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Strategies for Enhancing Job Satisfaction and Academic Staff Productivity in Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic: Challenges and Prospects

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ABSTRACT
This study examined strategies for enhancing job satisfaction and academic staff productivity in Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic, with particular attention to the challenges and prospects affecting academic staff. The study was anchored on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which explains job satisfaction through motivator factors such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, and advancement, and hygiene factors such as salary, working conditions, supervision, and institutional policies. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 380 academic staff of Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analysed using frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, while regression analysis was employed to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that improved remuneration, conducive working conditions, recognition, promotion opportunities, access to professional development, adequate teaching facilities, and participatory management significantly contributed to job satisfaction and academic staff productivity. The study also found that inadequate funding, heavy workloads, limited institutional resources, delayed promotion, insufficient recognition, and poor working conditions constituted major challenges to staff satisfaction and productivity. The study concluded that enhancing job satisfaction requires a combination of financial and non-financial motivational strategies that address both hygiene and motivator factors. The study recommended that the institutions should improve remuneration and working conditions, ensure timely promotion, recognise outstanding academic performance, provide regular training and professional development opportunities, reduce excessive workloads, and improve teaching and research facilities. It further recommended stronger institutional support and participatory decision-making to promote staff commitment, satisfaction, and productivity.
Keywords: Job Satisfaction, Academic Staff Productivity, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Motivation, Working Conditions, Professional Development, Taraba State.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, higher education institutions play a central role in human capital development, knowledge production, technological advancement and socio-economic transformation. The effectiveness of universities and polytechnics in achieving these responsibilities depends substantially on the commitment, satisfaction and productivity of their academic staff. Academic staff are expected to perform multiple responsibilities, including teaching, research, student supervision, innovation, community service and

institutional administration. However, changes in higher education, including massification, technological transformation, increasing workloads, financial pressures and changing expectations of academic workers, have created considerable challenges for staff well-being and productivity. A systematic review of higher education literature indicates that academic staff increasingly experience high job demands, workload pressures, limited job security and difficulties maintaining work-life balance, all of which can influence their performance and satisfaction (Naidoo-Chetty & du Plessis, 2021).

Job satisfaction has therefore become an important issue in the management of higher education institutions across the world. It generally refers to the extent to which employees feel positively about their jobs, including their remuneration, working conditions, recognition, promotion opportunities, leadership, professional development and relationships within the workplace. Recent international evidence indicates that academic staff satisfaction and retention are strongly influenced by supportive working environments, opportunities for professional development, work-life balance, equitable salaries and recognition. When these conditions are inadequate, institutions may experience reduced morale, higher turnover intentions and weaker organisational performance (Mather & Bam, 2025). Similarly, UNESCO has identified job insecurity, inadequate and unstable salaries, excessive performance pressures, poor work-life balance and unfavourable workplace conditions as major challenges affecting higher education staff globally (UNESCO IESALC, 2024). These challenges suggest that improving academic productivity requires more than simply increasing performance expectations; it requires institutional strategies that address the conditions under which academic staff work.

Similarly, research on African universities has emphasized the importance of academic autonomy, research competence, institutional rewards and alignment between individual academic activities and institutional research objectives in promoting productive academic behaviour (2019). These findings demonstrate that academic productivity cannot be separated from the organisational environment in which lecturers operate. Where staff are provided with adequate resources, opportunities for career progression and supportive leadership, they are more likely to demonstrate commitment and productive behaviour.

In Nigeria, the issue of academic staff job satisfaction and productivity is particularly significant because universities and polytechnics are major institutions for producing the skilled manpower required for national development. Nigerian higher education institutions have experienced challenges associated with inadequate funding, insufficient infrastructure, increasing student enrolment, research constraints, workload pressures, staff development needs and industrial disputes. Studies have shown that institutional factors are significantly associated with academic research productivity in Nigerian universities. In particular, conducive organisational culture, supportive working environments and motivational factors have been identified as important influences on academic productivity, while inadequate research funding remains a major constraint (Gbemi-Ogunleye, 2023).

The Nigerian situation is further complicated by industrial actions and disruptions in the academic calendar. Recurring disputes between academic staff unions and government or institutional authorities can interrupt teaching, research, supervision and other academic responsibilities. Recent evidence from Taraba State University indicates that strike actions have disrupted teaching schedules, increased workload, reduced motivation, limited lecturer-student interaction and affected research activities, conference participation and student supervision (Abdullahi et al., 2026). Consequently, strategies for enhancing job satisfaction and productivity must include effective grievance-resolution mechanisms, prompt payment of salaries and allowances, participatory management, improved working conditions and constructive labour-management relations.

In Taraba State, the issue assumes particular importance because tertiary institutions are expected to provide the human capital required for the state's educational, economic and technological development. Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic constitute important state-owned institutions serving different but complementary aspects of higher and technical education. Taraba State Polytechnic, for instance, provides certificate, diploma, National Diploma and Higher National Diploma programmes and is expected to prepare students with practical and industry-oriented skills. The quality of these

institutions is consequently dependent not only on students and physical infrastructure but also on the motivation, satisfaction, competence and productivity of their academic staff.

