

AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT OF JOB SATISFACTION AND STAFF-TYPE AT THE POLYTECHNIC, IBADAN.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates variations in job satisfaction between academic and non-academic staff at The Polytechnic, Ibadan, with a view to understanding how staff roles influence workplace experiences in public tertiary institutions. Despite the growing body of research on employee motivation in Nigerian higher education, limited attention has been given to the nexus between job satisfaction and staff-type within same institutional context. Adopting a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 446 respondents selected through stratified sampling from a population of 1,053 staff members. The instrument used was a structured questionnaire designed to capture key dimensions of job satisfaction. Findings indicate that academic staff reported relatively higher levels of job satisfaction (76.5%) compared to their non-academic counterparts (64.0%). The chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 7.56, p < 0.01$) confirmed a statistically significant relationship between staff category and job satisfaction. The results suggest that differences in job structure, access to professional development opportunities, and recognition systems may account for the observed variation. The study concludes that job satisfaction in polytechnic institutions is not uniform across staff categories and should not be managed using generalized policies. It recommends the implementation of targeted human resource strategies that address the specific needs of both academic and non-academic staff in order to enhance overall institutional performance.

Keywords: *Academic staff, Job satisfaction, motivation, productivity, non-academic staff, Polytechnic Ibadan.*

INTRODUCTION

Employees remain central to the performance and sustainability of higher education institutions, particularly in knowledge-driven environments where service delivery and institutional effectiveness depend largely on human capital (Michael Armstrong, 2020; Stephen P. Robbins & Timothy A. Judge, 2022). In the context of Nigerian polytechnics, where the mandate extends beyond teaching to include technical skill development and innovation, job satisfaction plays a critical role in shaping employee performance and organizational outcomes (Sani & Udoma, 2024).

Job satisfaction has been widely recognized as a key determinant of employee commitment, productivity, and retention across organizations (Robbins & Judge, 2022). In tertiary institutions, satisfied staff are more likely to contribute positively to teaching quality, administrative efficiency, and student outcomes. However, evidence from Nigerian public institutions suggests that structural challenges such as inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, and inconsistent policy frameworks continue to influence employee experiences and satisfaction levels (Olorunsola & Olayemi, 2020; Oshotoye *et al.*, 2023).

Within the polytechnic system, academic and non-academic staff operate under different institutional conditions and role expectations. Academic staff are primarily responsible for teaching, research, and knowledge dissemination, often enjoying a degree of professional autonomy and intellectual engagement. In contrast, non-academic staff provide administrative, technical, and support services that are essential for institutional operations but may be associated with limited recognition and slower career progression (Akinwale & George, 2020; Oshotoye *et al.*, 2023).

Empirical studies indicate that these structural differences significantly influence job satisfaction. For instance, non-academic staff in Nigerian tertiary institutions have been found to report lower levels of job satisfaction due to perceived inequities in reward systems, limited participation in decision-making, and restricted access to professional development opportunities (Akinwale & George, 2020). On the other hand, academic staff, although relatively more satisfied, often face challenges related to workload pressure, research funding constraints, and work-life balance (Ibojo & Fadare, 2025).

Despite these insights, existing literature tends to examine academic and non-academic staff separately, thereby limiting a comprehensive understanding of how job satisfaction varies within the same institutional context. This fragmented approach makes it difficult for institutional management to design targeted and effective human resource policies, as generalized strategies may fail to address the specific needs of different staff categories (Robbins & Judge, 2022). This gap underscores the need for studies that assess job satisfaction across staff categories within the same organization. The Polytechnic, Ibadan provides a suitable context for such analysis due to its diverse workforce and its strategic role in Nigeria's technical and vocational education system.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A key determinant and one that is widely recognized, of employee engagement, commitment, motivation and indeed productivity is job satisfaction. If employees are satisfied with their job, it is expected that they will be more efficient and effective in carrying out their duties. However, disparities which arises from reward systems, career route or progression and expected roles in job description has continued to affect job motivation in many Nigerian public polytechnics. While studies exist on the nexus between job satisfaction and staff types in both the academic and non-academic fields, these have largely been done separately, (Akinwale & George, 2020; Robbins & Judge, 2022). There is therefore a noticeable limited empirical gap or study of job satisfaction on these two categories of staff within the same institutions. If policies are to be developed to address the unique needs of these two categories of staff, it is very significant to understand this gap. The polytechnic, Ibadan, therefore provide a case study in not only understanding staff-types and job satisfaction but also how to improve institutional performance between these two categories of employees.

