

## Qualitative Analysis of University Lecturers' Job Satisfaction in Kwara State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

The optimum effect of satisfaction on the performance of university teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century cannot be overlooked. This study therefore examined the level of lecturers' job satisfaction in Kwara State. Phenomenology approach of qualitative design was used for this study. Stratified and convenience sampling techniques were adopted to sample eight participants proportionately from three Universities based on ownership (Federal, State and Private). Validated structured interview was used. Thematic approach was adopted to analyse data obtained through the interview with the use of Atlas.ti software. It was revealed based on the findings that, academic staff job satisfaction level is related to their performances. It was recommended that the university administrators should make policies that will improve lecturers' job satisfaction in the area of job security and advancement on the job for better performance in the areas of research, publications and community services for sustainable competitive advantage.

**Key words:** Job Satisfaction, Lecturers, Performance, Passion, Interest, Working Conditions

### Introduction

University is central in the attainment of national development and global sustainable goals. The university development and productivity is significantly related to the quality of its human capital which has a direct link to the level of satisfaction derived by the lecturers. In other words, the productivity of a university is predicated on the rate of job satisfaction of its teachers (Awodiji & Ijaiya, 2019). University education is the stage at which the nation's higher skilled, trained and qualified labour is produced to attain national development goals. It is established that no institution or nation can grow beyond its teachers. University teachers are the propelling engine around which other agents revolve in the achievement of the university goals.

The academic staff in any university is its backbone and plays a significant role in ensuring the institutions progress and goal attainment. They are the most vital asset of every university in a dynamic competition. Thus, they are to be motivated and encouraged so as to improve their performance (Awodiji, 2018). However, for qualitative teaching and learning

activities to be achieved in the Nigerian universities, there must be some moderate level of job satisfaction among academic staff. There are intrinsic and extrinsic factors that drive university's teachers toward commitment to work and give rise to some level of job satisfaction which also may influence their performance. Poor motivation of lecturers, among other factors, is the reason for the dwindling quality of university graduates and low research output (Ijaiya, 2019).

Motivation and satisfaction affect the optimum performance of university teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There are motivating factors (job satisfaction, organisation culture, organisational justice, emotional intelligence, leadership styles, and reward system) that could determine the level of lecturers' performance in the university (Efanga, Aniedi & Gomiluk, 2015; Mahfuzil, Grahita, & Junianto, 2017). The individual lecturer's job performance contributes to the overall performance of a university. The quantity and quality of the university graduates produced could be as a result of job commitment of lecturers which could be informed by their attitude to work, level

of satisfaction/dissatisfaction and other environmental factors (Onoyase, 2017).

The growth in the number of universities in Nigeria and recurrent strike experienced by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) in Nigeria's public universities where the union agitates for better welfare package (Earned Allowance), implementation of new minimum wage, forceful imposition of Integrated Personnel Payroll System (IPPIS) on university workers as a violation of the university autonomy act motivated the research. In addition, rate of job mobility has increased among lecturers of tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Various studies carried out have established factors that could promote university lecturers' job satisfaction (Mäenpää, 2005; Ogunbanjo, 2010; Demirtaş, 2010; Adeniji, 2011; Bibire, 2015). These indicators include: school-specific factors like availability of material resources, lecturers-students ratio, school environment, and school culture, prompt payment of salary, and feelings of successful teaching, among others. More importantly, prompt payment of salary might be an influencing factor as regards lecturers' satisfaction while school environment might be an influence factor to another. Job satisfaction has been demonstrated to be closely related to commitment, turnover, job effectiveness, productivity, and burnout (Bibire, 2015). Diverse factors could be responsible for the level of lecturers' performance which are, job safety, good working condition, salary, reward system, interpersonal relationship with co-workers, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits and job nature in Nigerian universities (Bello, Ogundipe & Eze, 2017).

Many empirical studies which were done have been carried out on the variables of the study. Bello, Ogundipe, & Eze, (2017) conducted research on the difference that exists in the level of job satisfaction between academic staff in private and public universities in Kwara State, Nigeria. The level of job satisfaction (recognition, pay and working condition) was compared between public and private universities in Kwara State. Although a qualitative approach was used, it was found out that a significant difference existed in job

satisfaction between academic staff in private and public universities which was in favour of the public universities in Kwara State. Also, a significant positive relationship was established between workers' job satisfaction and their performance in the study of Mohammed & Abdullahi, (2016) on impact of job satisfaction on performance of non-academic staff of Bauchi State University Gadau: The moderating effect of physical working environment. The study adopted quantitative approach but focused on non-academic staff of a university in Bauchi State.

