic staff performance in selected Federal Colleges of Education in six geopolitical zones in Nigeria.

H₀₂: Recognition has no significant influence on academic staff performance in selected Federal Colleges of Education in six geopolitical zones in Nigeria.

H₀₃: Training and development have no significant effect on academic staff performance in selected Federal Colleges of Education in six geopolitical zones in Nigeria.

H₀₄: Work conditions have no significant influence on academic staff performance in selected Federal Colleges of Education in six geopolitical zones in Nigeria.

H₀₅: Communication has no significant effect on academic staff performance in selected Federal Colleges of Education in six geopolitical zones in Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework of the Study The Concept of Academic Staff Performance

Academic staff performance refers to how effectively and efficiently academic workers perform their professional tasks; such as teaching, research, mentoring, and administration. According to Josiah et al. (2023) the effectiveness of academic staff is determined by their ability to provide high-quality education, conduct productive research, and contribute to institutional development. Musa (2024) defines academic staff performance as the amount to which lecturers carry out their academic roles and responsibilities, using metrics including student evaluation, research output, and participation in scholarly activities. Similarly, Omale et al. (2023) defined academic performance as a comprehensive assessment of staff contributions to teaching, research, community services, and professional growth within an institution. These definitions emphasize that academic staff effectiveness extends beyond classroom instruction to encompass larger contributions to institutional and societal objectives.

Academic staff performance is critical to the success of higher education institutions, because it has a direct impact on educational and research outcomes. High-performing professors not only increase student outcomes, but also enhance their schools' prestige through papers, grants, and collaborations (Zegullaj et al., 2024). Effective performance management, which includes clear expectations, recognition, and developmental support, is essential for maintaining academic achievement (Omale et al., 2023). Furthermore, fair and consistent performance evaluation can drive academic staff to innovate, engage in lifelong learning, and maintain high professional standards (Musa, 2024). Thus, assessing and improving academic staff performance is critical to achieving quality and sustainability in higher education.

Concept of Management Motivation

Management motivation refers to the tactics, practices, and behaviors used by leaders and managers to inspire, encourage, and retain employees within a company. According to Ogunode et al. (2023), management motivation entails leaders taking purposeful efforts to establish a supportive work environment that promotes employee engagement, satisfaction, and performance. Alhassan and Yusuf (2022) described management motivation as the process by which managers use intrinsic and extrinsic incentives to promote performance and match employee goals with company goals. Similarly, Omale et al. (2023) defined management motivation as a continual effort by supervisors to recognize accomplishments, provide feedback, and remove barriers to employees' performance. These definitions demonstrate that management motivation is a dynamic and continuous activity that aims to boost

workforce morale and productivity. In higher education, effective management motivation is critical for improving the performance of academic staff. Academic staff exhibit higher levels of commitment, originality, and productivity when higher education leaders actively inspire them through recognition, training, development opportunities, and equitable compensation systems (Josiah et al., 2023). Iftikhar et al. (2023) found that supportive and motivating management techniques reduce staff turnover and absenteeism, thus ensuring teaching quality and research excellence. Furthermore, clear communication of expectations and positive feedback from management helps academic staff fulfill and surpass performance criteria (Omale et al., 2023). Consequently, management motivation is an important engine for accomplishing institutional goals and promoting academic performance.

Financial Rewards

Financial rewards encompass all types of monetary remuneration provided to employees in exchange for their services or contributions to the organization. According to Alshammari and AlQahtani (2023), financial rewards include direct payments; such as salaries, bonuses, and allowances designed to recruit, retain, and motivate employees. Similarly, Iftikhar et al., (2023) describe financial rewards as the economic benefits firms offer employees to boost their job satisfaction and performance. Oladipo and Ogunyemi (2022) defined financial rewards as organized monetary incentives linked to performance, accountability, or organizational success. These awards not only meet employees' economic requirements, but also serve as acknowledgment for their accomplishments, promoting excellent workplace behaviors and performance outcomes. Financial incentives have a significant impact on academic staff performance in higher education settings. Academic staff who believe that their pay is fair and competitive are more likely to be committed, satisfied with their jobs, and do better in teaching and research. Studies conducted in Nigerian institutions have found that timely salary payments, performance-based bonuses, and research funds have a significant impact on teachers' motivation and performance (Omale et al., 2022).

