

**UNIVERSITY LECTURERS' MOTIVATIONAL APPROACH
AND MAXIMUM JOB PERFORMANCE IN UNIVERSITIES
IN EBONYI STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study examined university lecturers' motivational approach and maximum job performance in universities in Ebonyi, State, Nigeria. A survey research design was used for the study. The population of the study consisted of 23 university lecturers in the study area who all participated in the study. The questionnaire used in the investigation was the "University Lecturers Motivational Approach and Maximum Job Performance Questionnaire (ULMAMJPO). The instrument was validated by two experts at the University of Cross River, Nigeria. A trial test was carried out on 10 lecturers that were not part of the study, and the indexed reliability coefficient of .93 was obtained as the overall score. Descriptive statistics were used for the study, and an independent t-test was used to test the research hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The result of the findings shows motivational approaches such as job incentives and lecturers' image significantly influence university lecturers' job performance for maximum productivity. It was recommended, among others, that the federal government endeavor to pay lecturers eight (8) months' salary withholding; this could boost the morale of the university lecturer for maximum job performance.

Key words: university lecturer, motivational approach, maximum job performance.

Introduction

Motivation is one of the most significant concepts in the field of psychology, and it is critical for management to guide their employees' development toward achievable objectives. A work environment that is built around encouraging and promoting a sustained, progressively matured, and comprehensive embrace of responsibility for one's own work performance is best suited to assist with the transition of authority. According to Atah (2019), Individuals with strong work motivation are continually looking for improved ways to carry out their duties and obligations; as a result, they will be promoted faster. These personnel conduct their duties in such a way that the jobs require significantly more effort, allowing them to try harder to play the role for which they have been asked. However, motivation has recently been one of the most difficult issues for lecturers at Nigeria University. It is pertinent to note that university lecturers are victims of not being motivated to discharge their responsibilities. Regrettably, the lecturers are regarded with contempt and disrespect by the government and the general public and are compared to donkeys to be used as "beasts of burden." Lecturers are frequently used to teach and "bake" other professional manpower in society, but they are quickly abandoned and judged unworthy of receiving any motivation from the governing society or even those who are passing

through their grasp. Atah, Margaret, Ogbiji, and Itititn (2023) asserted that lecturers require recognition, advancement, compensation, job stability, job enrichment, incentives, and regular salary payments to be motivated and achieve their goals.

Additionally, the same issues have grown established and have received governmental acknowledgment, reliability, and immunity. The sad or humiliating trend is that lecturers job performance suffers, resulting in the knock-on effects of poor and declining educational standards in the educational profession. The researchers are compelled to make their observations because they are involved in the system and are observing these ailments firsthand. Indeed, this has necessitated their research study in this research frontier to determine the influence of incentive programs on the job efficiency of university lecturers in educational institutions and how these effects of motivation influence the standard and attainment of university educational goals in Nigerian universities.

Giving lecturers incentives is one way to motivate them to do a good job in the educational system. Organizational incentives can take numerous forms, but for this review, the researchers define organizational incentives as anything in front of positive benefits that would increase lecturers' output. As a result, the lecturer's remuneration immediately comes to mind, revealing his perspective on this. According to Atah (2019), even though lecturers' salaries are aligned with those of other sectors of the public sector, they are nevertheless insufficient for lecturers. Alternatively, payment of his End Academic Allowance (EAA) is sporadic and irregular. We can observe that lecturers' eight-month salaries are still pending with their employers. Other financial perks, such as leave grants, overtime, and other allowances, are still not recognized and applied to increase the interest of lecturers in their descriptions of employment. With deficit allowances, low pay, and inconsistent payments, lecturers become dissatisfied with their jobs and regard them as enslaved workers because their remuneration does not match their efforts (Atah, Idike, Godwin, Isaac, Ititim, Okpe, and Ochui, 2023).

Lecturers in the university perform duties such as teaching, checking and assessing student assignments, examining students in tests and examinations, marking and recording student results, meeting students individually to discuss their academic progress, supervising students' projects and seminars, pursuing research, and carrying out administrative functions such as attending faculty meetings, departmental board meetings, writing reports, writing research proposals and papers, and other publications. Yet, the 2009 agreement to raise university lecturers' salaries has not been implemented by the employers. Atah (2019) noted that the lecturers could not be used effectively to meet the school's aims because the employer delayed the payment of eight (8) months of the university lecturers' salaries. According to Atah, Chukvurah, Ogbiji, and Ochui (2023), with the current gasoline subsidy eliminated, university lecturers experience hardship and must be inspired by their employers in order to enhance their job performance. Nonetheless, Atah (2019) reminded us that lecturers require some incentives in order to work as counselors and motivators of learning in order to help students create their future. With regard to him, Education in general needs to keep its workforce in order to get the required work performance from its employees. In this circumstance, lecturers become an unavoidable factor and must be sufficiently motivated to perform to their full potential. Abang and Atah (2022) opined that the degree of interaction between incentive motives and ability impacts the level of performance of lecturers. This implies that even if we generate lecturers with exceptional competence and unique abilities, we cannot be certain that they will perform well in the absence of suitable incentive motives. People who are incentivized work harder than individuals who are not.