Oladipo, Ismi, Bahaman, & Adekanye, (2017) carried out a study on influence of demographic variables (age, sex and educational qualification) on job satisfaction among academics in Nigerian public universities. The outcomes of the study revealed that no significant difference between lecturers' job satisfaction and the demographic variables using ANOVA and t-test analysis. In related study, Bibire (2015) confirmed that job satisfaction and motivation are predictors of lecturers' effectiveness based on the study carried out in Nigeria police academy, Wudil, Kano State. This study therefore takes a step further to investigate level of lecturers' job satisfaction among Universities in Kwara State using qualitative enquiry approach. This was done since most of the literature reviewed used quantitative. More so, qualitative approach gives room for exploring and understanding a phenomenon or social event from the individuals' or group perspectives (Falaye, 2018).

#### Research Objectives

This paper established in-depth of lecturers' job satisfaction in Kwara State. Specifically, the following objectives were set to be achieved:

- (i) To identify the more prominent and considered highly motivating among the job related factors that brings about university lecturers' job satisfaction based on the lecturers responses;
- (ii) To determine the academic staff job satisfaction level based on working conditions and job security.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- (1) What makes university lecturers satisfied with their job in Kwara State?
- (2) What job related factor(s) is/are prominent and highly responsible in making lecturers satisfied with their job?
- (3) How satisfied are university lecturers with the working condition and job security?

Methodology

Qualitative design of phenomenology approach was used for this study. The design was used to describe the experience of lecturers on their job satisfaction from the perspective of those who have experienced it (Creswell, 2014; Falaye, 2018). The design type is considered appropriate for this work, because the study is interested in obtaining in-depth information on the lecturers' level of job satisfaction of selected universities in Kwara State.

Stratified and convenience sampling techniques were adopted to sample eight participants proportionately from three universities in Kwara State based on the ownership (Federal, State and Private). Semi-structured interview was used to extract in-depth information from the respondents on their job satisfaction. The interview conducted was transcribed verbatim into textual material and thematically. Ethical wise, the participation was made voluntarily in which none of the participants was coerced. Atlas.ti software was used to analyse the data obtained through the interview from the sampled respondents thematically.

Result and Discussion

In order to ascertain in-depth level of lecturers' job satisfaction, structured interview was conducted for eight lecturers from different universities in Kwara State. The data gathered through the interview was analysed using thematically with the aids of Atlas.ti software; results are presented below.

Research Questions 1: What makes lecturers satisfied with their job in Universities in Kwara State?