Recognition

Recognition is the acknowledgment of an employee's efforts, accomplishments, or contributions to business success. Iftikhar et al. (2023) define acknowledgment as publicly or privately recognizing employees for their excellent behaviors and performance, which develops an appreciation culture. Adebayo and Olamide (2022) define recognition as a non-monetary incentive system that acknowledges an individual's worthwhile reinforcing desired workplace activities and outcomes. Similarly, Musa (2024) defines acknowledgment as vocal praise, written gratitude, awards, or even simple actions such as saying "thank you," which boost motivation and morale. These definitions underline that recognition is more than just a feel-good habit; it is a strategic tool for engaging people and improving their performance. In higher institutions, acknowledgment is especially crucial for academic staff, who frequently endure heavy workloads, limited resources, and pressure to fulfill institutional standards. Recognizing academic personnel for accomplishments such as research publications, teaching excellence, mentorship, or administrative duties may boost motivation and job satisfaction (Josiah et al., 2023). Studies show that

recognition, even in non-financial forms, can increase lecturers' morale and sense of belonging, thereby positively influencing their performance (Omale et al., 2023). When institutions continuously recognize their academic personnel's achievements, this results in stronger dedication, lower attrition, and better overall institutional performance (Zegullaj et al., 2024). Thus, acknowledgment is a significant and cost-effective strategy to increase the effectiveness of academic staff and institutional success.

Training and Development

Training and development are organizational activities that attempt to increase employees' skills, knowledge, and competences so that they can perform better on the job. Yusuf and Lawal (2022) defined training as a planned process that provides individuals with the precise skills necessary to fulfill their current job duties efficiently, whereas development focuses on long-term personal and professional improvement. Ogunode et al. (2023) defined training and development as ongoing educational programs targeted at improving staff capacities to fulfill changing organizational goals. Similarly, Musa (2024) described academic training and development as seminars and workshops that help university professionals enhance their teaching, research, and leadership skills. These definitions underline that training and development are not only corrective; but also strategic, preparing employees for current and future institutional demands. Training and development are critical for improving the academic staff performance in higher institutions. Well-designed training programs assist lecturers in staying current with new teaching methods, research approaches, and technological tools, thus increasing their efficiency, effectiveness, and performance in the classroom and beyond (Josiah et al., 2023). Furthermore, investing in staff development through conferences, sabbaticals, or postgraduate opportunities enhances morale and communicates institutional support, both of which improve performance (Omale et al., 2023). A recent study indicates that academic staff who receive regular professional development are more motivated, engaged, and productive in teaching, research, and community involvement (Iftikhar et al., 2023). Thus, training and development are critical measures to increase institutional capacity and achieve academic excellence.

Work Conditions

Work conditions are related to physical, psychological, and environmental variables that shape the environment in which employees perform their responsibilities. According to Iftikhar et al. (2023), work conditions include the office layout, safety, resources, workload, and interpersonal connections in the workplace. Ogunode et al. (2023) described work conditions as the organizational environment; including infrastructure, administrative support, and policies, that influences how employees carry out their obligations. Similarly, Musa (2024) noted that work environments in academic institutions include facilities, instructional tools, Internet connectivity, and a supportive management culture, all of which contribute to staff satisfaction and performance. These concepts emphasize that good working conditions are essential for employee well-being and productivity. In higher education, work conditions have a substantial impact on motivation and performance of academic staff. A supportive work environment that includes access to research resources, comfortable office spaces, reliable power, and adequate instructional

aids enhances job satisfaction and effectiveness (Josiah et al., 2023). According to research, poor infrastructure, a lack of teaching materials, and administrative inefficiencies all contribute to occupational stress and disengagement among lecturers (Omale et al., 2023). When institutions engage in enhancing their working circumstances, academic personnel are more likely to show increased commitment, teaching quality, and research production (Zegullaj et al., 2024). Thus, work conditions are more than just operational concerns; they are also strategic factors for academic quality and institutional success.