Against this background, enhancing job satisfaction and academic staff productivity requires a comprehensive approach that combines financial and non-financial strategies. Such strategies may include competitive and timely remuneration, transparent promotion and reward systems, opportunities for training and professional development, improved research funding, adequate teaching and research facilities, access to digital resources, reasonable workloads, supportive leadership, staff participation in decision-making, recognition of achievements, effective welfare schemes and mechanisms for resolving workplace grievances. Recent Nigerian evidence also indicates that human resource development programmes can improve employee performance, job satisfaction and institutional productivity in public universities (Okoye & Ogu, 2026). Therefore, the present study focuses on Strategies for Enhancing Job Satisfaction and Academic Staff Productivity in Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic: Challenges and Prospects, with the aim of examining the factors affecting staff satisfaction and productivity, identifying the major institutional challenges and assessing practical strategies that can improve academic staff performance in the two institutions.

Statement of the problem

Job satisfaction among academic staff is an important factor influencing the quality of teaching, research, supervision, community service and overall institutional productivity. Despite the critical roles performed by academic staff in Nigerian tertiary institutions, many continue to experience challenges such as inadequate remuneration, heavy workloads, limited opportunities for professional development, inadequate teaching and research facilities, delayed promotion, poor welfare packages, limited recognition and weak participation in institutional decision-making. These conditions may reduce staff morale, commitment and satisfaction, which can subsequently affect their productivity and the quality of educational services delivered. In Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic, these challenges may be further associated with inadequate funding, infrastructural deficiencies, increasing student enrolment, research constraints and occasional disruptions in academic activities. When academic staff are dissatisfied with their working conditions, they may experience reduced motivation, absenteeism, lower research output, diminished commitment to teaching and increased intentions to seek employment elsewhere.

The major problem, therefore, is that despite the importance of satisfied and productive academic staff to the achievement of the educational objectives of Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic, there appears to be insufficient systematic attention to the strategies that can simultaneously improve job satisfaction and academic staff productivity in the two institutions. Existing interventions may focus on isolated issues such as remuneration or promotion without adequately addressing the broader combination of working conditions, leadership, career advancement, professional development, research support, recognition and staff welfare. Consequently, if these challenges remain inadequately addressed, they may negatively affect staff morale, institutional effectiveness and the quality of teaching and research. The study therefore seeks to examine the challenges affecting job satisfaction and academic staff productivity in Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic and to identify practical strategies and prospects for enhancing staff satisfaction, motivation, commitment and productivity in the two institutions.

Research Questions

1. What strategies are in place at Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic to enhance job satisfaction among academic staff?
2. How have the strategies of job satisfaction implemented by Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic influenced the productivity of academic staff?

Research Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine the strategies put in place at Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic to enhance job satisfaction among academic staff.

2. Analyse the extent to which the strategies adopted by Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic have affected the productivity of academic staff.

Research Hypotheses

$H_0$1: There are no specified strategies in place at Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic to promote job satisfaction among academic staff.

$H_0$2: The strategies implemented by Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic have no significant influence on the productivity of academic staff.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Employee Productivity

Employee productivity is a multifaceted and context-dependent concept that lacks a universally accepted definition across academic and professional domains. This variability arises primarily because productivity includes both quantitative and qualitative dimensions that differ markedly across industries, organizational goals, and individual job roles (Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007). For instance, in academic institutions, productivity is frequently evaluated based on scholarly output, such as peer-reviewed publications and successful grant acquisition, as well as the quality and effectiveness of teaching (Bland, Center, Finstad, Risbey, & Staples, 2005).

Job Satisfaction

There is currently no universally accepted definition of job satisfaction, a reality largely attributable to the concept's inherently subjective, multidimensional, and context-dependent nature. As a concept situated at the intersection of psychological and organisational domains, job satisfaction includes a broad spectrum of emotional, cognitive, and behavioural dimensions, each of which may be perceived and experienced differently by individuals across diverse professions, industries, and cultural settings (Spector, 1997). This variability challenges the development of a singular, all-inclusive definition that holds universal applicability. The lack of definitional consensus is primarily rooted in the diversity of theoretical lenses through which the concept is examined.

The complexity of job satisfaction is further compounded by the multitude of factors that influence its development. These include extrinsic variables such as remuneration, organisational policies, and work conditions, as well as intrinsic elements such as opportunities for personal growth, recognition, and the nature of work itself (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959; Judge, Bono, & Locke, 2000). Zhang and Li (2020) define job satisfaction as the overall feeling of contentment an employee experiences when their job aligns with their expectations, needs, and values. This definition is particularly valuable within the field of public personnel management, as it emphasises the subjective nature of employee satisfaction and acknowledges the role of individual perception in shaping work-related attitudes.

