

Effect of Work Environment on Employee's Performance in Public Tertiary Institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria

Arkila Yelmi¹, Saul Bondiron Hatamo², Dr. Alhaji Adamu Idris³

^{1,2}Adamawa State, University, ³Abubakar Tatar Ali Polytechnic, Bauchi

Corresponding author, kenyayelme82@gmail.com

Abstract: The study focused on the impact of the work environment on employee performance in tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State. The research used a descriptive survey design and included the entire academic and non-academic staff of three institutions, totaling 3,248 individuals. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the scale's reliability, with a score of 0.7 indicating reliability. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyze the data. The results showed a positive relationship between ergonomics and employee performance, as well as a positive association between the reward system and performance. Additionally, workload was found to significantly affect employee performance. Staff members expressed feeling overworked and lacking sufficient breaks, supporting the hypothesis that workload impacts performance. On the other hand, the study confirmed the hypothesis that the work environment has a significant effect on employee performance, with staff actively contributing to their teams and the university, effectively communicating, and maintaining regular attendance. Based on these findings, the study recommends that tertiary institutions in Mubi prioritize improving the physical work environment by investing in ergonomic facilities. It is also suggested that institutions establish a reward system to recognize and incentivize exceptional performance, including bonuses, promotions, and other forms of motivation. These measures aim to enhance employee performance in tertiary institutions.

Keywords: Work Environment, Ergonomics, Reward System, Workload, Employee and Employee Performance:

1. Introduction

The workplace environment of an employee determines the quality of work and productivity level in the organization. A conducive workplace environment motivates and enhances employee skills which influence employee's error rate, output rate, innovation level, collaboration with others, absenteeism, and length of service (Ezenwakwelu et al., 2018). Work systems specifically affect commitment, competence, and cost-effectiveness but also have long-term consequences for workers' well-being. There is some evidence to indicate that work system designs may have effects on physical health, mental health, and longevity of life itself (Spector and Beer, 1994).

The work environment plays a crucial role in shaping employees' performance and productivity in any organization. It encompasses various factors that influence individuals' experiences, well-being, and effectiveness within the workplace. In the context of public tertiary institutions

in Mubi, Adamawa State, understanding the effect of the work environment on employees' performance is of utmost importance. The work environment in these institutions comprises not only the physical aspects but also the social, psychological, and organizational elements that impact employees' daily work experiences and outcomes. According to Haines et al. (2019), some of the workplace environmental factors that affect employees' performance include; ergonomics, reward system, and workload. Ergonomics, which refers to the design of the workplace to fit the needs and capabilities of employees, involves creating an environment that minimizes physical strain, discomfort, and the risk of work-related injuries. In public tertiary institutions, employees, including lecturers and administrative staff, spend a significant amount of time engaged in tasks that require prolonged sitting, computer use, and repetitive motions. A poorly designed work environment lacking proper ergonomics can lead to discomfort, fatigue, and musculoskeletal issues, ultimately affecting employees' performance and productivity (Ajayi, 2019).

The workplace environment is the sum of the interrelationships that exist between the employees and the environment in which they work (Kohun, 2012). According to Heath (2016), this environment involves the physical location as well as the immediate surroundings, behavioral procedures, policies, rules, culture, resources, working relationships, and work location, all of which influence the ways employees perform their work. The quality of the workplace environment impacts employees' performance and subsequently influences the organization's competitiveness. An effective workplace environment management entails making the work environment attractive, comfortable, satisfactory, and motivating to employees to give employees a sense of pride and purpose in what they do (Humphries, 2015). Employees will and are always contented when they feel their immediate environment; both physical sensations and emotional states are in tandem with their obligations (Farh, 2012) and how well employees connect with their organization's immediate workplace environment, influences to a great extent their error rate levels, efficiency, and innovativeness, collaboration with other employees, absenteeism and, ultimately their retention (Leblebici, 2012)

A healthy workplace environment makes good business sense and is characterized by respect that supports employee engagement and creates a high-performance culture that encourages innovation and creativity (Kohun, 2012). Organizations deemed as a positive place to work will more likely have a competitive edge since they are in a better position to attract and retain highly skilled employees. This is a significant consideration in the current tight labor market. A positive workplace environment is likely to result in less employee turnover, fewer cases of fraud, better safety practices, easier attracting and retaining qualified employees, and improved employees well-being (Cunnen, 2016). In almost all high-performing banks, one message holds above them all "People are an organization's most important asset (O'Neill, 2017).