Communication

Communication is the exchange of information, ideas, and emotions between individuals or groups, with the goal of achieving understanding and alignment. According to Iftikhar et al. (2023), workplace communication includes both official and informal contacts that affect employees' understanding of their roles, responsibilities, and expected outcomes. Musa (2024) characterizes communication as the lifeblood of organizational operations, emphasizing how successful twoway communication generates trust, clarity, and cooperation between employees and executives. Similarly, Adebayo and Ogunleye (2022) define communication as a strategic management instrument that influences employee behavior, promotes transparency, and strengthens institutional coherence. These definitions emphasize that communication is more than just an exchange of information; it is essential for managing relationships and performance within an organization. In academic institutions, good communication has a considerable impact on staff performance by cultivating a culture of clarity, support, and involvement. Clear communication of institutional goals, policies, and expectations enables academic staff to connect their work with organizational objectives (Josiah et al., 2023). When communication channels are open, academic staff feel heard, valued, and devoted to their teaching and research roles (Omale et al., 2023). Furthermore, frequent feedback and constructive discussions between administrators and employees build confidence and eliminate misunderstandings, resulting in higher morale and productivity (Zegullaj et al., 2024). By contrast, ineffective communication can lead to low motivation, confusion, and disengagement. Thus, constant and clear communication is a vital factor for academic performance and institutional effectiveness.

Empirical Studies Empirical studies on the Relationship Between Management Motivation and Academic Staff Performance

Abubakar, et al., 2022) conducted a study at Bauchi State University to investigate the influence of remuneration, promotion, work satisfaction, and productivity on academic staff performance. This study used a quantitative research method, namely, a cross-sectional survey. Data from 285 academic staff were analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings revealed that salary and promotion considerably increased performance, while salary reduced the association between job happiness and performance. The study recommends that university administrators provide competitive compensation, implement clear and fair promotion processes, and invest in career development programs to increase productivity and work satisfaction.

Hussaini et al. (2021) investigated the impact of motivation and working environment on academic staff performance in two Nigerian polytechnics. This study used a quantitative, cross-sectional survey. The study's population consisted of academic staff from two Nigerian polytechnics. A questionnaire was used to obtain primary data. Using PLS-SEM on data obtained from 299 academic staff members, the authors discovered that both characteristics were positively related to staff performance. Motivation and the working environment were both found to be favorably connected with academic staff performance. Working environment did not influence the relationship between motivation and performance. The study suggests that management prioritizes direct motivational tactics (such as recognition, financial incentives, and capacity building). They should also invest in workplace upgrades, but keep in mind that motivation has a greater direct impact on performance than environmental factors.

Empirical Studies on the Relationship Between Financial Rewards and Academic Staff Performance

Babbuli and Aliyu (2024) investigated the impact of financial compensation systems; such as pay structures and advancement possibilities; on academic staff performance at Adamawa State University in Mubi (Nigeria). This study used a descriptive survey design. The study's sample consisted of 50 academic personnel from a school. A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data. The Data were analyzed using regression and Pearson's correlations. Financial pay strategies have been proven to have a substantial impact on academic staff professional advancement and job output. The study suggested that university administrators assess and improve pay structures, provide clear career pathways for academic staff (e.g., promotions, study leaves, training sponsorship), and ensure timely and equal compensation to promote dedication and productivity.

Ejumudo and Ejumudo (2023) This study, conducted at the Federal University of Petroleum Resources in Delta State, Nigeria, looked at the relationship between organizational incentives (both monetary and non-monetary) and academic staff performance. The study's sample consisted of 95 academic staff members from the school. This study employs quantitative survey research methods. A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data. The Data were analyzed using correlation and regression analyses. This study demonstrated a substantial positive association between organizational incentives (monetary and non-monetary) and lecturers' academic achievement. The study recommends that institutions build complete incentive structures, integrate monetary rewards with non-monetary assistance (e.g., recognition and; promotion chances), and establish transparent performance evaluation methods to align rewards with outcomes.