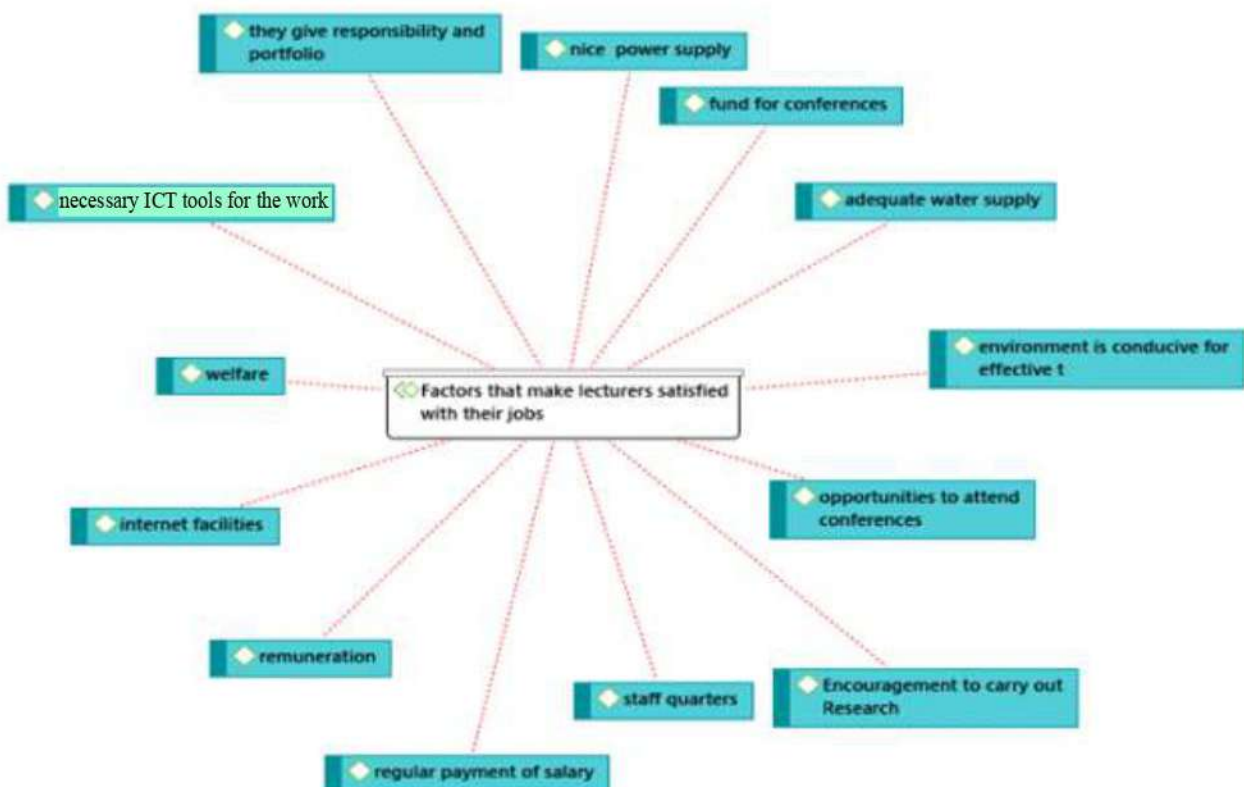


Figure 1: Factors that make lecturers satisfied with their job in Universities in Kwara State

The interviewees expressed their views about various factors that make them satisfied with their jobs. Figure 1 showed factors mentioned by the academic staff, which include regular payment of salary, fund for conferences, availability of staff quarters, internet facilities, encouragement to carry out research, staff welfare, etc. All these factors could be categorised under working conditions that make university teachers satisfied with their job. This is in line with Ayandibu (2014) who classified work condition of university lecturers into two, job context and job content. The condition in which an individual lecturer works includes but not limited to such things as amenities, physical environment, stress and noise levels, danger, work load and the likes. Good working

condition and environment for lecturers may mean the difference between a high retention rate and losing your employees to a greener pasture (Nicolas, 2017). Hence, working environment is a factor which aids lecturers working for the successful activities of teaching and learning processes in the universities in Kwara State. Such working environment which include regular payment of salary, fund for conferences, availability of staff quarters, internet facilities, encouragement to carry out research, staff welfare, among others add up to lecturers feeling of satisfaction with their job or dissatisfaction with the job or institution of work.

Research Question 2: Which of the job related factors of lecturers' job satisfaction is most prominent and considered highly motivating in Universities in Kwara State?