In considering the above, Sandhu, Igbal, Ali, Tufail, and Sajid (2017) defined motivation as a person's determination to accomplish a thing, mediated by the activity and his or her capacity to meet some requirements for the person being motivated. Once more, the work of industrial psychologists and applied sociologists will help us understand how motivation works in the workplace. According to Stup (2003), the strength of an anticipation that an act would be

followed by a specific consequence is determined by the appealing nature of what would happen to the individual. The outcome of rewards in teaching is not designed to be appealing to lecturers. In this vein, Stup (2003) said that academics in Nigeria are unmotivated and that their jobs are rendered unappealing. This is supported by lecturers' displeasure as a result of their wages being withheld for about eight (8) months during the ASUU strike, a lack of incentives, no fringe perks, and numerous other salary payment gaps by IPPIS. Because of these mistreatment, lecturers have become creditors to numerous groups and banks, owing to their incapacity to repay borrowed survival funds. This could have an impact on their self-esteem and social standing. If there is time for university lecturers to be motivated, now, when you take a look at university lecturers salary breakdown of IPPIS salary payments based on the new minimum wage consequential adjustment, effective as of April 18, 2019, where a graduate assistant is receiving 99,768.11, assistant lecturers receiving 114,464.48, lecturer 2 receiving 130,002.17, lecturer I receiving 163,709.24, senior lecturer receiving 231,393.17, associate professor receiving 281,867.72, and a professor receiving 342,442.35 as a monthly (gross minus deduction). This becomes pertinent for concerned Nigerians and stakeholders in education to critically look into the welfare of university lecturers as a platform for motivating them to have a greater impact on our university education.

Motivation is vital in institutions of learning because it improves employee performance and productivity. Indeed, it's critical to determining educational outcomes. This is because motivated lecturers are more likely to be dedicated to the educational development of students and the achievement of educational goals. As a result, lecturers must be motivated in order to improve their job performance. Salaries and wages are essential motivators in most circumstances since they go a long way toward meeting fundamental demands. If an employee is not driven, the quality of his or her work will suffer. This claim was supported by Iqbal, Ali, Tufail, and Sajid (2017), who stated that employee performance was determined by ability and motivation. As a result, inspiring subordinates to achieve the best of their abilities is critical. Motivation can influence a worker's actions in the direction of achieving organizational goals (Akpama and Inyang, 2022). The desire to succeed is an incentive that motivates people to take action in order to achieve their goals (Schater, 2011). In accordance with Denga (1982), reward can also be instrumental in nature, which includes pay-raise suggestions, rewards for perseverance and commitment, and access to institutional resources and amenities. These prizes must be given out on schedule and to the majority, if not all, of the personnel. However, the type and size of the incentive are determined by the organization's personnel performance. The importance of a clear basis for reward cannot be overstated. Denga (1982) noted that these incentives are having certain functional effects on staff and ought to be used appropriately. According to Kyari (2021), job performance, in its broadest definition, relates to how well duties or job-related activities are carried out. It reflects the quality and amount of work performed, which is the product of individual employees' teamwork, proficiency, competency, creativity, and presentation of suitable skills, knowledge, and attitude. According to Foluso and Wilfred (2021), performance is the consequence of a person's or group's work in an organization at a specific time that displays how well the individual or group meets the criteria of a position in a mission to achieve organizational goals.