Empirical Studies on the Relationship Between Recognition and Academic Staff Performance

Enyioko (2025) investigated the impact of official and informal recognition systems on employee motivation and retention as a proxy for the performance context at private Nigerian universities. This study used a quantitative mixed method approach that included both surveys and interviews. The sample size was 320 academic and administrative workers from selected private universities in Nigeria. Structured surveys and interviews were conducted to collect data in a qualitative manner. The data were examined using multiple regression analysis The findings demonstrate that acknowledgment has a favorable and

significant impact on employee motivation and retention. It has been suggested that private institutions incorporate recognition-based measures (both official and informal) to develop commitment and limit turnover, thus enabling indirect improvements in performance.

Wakabi and Balikuddembe (2024) explored the link between employee recognition and performance among academic and administrative workers at Ugandan University. This study uses a quantitative survey design. The survey included 1,000 academic and administrative workers from several public and private universities. The study had a sample size of 313 respondents, most likely drawn using normal sampling procedures. Stratified and random sampling procedures were used to ensure representation across the staff types and institutions. Structured questionnaires were distributed to the responders. Data were analyzed using SPSS for multiple regression and descriptive statistics. The study found that employee recognition, remuneration (compensation), and organizational atmosphere have a significantly favorable impact on performance. There is a substantial positive association between recognition and staff performance, and the study recommended that academic staff receive sufficient acknowledgment when necessary to improve their performance.

Empirical Studies on the Relationship Between Training and Development and Academic Staff Performance

Adamu and Mafindi (2024) evaluated the impact of training on productivity in Nigerian educational colleges. This study uses a correlational survey approach. The sample size was 833 academic personnel from 12 colleges of education in northeast Nigeria. The data collection instrument included a structured questionnaire focusing on CPD, training needs assessments, and institutional assistance. The data were evaluated using Pearson correlation. The results revealed that CPD positively influence teaching effectiveness, research output, and job satisfaction. The study advocated increasing financing, conducting regular training needs assessments, increasing institutional leadership engagement, and improving the ICT infrastructure to improve T&D outcomes.

Adamu et al. (2025) investigated the effects of training and development on productivity in the Niger State Polytechnic. The study employed a quantitative survey research design; that included hypothesis testing (chi-square) and descriptive statistics. The sample size was 367 academic personnel from various departments who received training through the TETFund (local and international, 2010-2023), with 184 respondents selected using the Krejcie and Morgan table. Stratified and basic random sampling techniques were used. A structured questionnaire was used for the data collection. Data were analyzed using simple percentages and chi-square tests, with a significance level of 5%. Training and development have been shown to improve productivity in terms of knowledge, teaching methods, research quality, and qualifications. The study concludes that academic institutions should provide ongoing and equitable training opportunities for academic personnel to maximize productivity and institutional goals.

Empirical Studies on the Relationship Between Work Conditions and Academic Staff Performance

Paul, Dare, and Obasi (2024) examined the impact of the work environment on academic staff at the University of Abuja. This study used a descriptive survey design. The survey included 678 academic

workers from the University of Abuja. The sample size was 252 respondents drawn from the population and calculated using Taro Yamane's formula. The data gathering strategy was designed using questionnaires distributed to respondents, with expert evaluations to ensure validity. Data were coded using SPSS v22 and analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression. The results revealed a positive and significant effect of the work environment on academic staff performance. It has been advised that academic institutions create an enabling climate by reducing workloads, providing research grants, and supporting training and workload management. This is critical for improving academic achievement. Idowu and Aderonke (2025) investigated the impact of the work environment on academic staff at public universities in north-central Nigeria. This study used a descriptive survey approach to assess the physical and psychological components of the work environment. The survey included academic personnel from 13 public universities in north-central Nigeria. This study used a sample of 381 respondents. Respondents were selected using a random sampling procedure. Structured questionnaires were distributed to participants from the surveyed universities. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results revealed that work environment had a positive and significant impact on academic staff performance. The study recommended that academic workers be provided with a good work environment to perform optimally.