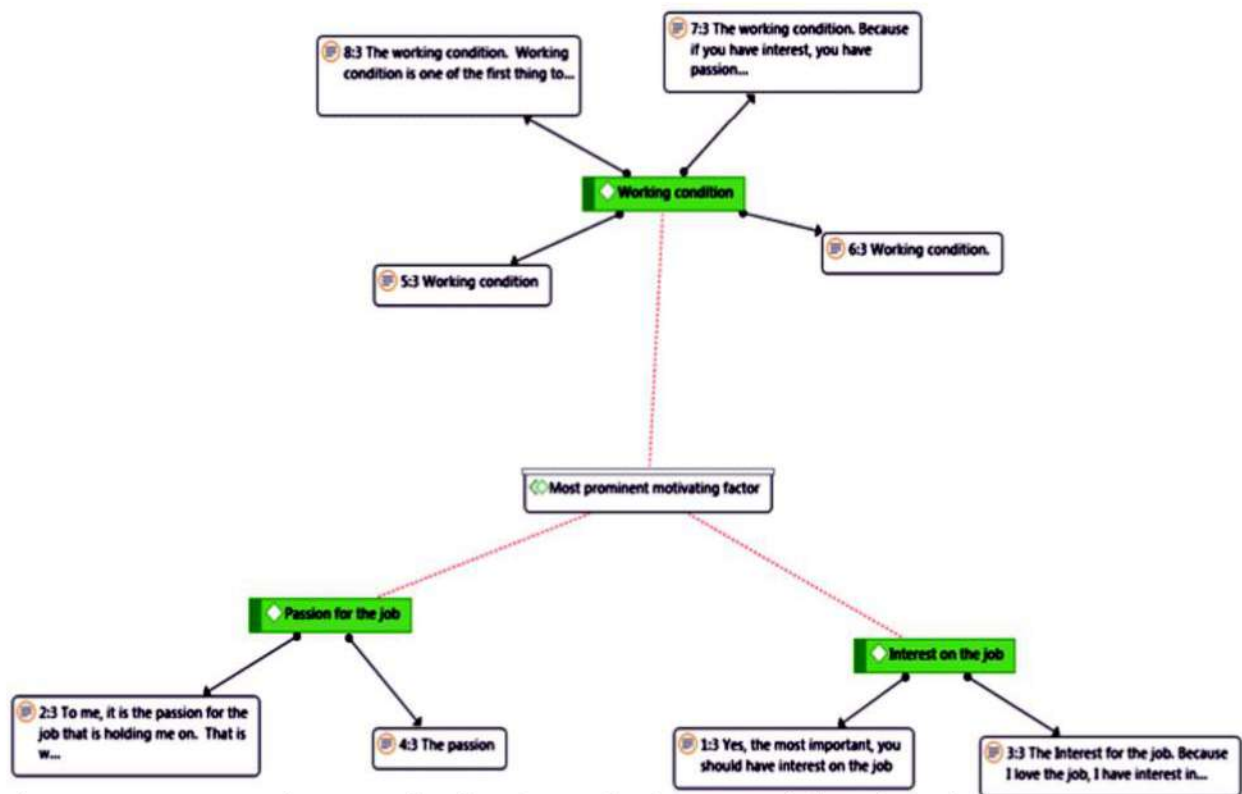


Figure 2: Most prominent motivating factor for lecturers' job satisfaction

This study identified three factors that can predict job satisfaction of lecturers; these are working condition, passion for the job and interest of the job. The interviewees were requested to express their opinion about the factor they consider to be the most prominent in motivating job satisfaction. As shown in figure 2, most of the lecturers stated that conducive working condition is the most prominent factor in motivating job satisfaction of lecturers.

Based on the result in figure 2, four lecturers gave priority to working condition as the prominent motivating factor that propels their job satisfaction. This implies that even when the passion and interest for the job which are intrinsic factors, extrinsic factors play a major role in activating the internal factors. These conducive working conditions could be in form

of regular payment of salary, fund for conferences, availability of staff quarters, internet facilities, encouragement to carry out research, staff welfare, among others. The productivity of lecturer is determined extensively by the working condition in which they work. An attractive and supportive working condition is critical to job satisfaction. Work condition/environment has numerous properties that may influence both physical and mental well being of lecturers. A quality work condition is fundamental to keeping academic staff on their toes as they carry out their various tasks thereby working effectively (Sarode & Shirsath, 2012).

Research Question 3: How satisfied are university lecturers with the working conditions and job security?