Decenzo and Robbins (2018) asserted that university lecturers maximum job performance has become essential as a result of rising concern among human resources and people specialists about the amount of production obtained from workers as a result of low remuneration. This low pay may force many employees to modify their attitude about their jobs. This becomes a key worry, and it is crucial to detect difficulties that occur in industrial sales as a result of managers' casual attitudes toward managing their staff by rewarding them properly in order to maximize their output. Atah (2014) asserted that human resources and workers are primary assets, which can lead to success or, if not properly targeted, downfall. Absolutely no company can advance or accomplish success unless and until its personnel are content with it,

are motivated to complete tasks and reach goals, and are encouraged. This could mean that appropriate reward packages can encourage or persuade employees (university lecturers) to adopt a favorable attitude toward their jobs, increasing productivity. Based on this note, the research deems it necessary to carry out a study on university lecturers' motivational approach and maximum job performance in universities in Ebonyi State, Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

The latest developments in the educational system necessitate that lecturers be motivated to give their all in order to meet the challenges of the new trends. However, the researcher's extensive teaching experience in the Nigerian university environment has familiarized them with general lecturers' issues, complaints, and challenges, which have resulted in low productivity on multiple occasions. These issues frequently cause teachers to abandon their jobs or lose interest in their teaching positions or responsibilities. Indeed, there is a growing disillusionment among lecturers, almost universally, regarding job satisfaction and motivation in the teaching profession. Every lecturer's dedication to teaching falls short of public expectations. The public is outraged that the grade of instruction is not up to par with that of the lecturers. The aforementioned issues indicate that lecturers are not sufficiently motivated to devote themselves to their work. The researchers deem it necessary to carry out a study on university lecturers' motivational approaches and job performance in universities in Ebonyi State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

This study aims at finding out the university lecturers' motivational approach and job performance in universities in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to determine the influence of:

1. Job incentives and university lecturers job performance in universities in Ebonyi State, Nigeria
2. Lecturers image in society and job performance in universities in Ebonyi State

Research Questions

The following research questions were designed to test this research work:

1. What are the job incentives needed for university lecturers job performance in universities in Ebonyi State?
2. What is the influence of university lecturers' image on their job performance in universities in Ebonyi State, Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis

In the actual execution of this work, the following research hypotheses were generated to guide the study:

1. There is no significant difference in the mean rating of gender on the job incentive needed for university lecturers job performance.
2. There is a significant difference between the *mean* ratings of university lecturers images and their job performance based on gender.

Methodology

This study adopts a survey research design, and the study was carried out in universities in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of twenty-three (23) university lecturers in the study area. A census sample technique was used for the study. The instrument used for this study was a questionnaire. The pattern of the questionnaire used was the Likert scale pattern. The scale contained a statement, which had four responses. Strongly agree SA:

agree A; strongly disagree SD; disagree D. Three experts from the University of Cross River State validated the instrument. A trial test was carried out on the instrument with non-participating respondents, and the overall coefficient is 0.93, which means that the instrument was reliable. The instrument was administered to the respondents by the researchers, and 23 copies were returned, representing a 100% rate. The basic decision was a bench mark of 2.50; any item with a score or grand mean of 2.50 signifies agreement, and a score below the 2.50 cut-off point signifies disagreement. Descriptive statistics were used in the study. And the hypotheses were tested at the 0.04 level of significance using an independent test.

Result of the findings

Research question 1

What are the job incentives needed for university lecturers job performance in universities in Ebonyi State?

Table 1: mean rating of job incentive needed by universities lecturers for effective job performance

S/No	Items Statement	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	Monetary rewards enhance my job effectiveness.	23	3.3478	.71406	Agree
2	My job has nothing to do with monetary rewards.	23	1.9565	.52826	Disagree
3	Leave grants enhance my job performance.	23	3.1304	.81488	Agree
4	I am not motivated by the leave grant allowance.	23	2.0130	.64816	Disagree
5	Overtime monetary value enhances my job effectiveness.	23	3.3043	.70290	Agree
6	Salary increases enhance my job effectiveness.	23	2.6957	.92612	Agree
7	Salary increments have not influenced my job performance.	23	1.7826	.59974	Disagree
8	End-of-year academic allowance enhances job productivity	23	3.0000	1.04447	Agree
	Grand Mean	23	2.6538	0.7473	Agree

According to the findings in Table 1, job incentives are required for effective job performance by university lecturers in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. It was discovered that items 1, 3, 5, 6, and 8 with mean scores of 3.34, 3.13, 3.30, 2.69, and 3.00 indicated that university lecturers agree that motivation in the form of job incentives is required for lecturers to perform effectively in their place of work. It might be argued that university lecturers' employers should consider any motivating technique in order to motivate university lecturers to improve their job performance. Items 2, 4, and 7 with a mean score of 1.95, 2.01, and 1.78 show that university lecturers in Ebonyi State are of the opinion that salary increments, leave grant allowances, and monetary rewards have a way of enhancing their job performance. The table also showed that the standard deviation of 0.74 fell within the range.

Research question 2

What is the influence of university lecturers' image on their job performance in universities in Ebonyi State, Nigeria?