The aim of this paper is therefore in two-fold. Firstly, to assess the level of job satisfaction among academic, and non-academic staff at The Polytechnic, Ibadan and; secondly, to determine the significant level of relationship between staff-types at the Polytechnic, Ibadan and job satisfaction. Put succinctly, the paper strives to answer the following questions:

- i. What is the level of job satisfaction among academic staff and non-academic staff at The Polytechnic, Ibadan
- ii. Is there any significant difference between these two categories of staff especially as it relates to job satisfaction?

Study Area

One of the oldest and most prestigious technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions in the nation is the Polytechnic, Ibadan, which is situated in Sango-Eleyele, Ibadan, the capital of Oyo State, Nigeria. With the specific goal of training and developing techniques in applied sciences, engineering, business, environmental studies, and commerce for the socio-economic development of the state and the nation at large, the institution was founded on August 7, 1970, by the Oyo State Government through the Polytechnic, Ibadan Edict No. 15 of 1970 as a successor to the former Technical College, Ibadan. It has developed over the years into a full-fledged polytechnic that offers professional and short-course certificates suited to industry demands and workforce development, in addition to National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) programs in a variety of fields.

Poly Ibadan, a prominent state-owned university, places a strong emphasis on practical, hands-on instruction as the foundation of its teaching philosophy. Nigeria's larger policy objective of using TVET to generate middle-level workers with the necessary technical proficiency and entrepreneurial ability to propel industrialization and economic development is the source of this emphasis on practical education (National Board for Technical Education, 2024). Engineering, Sciences, Environmental Studies, Financial and Management Studies, and Business and Communication Studies comprise the polytechnic's multi-faculty structure, which reflects a varied academic portfolio intended to generate technically proficient graduates for both the formal and informal sectors of the economy.

External evaluations have consistently placed the institution among Nigeria's top state polytechnics, maintaining its reputation for quality in technical education. For instance, based on program accreditation and institutional performance criteria, the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) named the Polytechnic, Ibadan as one of the top state-owned polytechnics in the nation, emphasizing its consistent caliber of curriculum delivery. The polytechnic works with government organizations, business stakeholders, and professional associations in addition to its academic programs to make sure that its training is up to date with the demands of the modern workplace and technological developments.

The Polytechnic is in the center of industrial engagement and educational development in the South-West due to its advantageous position in Ibadan, one of Nigeria's major urban centers with a rich socio-cultural legacy and economic activity. Ibadan City is home to a network of businesses, academic institutions, and governmental organizations that provide chances for partnerships, industrial linkages, and community involvement initiatives that enhance the educational setting. These connections are crucial in situations where graduate employability and institutional contribution to regional development depend on the acquisition of practical skills and industrial relevance. By providing local residents with entrepreneurial and vocational training, the polytechnic further strengthens its position as a hub for the spread of applicable knowledge and skills and empowers the community.

The Polytechnic, Ibadan's workforce, which is divided into two main categories academic personnel and non-academic staff is a crucial aspect of the institution and the focus of this study. The polytechnic employs 385 academic staff members, including both permanent and temporary lecturers who are in charge of curriculum creation, teaching, research supervision, and student evaluation, according to internal institutional data. In addition, the university employs 668 non-academic staff members who offer administrative, technical, operational, and auxiliary services necessary to the efficient administration of the institution. These employees include management personnel, permanent support staff, and contract workers. These numbers increase the total number of employees to 1,053, who make up the study population for the productivity and motivation survey.

Lecturers at different professorial and instructional ranks (such as Assistant Lecturers, Lecturer II/I, Senior Lecturers, and Chief Lecturers) from the polytechnic's faculties are included in the academic staff category. In addition to giving lectures, these experts are responsible for conducting research, managing projects, and taking part in academic governance. Their jobs necessitate a high level of specialized knowledge, instructional expertise, and academic engagement components that influence their motivational drives, work expectations, and job satisfaction perceptions.