Nowadays, the workplace is highly dynamic, thus, the orthodox employee-employer relation has been turned upside-down; implying that employees are now in a new era with unlimited job opportunities. However, even though an effective workplace is a condition for performance

improvement, still organizational workplace still presents an absence of safety, health, and comfort challenges. Employees in an unsupportive workplace invariably result in occupational health diseases leading to low performance. Thus, organizations in the 21st cannot survive (in the long run) without careful workplace consideration. Although organizations in Nigeria, like their counterparts across the globe, operate within an environment, however, despite the scholastic renaissance, especially among contemporary scholars on the instrumentality, topicality, and primacy of the workplace as a decider of employees' performance, studies devoted to this area in Nigeria are unexplainably and unmistakably scanty, thus leading the researcher to assess whether workplace environment affects employees' performance in Nigerian tertiary institutions especially in Mubi, Adamawa State.

2. Statement of Problem

The work environment plays a crucial role in shaping employees' performance and job satisfaction. A supportive and conducive work environment not only enhances employees' productivity but also contributes to their overall well-being. However, the impact of the work environment on employees' performance in tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria has not been extensively studied. This statement of problem aims to address the gap in knowledge by examining the effect of the work environment on employees' performance in these institutions. In an ideal situation, tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State would provide a work environment that promotes employees' satisfaction, engagement, and productivity. The ideal work environment would include adequate resources, modern technological tools, safe and healthy conditions, realistic expectations, fair compensation, and effective candidate screening processes (Jackson, 1981). It would foster a sense of belonging and motivation among employees, enabling them to utilize their knowledge, skills, and competencies effectively to deliver high-quality services to the institution.

However, the current work environment in tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State appears to be inadequate and unsupportive, leading to several negative consequences. Employees, including teaching staff, have been observed to be dissatisfied and face various challenges. Insufficient basic facilities for teaching, learning, and research hinder the ability of lecturers to effectively meet the diverse needs of students (Bushir, 2014). Moreover, the lack of documented evidence on workload management practices among staff members suggests a potential absence of strategies to manage workload within tertiary institutions in Mubi. These issues contribute to a high turnover rate among staff, including teaching staff, in the institutions (Gomathi et al., 2020). To address the challenges of the work environment in tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, several efforts have been made. Trade unions and academic staff have engaged in negotiations and conflicts with school administrations to advocate for better working conditions and adherence to staff appointment criteria (Bello, 2004). However, these efforts have not fully resolved the underlying issues. The persistence of workplace-related problems, including unsatisfactory working conditions, underfunding, rising absenteeism, brain drain, and low job satisfaction, indicates that more comprehensive measures are needed to improve the

work environment and retain skilled employees (Salau et al., 2018; Obateru, 2013; Okebukonla, 2008; Ige, 2014; Okoro et al., 2014; Adeyemi & Ekundayo, 2010; NUC, 2015; Nwagwu, 2015).

The unfavorable work environment in tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State has significant consequences for both the institutions and the employees. High turnover rates disrupt teams, increase costs, reduce productivity, and lead to the loss of valuable institutional knowledge (Gomathi et al., 2020). Moreover, the remaining employees experience increased workloads and stress levels due to understaffing and the departure of experienced colleagues. These consequences further contribute to reduced institutional productivity and hinder the achievement of the institution's mission and goals. Despite the existing literature on the factors influencing employee turnover and job satisfaction, there is a notable gap in knowledge regarding the specific impact of the work environment on employees' performance in tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State. Previous studies have primarily focused on general factors contributing to turnover and job dissatisfaction, neglecting the unique context and challenges faced by employees in these institutions. Therefore, there is a need for a comprehensive investigation into the relationship between work environment and employees' performance, as well as the underlying factors

3. Research Questions

- i. What considerations are made for ergonomics in tertiary institutions within Mubi, Adamawa State?
- ii. What functional reward system is implemented by tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State?
- iii. What is the effectiveness of workload management in tertiary institutions located in Mubi, Adamawa State?

4. Objectives of the Study

- i. Assess ergonomics as it affects employee performance within tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State.
- ii. Examine the reward system as it affects employee performance within tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State.
- iii. evaluate workload effect on employee performance within tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State.

5. Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: Ergonomics has no significant effect on employee performance within tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State.

H₀₂: The reward system has no significant effect on employee performance within tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State.

H₀₃: Workload has no significant effect on employee performance within tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State.

6. Methodology

The descriptive (survey) design was adopted for the study; the choice of descriptive research design is premised on its value and feasibility in addressing the research problem raised in the study. Its applicability for collecting standardized data allowed the researcher to create information for precisely answering questions concerning the impact of the work environment on employee performance in tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State. Besides, the data structures created from survey methods will increase the researcher's ability to make generalized inferences about the defined target population as a whole.

7. Population of the Study

The population of this study consisted of the entire Academics and Non-academics staff of Adamawa State University, Mubi, Federal Polytechnic, Mubi, and College of Health Technology Mubi making a total population of 3,248.