Table 2: mean rating of the university lecturers' image on their job performance in Ebonyi state Universities

S/N.	Items Statement	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
9	Hard work and rewards influence my job performance.	23	3.0435	.63806	Agree
10	My job performance does depend on hard work and rewards.	23	1.4783	.54582	Disagree
11	Promotion, when due, influences my job performance.	23	2.6957	.97397	Agree
12	Regular promotion enhance my job performance	23	1.5217	.59026	Disagree
13	Verbal appreciation has a way of encouraging me to work hard.	23	3.0435	.63806	Agree
14	Recognition in the workplace influences my job performance.	23	3.3043	.47047	Agree
15	Respect by the employers enhances lecturers job performance.	23	3.5652	.50687	Disagree
16	Respect has not been influenced by my job performance.	23	1.6957	0.50196	Agree
	Grand Mean	23	2.5434	0.6081	Agree

Table 2 demonstrated that university lecturers' perceptions of their job performance in Ebonyi State, Nigeria, are critical and necessitate incentives for their best performance in the classroom. Items 9, 11, 13, 14, and 15 with mean scores of 3.04, 2.69, 3.04, 3.30, and 3.56 and a grand mean of 2.54 indicate that university lecturers feel that their image is important in inspiring them to work well. Items 10, 12, and 16 with mean scores of 1.47, 1.52, and 1.69, respectively, demonstrated that university lecturers' maximum performance is heavily reliant on rewards, verbal acknowledgment, and respect to improve their job's maximum performance. The table also showed that the standard deviation of 0.60 fell within the range of agreement.

Hypothesis I

There is no significant difference in the mean rating of gender on the job incentive needed for university lecturers job performance.

Table 3: Independent t-test of the mean rating of male and female on the job incentive needed for university lecturers job performance¹

Respondents''		Std.							
Items	category	N	Mean	Dev	df	t-cal	Alpha	P-val.	Decision
1	Male Lecturers'	15	3.4	0.50709	21	0.471	0.05	0.000	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	3.25	1.0351					
2	Male Lecturers'	15	3.0667	0.88372	21	0.772	0.05	0.265	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	2.75	1.0351					
3	Male Lecturers'	15	3.5333	0.5164	21	4.396	0.05	0.143	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	2.375	0.74402					
4	Male Lecturers'	15	2.7333	0.70373	21	-1.424	0.05	0.023	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	3.25	1.0351					
5	Male Lecturers'	15	3.2667	0.45774	21	-0.345	0.05	0.044	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	3.375	1.06066					
6	Male Lecturers'	15	2.6	0.98561	21	-0.67	0.05	0.32	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	2.875	0.83452					
7	Male Lecturers'	15	2.7333	0.59362	21	-0.531	0.05	0.953	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	2.875	0.64087					

8	Male Lecturers'	15	2.6667	0.89974	21	-2.289	0.05	0.551	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	3.625	1.06066					
	Male Lecturers'	15	24.0001	5.54764	21	0.047	0.05	0.287	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	24.375	7.44603					

The findings in Table 3 revealed that the t-cal. of 0.047 is less than the p-val. of 0.287 at the 0.05 level of significance and 21 degrees of freedom. This implies that the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of gender on the incentive needed for university lecturers to be effective was retained. This is because both male and female university lecturers' need motivation for maximum performance in their job.

Hypothesis 2

There is a significant difference between the mean rating of university lecturers' image and their job performance based on gender.

Table 4: Independent t-test of the mean rating of university lecturers' image their job performance based on gender

Items	Respondents''		Std.		df	t-cal	Alpha	P-val.	Decision
	category	N	Mean	Dev					
9	Male Lecturers'	15	3.2000	0.56061	21	1.676	0.05	0.953	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	2.7500	0.70711					
10	Male Lecturers'	15	3.7333	0.45774	21	2.134	0.05	0.001	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	3.0001	1.19523					
11	Male Lecturers'	15	2.8000	0.7746	21	0.695	0.05	0.017	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	2.5000	1.30931					
12	Male Lecturers'	15	3.8001	0.41404	21	2.597	0.05	0.000	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	3.0002	1.06904					
13	Male Lecturers'	15	3.0667	0.79881	21	0.233	0.05	0.033	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	3.0000	0.00001					
14	Male Lecturers'	15	3.0001	0.10000	21	-9.791	0.05	0.004	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	3.875	0.35355					
15	Male Lecturers'	15	3.3333	0.48795	21	-3.822	0.05	0.000	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	4.0000	0.0001					
16	Male Lecturers'	15	2.4000	0.63246	21	-2.036	0.05	0.009	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	3.2500	1.38873					
	Male Lecturers'	15	25.333	4.1262	21	-1.03	0.05	0.127	NS
	Female Lecturers'	8	25.375	6.0229					

The result above in Table 4 shows that at the 0.05 level of significance and 21 levels of degree of freedom, the critical value of -0103 is less than the p-value of 0.127. The null hypothesis that states that there is a significant difference between the mean rating of university lecturers image and their job performance was rejected. This could be because both genders desire to have a good self-image to enhance their performance.