On the other hand, non-academic staff includes a wide range of institutional functional units, including student affairs, clinic/medical services, registrarial services, bursary and financial operations, human resource management, library services, security, works and services, and other support domains. Their duties are essential to the institution's mission because they guarantee the smooth operation of internal coordination, student services, administrative procedures, and physical infrastructure. Compared to their academic equivalents, these jobs' variability results in a variety of working environments and job demands that may have a different impact on motivating experiences and outcomes.

The significance of a study of job happiness and productivity is highlighted by the variety of staff positions. Different employment structures, performance standards, incentive systems, and recognition methods are frequently encountered by academic and non-academic staff; research indicates that these

factors can have a substantial impact on employee motivation and productivity (Robbins & Judge, 2022). For example, while non-academic staff may be more impacted by extrinsic factors like administrative support, job security, and welfare provisions, academic staff may derive intrinsic satisfaction from research publication, student mentorship, and professional autonomy (Akinwale & George, 2020; Oshotoye *et al.*, 2023). To find out how these diverse staff groups see job satisfaction in the Polytechnic setting, empirical research is required due to the differences in motivational motives.

Conceptual Review

The relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance has received extensive attention in organizational and educational research, particularly within tertiary institutions where human capital plays a central role in achieving institutional objectives. Contemporary studies emphasize that job satisfaction is influenced by a combination of environmental, organizational, and psychological factors, rather than a single determinant (Stephen, Robbins & Timothy, Judge, 2022).

Recent empirical evidence suggests that the quality of the work environment remains a fundamental predictor of employee satisfaction and productivity. In the context of Nigerian polytechnics, Sani and Udoma (2024) found that inadequate facilities, poor supervisory support, and limited access to work resources significantly reduce employees' effectiveness. Similarly, Oshotoye, Ogunremi, and Adewale (2023) demonstrated that organizational support systems—such as recognition, training opportunities, and ethical work climates—play a crucial role in shaping employees' perception of their jobs. These findings indicate that job satisfaction is not only dependent on individual attitudes but is also strongly conditioned by institutional structures and managerial practices.

Beyond environmental conditions, psychological factors have also been identified as key drivers of job satisfaction. Drawing on social cognitive perspectives, employees who perceive themselves as competent and valued within their organization are more likely to exhibit higher levels of motivation and performance (Bandura, 1997). This position is supported by recent studies which show that self-efficacy, participation in decision-making, and opportunities for skill development contribute significantly to job satisfaction among non-academic staff in Nigerian tertiary institutions (Oshotoye *et al.*, 2023). Such findings reinforce the argument that employee satisfaction is partly constructed through internal cognitive processes shaped by workplace experiences.

However, the experience of job satisfaction is not uniform across different categories of staff. Empirical studies consistently reveal variations between academic and non-academic employees due to differences in job roles, reward systems, and career structures. For instance, Akinwale and George (2020) reported that non-academic staff often experience lower satisfaction levels, largely due to limited career advancement opportunities and perceived marginalization in institutional decision-making. In contrast, academic staff tend to derive satisfaction from intrinsic aspects of their roles, including professional autonomy, intellectual engagement, and opportunities for research and publication (Ibojo & Fadare, 2025).

Despite these insights, a critical limitation in existing literature is the tendency to examine staff categories in isolation. Many studies focus exclusively on either academic or non-academic staff, thereby overlooking the dynamics that exist within the same institutional setting. For example, while Obiakor *et al.* (2024) explored job satisfaction among academic staff in a federal polytechnic, their findings do not provide insight into how these experiences differ from those of non-academic personnel within the same environment. Similarly, studies centered on non-academic staff often fail to contextualize their findings within broader institutional frameworks that include academic roles.

This fragmented approach limits the ability of institutional administrators to design targeted human resource strategies. As noted by Robbins and Judge (2022), organizational policies that fail to account for role-specific differences in motivation are unlikely to achieve optimal outcomes. In the absence of comparative evidence, management interventions may be generalized, thereby neglecting the unique needs and expectations of different employee groups. From a theoretical perspective, several frameworks have been used to explain variations in job satisfaction. The Job Characteristics Model developed by

Hackman and Oldham (1980) posits that job satisfaction is influenced by core job dimensions such as skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback.