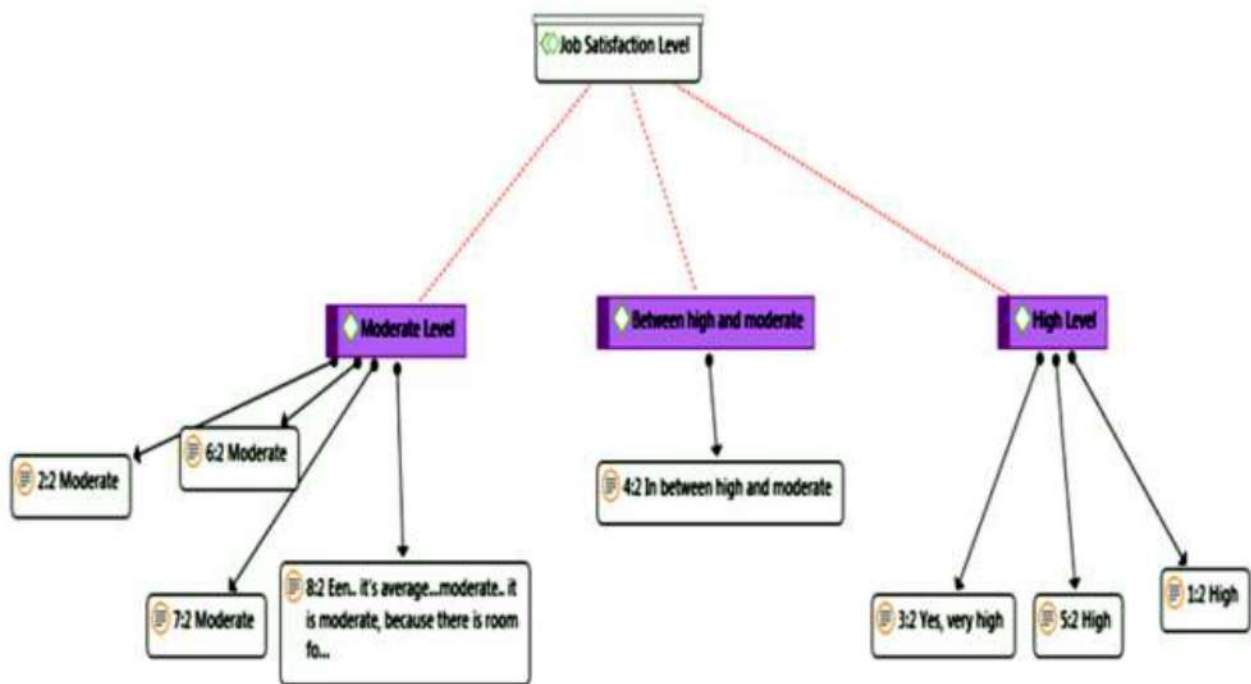


Figure 3: Level of job satisfaction with working condition and job security among university lecturers in Kwara State

Figure 3 is the result of enquiry about interviewees' rating of their level of job satisfaction, high, moderate or low. Results revealed that most of the lecturers unanimously mentioned that their job satisfaction is moderate. A respondent said it is average because there is room for improvement.

Another respondent said it is between high or moderate. Others said it is high.

Drawing from the result, it implies that level of lecturers' job satisfaction in Kwara State is moderate. The moderate level of job satisfaction could have been informed. Inuwa (2015) findings showed that lecturers with high level of satisfaction tend to perform better and also tend to be more efficient and effective in carrying out their teaching, research and community roles.

They embrace their work and workplace wholeheartedly and render services required by them as at when due. The level of lecturers' job satisfaction is affected by intrinsic and extrinsic factors and usually determines the success or failure in their work. Level of job satisfaction among university lecturers could be influenced by different factors such as, motivation, work environment, salary, organisational commitment, leadership style, and institutional policy among others (Selesho, Africa & Naile, 2014). Although, Oladipo, Ismi, Bahaman & Adekanye, (2017) reported from their findings that a significant difference in level of job satisfaction exists between lecturers in private and public universities in Kwara State, it was further reported that public university lecturers are more satisfied than private lecturers in terms of pay and promotions, whereas, no difference was established in pay package between private and public university lecturers in Kwara State. The level of lecturers' job satisfaction could be informed by motivators such as: working condition, passion for the job, job security and interest on the job, which have some relationship with their level of job performance in terms of teaching, lecturers' rate of researches and publications and community services.

### Conclusion

Based on the findings from the interview conducted and analysed, it is confirmed that working conditions (regular payment of salary, fund for conferences, availability of staff quarters, internet facilities, encouragement to carry out research, staff welfare, etc) are factors that make university teachers satisfied with their job. Also, it was discovered that working conditions of the university is a most prominent factor motivating or causing job satisfaction among lecturers in the universities in Kwara State regardless of interest in the job or passion for the job.

### Recommendations

In line with the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- i. Factors such as regular payment of salary, funding for conferences, availability of staff quarters, internet facilities, encouragement to carry out research, staff welfare should be given priority to sustain lecturers' job satisfaction for retention, global competitiveness and sustainable development.

- ii. Level of lecturers' job satisfaction should be improved upon through public-private partnership with private individuals in the provision of factors that informed lecturers' satisfaction.
- iii. University administrators should make policies that will improve lecturers' job satisfaction in terms of their job security and advancement on the job for better performance in the areas of research, publications and community services, thereby sustaining competitive advantage.
- iv. University lecturers' innovations, inventions and creativity should be rewarded appropriately in order to encourage creativity and ingenuity among academic staff.

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