Empirical Studies on the Relationship Between Communication and Academic Staff Performance

Olugbo et al., (2023) investigated the impact of Effective Communication on Institutional Performance in Higher Education at Bayelsa State University, Nigeria. This study used a quantitative descriptive research design. The study population included chief officers, deans, directors, heads of departments, academics, and senior non-academic workers. This study used a sample of 180 participants. The data collection instrument was a standardized questionnaire administered to the sampled workforce. The data were examined using factor and analysis ANOVA. Communication components such as communication processes, culture/climate, verbal/nonverbal cues, and communication techniques, have been proven to have a considerable positive impact on employee performance. The findings revealed that good communication greatly improves staff performance (both academic and non-academic) within an institution. The study suggests that institutions adopt effective communication tactics in their management procedures to reduce conflict, explain misunderstandings, and build positive connections.

Okeleke and Oladejo (2021) investigated information sharing and academic staff performance in Public Colleges of Education in Southwest Nigeria. This study used a quantitative (survey) and a qualitative research design. The survey included 3,377 academic personnel and 20,211 final-year students from six colleges. The sample size was 4,080 participants (480 academic staff and 3,600 students). A random sample procedure was used to ensure representative coverage. A questionnaire was used as the data collection instrument. The data were examined using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and the chi-square test. A significant effect was observed ($\chi^2 = 11.09$; $p < 0.05$). The findings revealed that effective information exchange by academic staff had a considerable impact on their work performance; according to both staff and student ratings. The study recommends that institutions promote effective

information-sharing mechanisms and positive communication attitudes to improve staff performance and collegiality.

Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study is based on Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory. This theory provides a solid framework for understanding how management motivation may improve academic staff performance by focusing on the psychological mechanisms that connect effort, performance, and rewards. This theory states that academic staff will be motivated to perform well if they believe that their efforts will result in successful performance (expectancy), that this performance will be appropriately rewarded (instrumentality), and that the rewards offered are valuable to them (valence) (Chileskar, 2025). Management in educational institutions can apply this theory by ensuring transparent performance evaluation systems, providing the resources and support required for staff success, and aligning incentives such as promotions, professional development opportunities, or recognition with staff preferences (Robbins & Judge, 2023). Recent research confirms that when academic staff see a clear and attainable link between their efforts and desired rewards, motivation and performance rise dramatically (Wakabi & Balikuddembe, 2024). As a result, Expectancy Theory anchors management motivation by guiding leaders in developing motivation strategies that increase beliefs in the link between effort and performance, ensure equitable reward systems, and provide meaningful incentives, all of which contribute to academic staff productivity and institutional success.

Methodology

This study used a descriptive survey design. The population of the study was 5424 academic staff in the selected colleges of education in six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. The sample size of the study was 373, was obtained using a simplified formular by Yamane in Israel (1992). This formular was used because it calculates the sample sizes especially when the population is large. A simple random sampling technique was used to select sample. The unit of analysis of the study was the academic staff who were randomly selected from the chosen colleges of education. The instrument used for data collection was a closed-ended, structured questionnaire. This study adapted items suitable for measuring the various constructs of this study from previous studies. The questionnaire was designed using 5-point Likert scales ratings of "strongly disagree" (1) and "strongly agree" (5). Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability coefficients were used to establish the reliability of the instrument. A face validity assessment by experts in this area of academic discipline was also conducted. The Data were coded using SPSS version 27.0. The null hypotheses were tested using a multiple regression analysis at a significance level of 0.05.