Staff Category	Adamawa State University, Mubi	Federal Polytechnic, Mubi	College of Health Technology, Michika	Total
Academic Staff	263	719	33	1,015
Non-Academic Staff	492	1654	87	2,233
Total	755	2373	120	3248

Source: Institutions' Registry

In the course of this study, the sample of the respondents was drawn using the Yaro Yamane simplified formula at a 95% level of confidence, after which the proportionate stratified sampling method was used to assign the sample size for each stratum (academic and non-academic staff) at each of the institutions. The Yaro Yamane formula is given by:

Where: n = corrected sample size

N = Population size

e = Margin of error (0.05 at 95% level of confidence).

This sample size is calculated thus;

The sample size of this study is therefore adjudged to be 356 respondents. This is further calculated as shown below to ascertain the strata sample size.

Institution	Strata	Population	Sample Size
Adamawa State University, Mubi	Academic staff	263	
	Non-Academic Staff	492	
	Academic staff	33	

College of Health Technology, Mubi	Non-Academic Staff	87	
Federal Polytechnic Mubi	Academic Staff	719	
	Non-Academic Staff	1654	
Total		3248	356

Source: Researcher's computation (2023)

8. Result and Findings

Based on the results of this study, it is evident that the workplace environment significantly affects employee performance within tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State. This finding is in line with the study conducted by Aliyu et al. (2019) which suggests that workplace factors have a significant impact on employee performance. Specifically, the study found that ergonomic factors such as the design of workstations and furniture have a significant positive effect on employee performance. This is consistent with the findings of other recent studies such as Alipour et al. (2019) and Kebriyai and Zarei (2020) who also found that ergonomic factors have a positive effect on employee performance.

In addition, the study found that reward systems have a significant positive effect on employee performance, which is in agreement with the findings of previous studies such as Zhu et al. (2019) and Agyemang and Afrifa (2021). These studies highlight the importance of a fair and effective reward system in motivating employees to perform at a higher level. Furthermore, the study found that workload has a significant negative effect on employee performance, which is consistent with the findings of other recent studies such as Arulrajah et al. (2019) and Balogun et al. (2020). These studies suggest that excessive workload can lead to stress and burnout, which in turn can negatively impact employee performance.

Overall, the findings of this study emphasize the need for institutions to pay attention to the workplace environment and implement strategies to improve employee performance. Specifically, institutions should focus on implementing ergonomic interventions and effective reward systems while also ensuring that workload is managed appropriately to avoid negative impacts on employee performance.

9. Summary

This study examines the effect of work environment on employee performance in tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State. The study was divided into five chapters. The main themes of the study were outlined in chapter one. In the chapter, the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, research hypotheses, scope covered by the study, and significance of the study.

In this study, a review of both the theoretical and empirical literature on the key variables of the study was done. The chapter began by reviewing relevant studies on the concept of work environment and its determinants, concepts of ergonomics, rewards system, and workload and their effect on employee performance. Also, a review of theoretical approaches to entrepreneurial education was done and the conceptual framework was developed based on the review of the related literature. Finally, an empirical review was done on the effect of work environment on employee performance, and gaps were identified from the review.

The research methodology used to achieve the objectives of the study was discussed in chapter three. In the chapter, research design, area of the study, population of the study, sample and sampling technique, method of data collection, research instruments, validity and reliability test of the research instruments, study variables, and measurement, and method of data analysis were discussed.

The data analysis and results of the study are presented in chapter four. In the chapter, the descriptive analysis of the respondents was presented. Also, the result of the relationship among the variables of the study was presented and analyzed. In addition, the result of the hypotheses tests of the influence of independent variables on the dependent variables is presented, analyzed, and interpreted.

10. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study aimed to investigate the effect of work environment on employee performance in tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State. The study found that ergonomics, reward systems, and workload significantly affect employee performance in the studied institutions. The study also found that workload hurts employee performance. These findings suggest that tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State should consider improving their work environment by implementing ergonomic measures, designing an effective reward system, and managing workload to enhance employee performance.

Institutions need to recognize the importance of a positive work environment in achieving high levels of employee performance. The results of this study are consistent with previous research that has highlighted the importance of the work environment on employee performance (Akintayo et al., 2021; Ali et al., 2019; Waziri et al., 2020). Therefore, institutions should prioritize the implementation of policies and practices that promote a positive work environment to ensure the well-being and productivity of their employees. Overall, this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between work environment and employee performance in tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State. However, further research is needed to explore other factors that may affect employee performance in these institutions, as well as in other regions in Nigeria.

11. Recommendation

Based on the results and conclusions of the study on the effect of work environment on employee performance in tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, the following recommendations are suggested to be implemented:

- i. Tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State should prioritize the improvement of the physical work environment by investing in ergonomic facilities and ensuring that the facilities are up-to-date and meet the needs of the employees.
- ii. Tertiary institutions should establish a reward system that recognizes and rewards exceptional performance by employees. This can include bonuses, promotions, and other incentives to motivate employees to perform at their best.
- iii. Workload management strategies such as task prioritization, job rotation, and delegation should be employed in tertiary institutions to prevent excessive workloads that could affect the productivity and health of employees.

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