Jobs that are enriched along these dimensions are more likely to generate higher levels of intrinsic motivation and satisfaction. In contrast, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory distinguishes between hygiene factors (e.g., salary, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., achievement, recognition), suggesting that the absence of hygiene factors leads to dissatisfaction, while the presence of motivators enhances satisfaction (Herzberg et al., 1959). While these theories provide valuable insights, their application in Nigerian polytechnic settings has often been limited to single staff categories. Few studies have attempted to integrate these theoretical perspectives within a comparative framework that captures the experiences of both academic and non-academic staff simultaneously. This represents a significant gap in the literature, particularly in developing country contexts where institutional conditions may differ markedly from those in which these theories were originally developed.

In addressing this gap, the present study adopts a comparative approach to examine job satisfaction across staff categories within The Polytechnic, Ibadan. By analyzing both academic and non-academic staff within the same institutional environment, the study provides a more holistic understanding of how structural and motivational factors interact to shape employee satisfaction. This approach not only contributes to existing literature but also offers practical insights for the development of more effective and context-specific human resource policies in Nigerian polytechnics.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine differences in job satisfaction between academic and non-academic staff at The Polytechnic, Ibadan. The design was considered appropriate because it enables the systematic collection of data on existing conditions without manipulation of variables, thereby allowing for objective comparison between defined groups. The study population comprised all full-time staff of The Polytechnic, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Institutional records indicate a total of 1,053 employees, consisting of 385 academic staff and 668 non-academic staff across various departments and administrative units.

Given the heterogeneous nature of the population, a stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure adequate representation of both staff categories. The population was first divided into two strata, academic and non-academic staff, after which proportional sampling was applied. The sample size was determined using the Yamane (1967) formula for finite populations:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = sample size

N = population size (1,053)

e = margin of error (0.05)

The computation yielded a sample size of 446 respondents. Using proportional allocation, 196 respondents were selected from the academic staff, while 250 respondents were drawn from the non-academic staff. This approach ensured that each subgroup was represented in proportion to its size within the population.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure key dimensions of job satisfaction, including working conditions, compensation, recognition, and overall job experience. The instrument consisted of closed-ended items measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The use of standardized response categories facilitated uniformity in responses and supported quantitative analysis. The questionnaire was administered directly to respondents within their respective departments and units. This approach was adopted to enhance response rates and ensure adequate coverage of both staff categories. Completed questionnaires were retrieved through follow-up visits, resulting in a high response rate suitable for statistical analysis. Data collected were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics,

including frequencies and percentages, were used to summarize respondents' characteristics and levels of job satisfaction. To test the relationship between staff category and job satisfaction, the chi-square test of independence was employed. This technique was appropriate because both variables were categorical and the study sought to determine whether observed differences between groups were statistically significant. The level of significance was set at 0.05.

Results

Data for this study were collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The results are presented below.

Table 1: Distribution of Job Satisfaction by Staff Category

Staff Category	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Total
Academic	150 (76.5%)	46 (23.5%)	196
Non-Academic	160 (64.0%)	90 (36.0%)	250
Total	310	136	446

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 1 shows the distribution of job satisfaction across academic and non-academic staff. The results indicate that academic staff exhibit a higher level of job satisfaction (76.5%) compared to non-academic staff (64.0%). Although the majority of respondents in both categories reported being satisfied, the proportion of dissatisfied respondents is notably higher among non-academic staff (36.0%) than among academic staff (23.5%). This difference suggests that job satisfaction is not experienced uniformly across staff categories. While both groups operate within the same institutional environment, their perceptions of work conditions and rewards appear to differ significantly.

Table 2: Chi-Square Test of Association between Staff Category and Job Satisfaction

Test Statistic	Value
Chi-square (χ^2)	7.56
Degrees of Freedom	1
p-value	0.006

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The chi-square test results presented in Table 2 indicate a statistically significant relationship between staff category and job satisfaction ($\chi^2 = 7.56$, $p = 0.006$). Since the p-value is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that job satisfaction is significantly associated with staff classification at The Polytechnic, Ibadan.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this study highlight important differences in job satisfaction between academic and non-academic staff. The higher satisfaction levels observed among academic staff may be attributed to the nature of their roles, which often include professional autonomy, intellectual engagement, and clearer career progression pathways. These characteristics align with the Job Characteristics Model, which emphasizes the role of autonomy and task significance in enhancing employee motivation and satisfaction.