Table 1: Reliability Analysis; Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability

Construct	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Financial Rewards	4	0.88	0.91
Recognition	4	0.85	0.89

Training and Development	5	0.87	0.90
Work Conditions	4	0.83	0.87
Communication	5	0.86	0.89
Academic Staff Performance	6	0.89	0.92

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

Table 1 reveals that all constructs have good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha; financial rewards (0.88), recognition (0.85), training and development (0.87), work conditions (0.83), communication (0.86) and academic staff performance (0.89). Similarly, Composite Reliability values financial rewards (0.91), recognition (0.89), training and development (0.90), work conditions (0.87), communication (0.89) and academic staff performance (0.92) are greater than the recommended level of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2022). This ensured that the components in each construct accurately measure the specified concepts.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Variables in the Study

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.
Academic Staff Performance	373	3.78	0.61
Financial Rewards	373	3.45	0.72
Recognition	373	3.68	0.65
Training and Development	373	3.82	0.70
Work Conditions	373	3.59	0.67
Communication	373	3.74	0.63

Source: SPSS Output, 2025

In Table 2, a means of 3.78 and a standard deviation of = 0.61 were recorded for academic staff performance, which is above the average of 3.0 in the study. This implies that academic staff members perceive their performance to be high. The mean of 3.45 and standard deviation of 0.72 were recorded for financial rewards which are also above average. This means that the academic staff is satisfied with the financial rewards given to them. This shows that academic staff are concern about the recognition provided to them in colleges. This means that the academic staff is satisfied with the financial rewards given to them. This shows that academic staff are concerned about the recognition provided to them in colleges. The mean for training and development was 3.82 with a standard deviation of 0.70. work condition had a mean of 3.59 and a standard deviation of 0.67. This is also above average and implies that staff are developing concerns over work conditions. Communication has a mean of 3.74 and a standard deviation of 0.63. This implies that the academic staff receive effective and timely communication at work.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Results on the Relationship Between the Independent and Dependent Variables in the Study

Variables	Beta	Std. Error	T. Value	Sig. (p)	Decision Rule on H0
Financial Rewards	0.182	0.046	3.96	0.001**	Not Accepted
Recognition	0.214	0.052	4.11	0.000***	Not Accepted
Training and Development	0.289	0.048	6.02	0.000***	Not Accepted
Work Conditions	0.134	0.051	2.82	0.003**	Not Accepted
Communication	0.245	0.047	5.21	0.000***	Not Accepted
R	0.610				
R ²	0.612				
F	87.460				
P Value	0.000				

Source: SPSS Output, 2025**Findings and Interpretations**

Table 3 shows that financial rewards have a favorable and significant impact on academic staff performance ($\beta=0.182$, p value =0.001 at 0.05). Thus, the null hypothesis, which claims that financial rewards have no substantial effect on academic staff performance, was rejected. Table 3 shows that academic staff performance was considerably influenced by recognition ($\beta = 0.214$, p = 0.000, p < 0.01). The second null hypothesis which claims that recognition has no substantial effect on academic staff performance, is not accepted. Table 3 shows that training and development have a favorable and significant impact on academic staff performance ($\beta=0.289$ and p value=0.000 at the 0.01 significance level. The third null hypothesis which claims that training and development have no meaningful effect on academic staff performance, is not accepted. Work conditions had a favorable and substantial effect on academic staff performance ($\beta=0.134$, p value =.0003 at 0.05). Thus, the null hypothesis four was rejected. Table 3 demonstrates that communication has a favorable and substantial effect on academic staff performance ($\beta=0.245$, p value=0.000 at 0.01 significance level). The null hypothesis five, which claims that communication has no substantial effect on academic staff performance, is not accepted. R² was 0.612, indicating that financial rewards, recognition, training and development, work conditions, and communication account for 61.2% of the variation in academic staff performance. The remaining 38.8% were explained by the characteristics not included in this study.

Discussion of Findings Financial Rewards

The findings in Table 3 demonstrated that financial incentives have a positive and significant effect on academic staff performance. These results are congruent with the findings of Babbuli and Aliyu (2024) who discovered that financial compensation methods had a substantial impact on both professional

progress and work output among academic personnel. The findings also complement those of Ejumudo and Ejumudo (2023), who discovered a substantial positive link between organizational incentives (monetary and non-monetary) and lecturers' academic performance. Financial rewards had a significant impact on academic staff performance. When financial benefits are linked to performance goals, academic personnel have stronger morale, lower turnover intentions, and a greater desire for professional growth. Consequently, smart financial incentives can be used to drive both individual and institutional success in academics.