Discussion of findings

The result in Table 2 shows that job incentives are needed for effective job performance by university lecturers in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. This is because the table revealed that items 1, 3, 5, 6, and 8 with a mean score of 3.34, 3.1-3, 3.30, 2.69, and 3.00 signified that university lecturers are in agreement that, for lecturers to perform effectively in their place of work,

motivational approaches such as monetary rewards, leave grants, overtime monetary value, salary increasement, and payment of end-of-year academic allowance are needed to enhance their job performance. It could be said that the university lecturers' employers should take into consideration any motivational approach to motivate them to enhance their job performance. Items 2, 4, and 7 with a mean score of 1.95, 2.01, and 1.78 show that university lecturers in the Ebonyi Suite are of the opinion that salary increments, leave grant allowances, and monetary rewards have a way of enhancing their job performance. The table also showed that the standard deviation of 0.74 fell within the range. This finding is consistent with Decenzo and Robbins (2018) observation that lecturers require incentives in order to serve as learning counselors and motivators for Nigerian students. He also stated that education must sustain its workforce in order to attain the required work performance for its employees. In this instance, lecturers must be sufficiently motivated to give their all. Motivation is vital in educational institutions because it improves employee performance and productivity. As a result, university lecturers must be driven to improve their job performance. According to Iqbal, Ali, Tufail, and Sajid (2017), employee performance is dependent on ability and motivation level; hence, inspiring subordinates to achieve to the best of their abilities is a crucial duty of educational institution leaders. Motivation can impact an employee's behavior toward achieving organizational objectives. The null hypothesis resulted in no significant differences in the mean rating of gender on the job incentive required for university lecturers job performance. This could be because both male and female teachers in Nigerian universities need to be driven to work at their best. This could mean that when job incentives are involved, university lecturers will be willing to give their all because motivation plays an essential role in strengthening the brains and morale of university lecturers. Lecturers image in society and job performance in universities in Ebonyi State.

The findings of the study in Table 3 show that university lecturers' image in their job performance in Ebonyi State, Nigeria, is crucial and requires a motivational approach for maximum performance in discharging their statutory duties in the universities and being young. The items 9, II, 13, 14, and 15 with a mean score of 3.04, 2.69, 3.04, 3.30, and 3.56 with a grand mean of 2.54 imply that the university lecturers agree that their image, such as recognition in the workplace, respect by the employers, promotion when due, and verbal appreciation, plays a vital role in motivating university lecturers for maximum performance. The table also showed that the standard deviation of 0.60 fell within the range of agreement. The null hypothesis result indicates that the study agrees that there is a substantial difference in the mean rating of university lecturers' image and job performance based on gender. The findings are consistent with the findings of Atah (1019), who discovered that the government plays with the image of the lecturers who would have received the most adequate attention, and this may induce university lecturers to not provide their best effort in the case at hand. This could be because encouragement boosts lecturers' morale, allowing them to perform better on the job. In line with this research, Stup (2003) discovered that a lecturer's attitude and motivation influence and affect the performance of classroom students, which might increase the lecturer's ego and excitement for the subject. Both male and female lecturers care about their names and the professions to which they have been called, and they want to be recognized and treated as persons of knowledge and wisdom by their employers.

Conclusion

The findings of the study revealed that university lecturers need to be motivated with job incentives to enhance their maximum job performance. This implies the Federal Government should take the motivational approach seriously because it plays a major and leading role in increasing lecturers' job performance. When university lecturers are massively motivated by job incentives, it will enhance productivity. Thus, the university management should not allow the federal government alone to motivate lecturers; rather, from the internal revenue generated, the

management should identify and motivate lecturers. This will have a long way to go in the educational sector. Again, when the federal government and society at large respect and encourage university lecturers, this could enhance their performance.

Recommendations

In view of the findings above, the following recommendations were made:

1. The federal government should endeavor to pay lecturers four (4) months' salary withheld; this could boost the morale of the university lecturer for effective job performance.
2. The federal government should motivate university lecturers by implementing the 2009 agreement.
3. There should be a good working relationship between the Ministry of Education and ASUU to enhance lecturer job performance.
4. Professional programs and welfare packages should be made feasible, as these are incentives so as to give the lecturers job satisfaction for better performance.

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