In contrast, the relatively lower satisfaction levels among non-academic staff suggest the influence of structural and organizational constraints. The higher proportion of dissatisfaction within this group points to potential challenges related to working conditions, recognition, and career advancement opportunities. This pattern is consistent with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which identifies deficiencies in extrinsic factors as a primary source of dissatisfaction.

The results are consistent with previous empirical studies in Nigerian tertiary institutions, which report that non-academic staff often experience lower levels of job satisfaction due to limited participation in decision-making and fewer opportunities for professional growth, while academic staff tend to benefit from intrinsic motivational factors associated with their roles (Akinwale & George, 2020; Oshotoye *et al.*, 2023; Ibojo & Fadare, 2025).

However, this study makes an important contribution by providing a direct comparison within the same institutional setting, rather than examining each staff category separately. The findings demonstrate that differences in job satisfaction are not only theoretical but are observable within a single organization, thereby highlighting the limitations of uniform staff management policies.

From a practical standpoint, the results suggest that institutional management should adopt differentiated human resource strategies that address the specific needs of each staff category. While policies supporting academic staff may be relatively effective, additional attention is required to improve the work experience of non-academic staff in order to achieve balanced organizational performance.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to better understand how staff category affects satisfaction results in a public polytechnic setting, this study looked at the disparities in job satisfaction between academic and non-academic personnel at The Polytechnic, Ibadan. The study offers significant insights into worker welfare and institutional success by using empirical data and well-established organizational and motivational theories.

The results show that while most employees in both groups said they were happy in their professions, academic employees showed much greater levels of job satisfaction than non-academic employees. 76.5% of academic workers and 64.0% of non-academic staff were satisfied, according to the frequency distribution analysis. The chi-square test further verified that the observed difference was statistically significant, showing a high correlation between staff category and work satisfaction among The Polytechnic, Ibadan employees. This implies that the organizational environment and work roles are seen differently by academic and non-academic staff.

The results provide empirical support for Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model, and Social Cognitive Theory. Higher levels of intrinsic motivators, such as autonomy, job significance, and professional recognition, which boost motivation and satisfaction, seem to be present in academic staff roles. On the other hand, the comparatively higher level of discontent among non-academic workers points to a lack of exposure to intrinsic motivators and shortcomings in hygienic elements like working conditions, recognition, and career advancement possibilities. The unequal distribution of job satisfaction seen in the study can be explained by these structural and motivational differences.

The study comes to the conclusion that consistent policies alone are insufficient to improve job satisfaction in polytechnic schools. Instead, it is influenced by the nature of staff jobs, organizational support, and job design. Staff morale may suffer, productivity may decline, and institutional performance may eventually be impacted if these variances are not acknowledged and addressed. This study closes a significant gap in the literature and provides evidence-based insights for management decision-making in Nigerian polytechnics by directly comparing academic and non-academic workers within the same institution.

A number of suggestions are made in light of the results. First, in order to meet the unique demands of academic and non-academic workers, The Polytechnic, Ibadan's management should implement varied incentive tactics. Enhancing working conditions, career advancement pathways, and recognition systems should receive more attention for non-academic workers because they are likely to increase satisfaction and decrease unhappiness. To promote a sense of worth and inclusion, regular staff appraisal procedures that prioritize feedback and appreciation should be reinforced.

Second, to increase skill diversity, competence, and self-efficacy, non-academic workers should have more possibilities for professional development and training. These programs have the potential to improve productivity and job satisfaction and are consistent with Social Cognitive Theory. Supportive

policies that promote research, innovation, and ongoing professional development should preserve the incentive elements that currently exist for academic personnel, such as autonomy and professional recognition.

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In order to have a deeper understanding of staff opinions and experiences, future research is urged to expand this study by utilizing qualitative techniques like focus groups and interviews. A more thorough understanding of staff satisfaction patterns in Nigeria's higher education sector would result from studies conducted across several polytechnics or other tertiary institutions, which would also improve the generalizability of findings.

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