Recognition

Recognition has a significant effect on the performance of the academic staff. This means that the more academic professionals are acknowledged, the better they perform. This finding is consistent with previous research (Enyioko, 2025; Wakabi & Balikuddembe, 2024), which discovered that employee recognition, salary (compensation), and organizational climate all have a strong favorable impact on performance. There is a significant and favorable relationship between recognition and academic staff performance. The report advised that academic workers to be given appropriate recognition, as necessary to improve their performance. Recognizing academic personnel for accomplishments such as research publications, teaching excellence, mentorship, or administrative duties may boost motivation and job satisfaction (Josiah et al., 2023). Studies suggest that appreciation, especially in non-financial forms, can improve lecturers' morale and sense of belonging, thereby positively influencing their performance.

Training and Development

Training and development have a significant effect on academic staff performance. These findings are consistent with those of previous research (Adamu et al., 2025; Adamu, 2024), which revealed that training and development had a favorable and significant impact on academic staff productivity and performance. The strong influence of training and development is consistent with previous research indicating that continual professional development is crucial for motivation and job performance, particularly in knowledge-intensive industries such as higher education. These opportunities encourage workers to innovate and thrive in their teaching and research responsibilities, improving their institutional performance. Well-designed training programs enable lecturers to stay current with new teaching methods, research methodologies, and technologically tools, thus boosting their effectiveness in the classroom and beyond.

Work Conditions

Table 3 shows that working conditions had a positive and significant impact on academic staff performance. Work conditions have a substantial impact on academic staff's motivation and performance. This validates the findings of (Idowu & Aderonke; 2025) and Paul et al. (2024), who found that work conditions have a positive and significant impact on academic staff performance. A supportive work environment that includes access to research resources, comfortable office spaces, a consistent power supply, and adequate teaching aids encourages better job performance. The modest impact of working conditions emphasizes the necessity of creating a positive physical and psychological environment.

Communication

The study also found that good communication has a positive and significant influence on academic staff performance. This finding is consistent with previous research (Olugbo et al., 2023; Okeleke & Oladejo, 2021), which found that good communication greatly improves staff performance (both academic and non-academic) with the organization. In academic institutions, good communication has a considerable impact on staff performance by cultivating a culture of clarity, support and involvement. Clear communication lowers ambiguity and aligns expectations between management and employees, there by promoting a collaborative work culture.

Conclusion

This study confirms that management motivation has a considerable impact on academic staff performance. The independent variables, financial rewards, recognition, training and development, work conditions and communication have positive significant impact on academic staff performance in selected federal colleges of education in six geopolitical zones in Nigeria. Together, these characteristics account for 59% of the variation in academic staff performance, highlighting their importance in organizational success within academic institutions. The findings underscore the importance of a comprehensive approach that includes good communication, continuing professional development, suitable financial and non-financial rewards, and conducive work conditions to maximize academic staff performance. Institutions that overlook these aspects are at risk of poor performance and low employee morale.

Recommendations

The study recommends that academic institutions should continue to;

1. Provide adequate financial rewards in a fair and transparent manner to enhance academic staff performance.
2. Give good recognition system that will boost academic staff morale for optimum performance
3. Invest in ongoing training and development to help employees grow their skills and match with institutional goals.
4. Enhance work environments with enough resources, supportive management, and policies that prioritize work-life balance.
5. Improve communication with academic staff by establishing frequent forums, providing transparent feedback, and defining clear goals.

Limitations

1. The study's cross-sectional design restricts the capacity to draw causation between motivation and performance.
2. Data was gathered only from academic personnel at Federal Colleges of Education, which may limit generalizability.
3. Self-reported questionnaires may include social desirability and answer bias.

Suggestions for more research

1. Use longitudinal designs to measure motivation and performance changes over time.

2. Increase the sample size to include other tertiary institutions for comparison analysis.
3. Explore additional dimensions, including leadership style, company culture, and psychological empowerment.
4. Conduct qualitative research to gain deeper insights into the motivational drivers and barriers faced by academic personnel.

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