Job Satisfaction and Employee Productivity

The nexus between job satisfaction and employee productivity has been a central focus of organisational behaviour, human resource management and industrial psychology for decades. This relationship is complex and multifaceted, influenced by individual, organisational and environmental factors. Job satisfaction, broadly defined as the degree to which employees feel positively about their work, has been consistently associated with higher levels of productivity across a variety of sectors and occupational roles. A growing body of literature has examined how contentment with elements such as the physical work environment, compensation, social relationships, and opportunities for career advancement can influence employees' overall efficiency and performance outcomes. Numerous empirical studies affirm that satisfied employees are more likely to exert greater effort, demonstrate organisational citizenship behaviours, and contribute positively to organisational performance. For example, Judge et al. (2001) conducted a meta-analysis involving 312 studies and found a moderate yet statistically significant correlation, with a mean coefficient of 0.30, indicating that job satisfaction is frequently linked to improved job performance. Similarly, Riketta (2008) found that job satisfaction had a moderate to strong correlation with job performance, particularly when satisfaction was measured in a holistic manner rather than as discrete aspects of the job.

Theoretical frameworks have sought to explain this relationship in greater depth. One of the most influential is the Job Characteristics Model developed by Hackman and Oldham (1976), which posits that task significance, autonomy and feedback are central to enhancing job satisfaction and, consequently, performance. Employees who perceive their work as meaningful and experience a sense of control over their tasks are more likely to report higher satisfaction and demonstrate enhanced productivity. A practical illustration of this is seen in a manufacturing firm that permitted its assembly line workers to redesign their workflow, leading to a 20 percent increase in output, attributed to increased autonomy and a greater sense of ownership. Similarly, in the service sector, Brown and Lam (2008) reported that customer service representatives who expressed higher satisfaction levels also attained superior customer ratings and faster resolution times.

While the prevailing view supports a positive relationship between satisfaction and productivity, the direction of causality remains debated. Scholars such as Locke (1976) argue that satisfied workers are more productive due to increased intrinsic motivation and emotional wellbeing; whereas Lawler and Porter (1967) suggest that high performers become more satisfied as a result of receiving recognition and rewards. This bidirectional influence suggests the existence of a self-reinforcing cycle in which satisfaction fosters performance, which in turn enhances satisfaction. For example, sales professionals who exceeded their quotas often reported elevated levels of satisfaction, derived not only from financial incentives but also from feelings of competence and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997).

Employee Productivity and Job Satisfaction among Academic Staff in Universities

Employee productivity and job satisfaction are key components in determining the performance and overall quality of higher education institutions globally. Among academic staff, job satisfaction does not only function as a determinant of individual productivity, but also profoundly influences the quality of teaching, the volume and calibre of research output, and the degree of student engagement. As universities increasingly rely on the intellectual capital of their staff to meet both educational and societal expectations, job satisfaction has emerged as a critical area of focus in higher education policy and institutional administration. The nexus between job satisfaction and academic productivity has therefore received extensive scholarly attention, as it bears significant implications for institutional development, staff retention, and the broader delivery of quality education.

Job satisfaction includes a variety of factors, including remuneration, work environment, promotion opportunities, workload, leadership style, collegiality, and recognition. Studies have consistently demonstrated that when lecturers are content with their working conditions, they are more likely to be engaged, innovative, and productive in fulfilling their teaching, research, and community service responsibilities. For instance, Ssesanga and Garrett (2005) emphasise that job satisfaction significantly influences academic staff's level of commitment and performance. Similarly, Oshagbemi (2000) found that lecturers in the United Kingdom who reported satisfaction with administrative support and collegial relationships showed greater involvement in curriculum development and student mentorship. Kinman and Jones (2008) further demonstrated that academic staff who felt supported by institutional leadership tended to perform better, particularly in areas such as student engagement and research publication.

In the context of developing countries, the relationship between job satisfaction and productivity becomes even more pronounced due to the systemic and financial constraints faced by many institutions. Aina (2010) observed that in Nigerian universities, insufficient infrastructure, delayed salary payments, and inadequate research funding were major sources of dissatisfaction that undermined academic productivity. These challenges often translate into high turnover rates, frequent industrial actions, and diminished research output. Akpan (2013) supports this observation, noting that job dissatisfaction among academic staff in Nigerian tertiary institutions frequently results in reduced scholarly engagement and weakened alignment with institutional goals. Furthermore, Ofoegbu and Nwadiani (2006) confirmed that low remuneration and limited access to research funding substantially erode motivation among Nigerian lecturers, while Akinyemi (2012) highlighted that inconsistent promotion practices and excessive workloads hinder optimal academic performance.

Strategies Implemented by University Management to Enhance Job Satisfaction and Academic Staff Productivity

Job satisfaction and productivity among academic staff are universally recognised as fundamental to the effective functioning of universities. The role of university management in enhancing these factors has garnered considerable scholarly attention, with extensive evidence demonstrating that a wide array of institutional strategies, adapted to local cultural and systemic contexts, can substantially influence both academic staff morale and academic output. Across the world, higher education institutions have adopted diverse approaches aimed at improving the working environment, incentivising performance, and cultivating a strong sense of academic purpose and belonging.

One of the most commonly implemented strategies involves participatory governance and inclusive decision-making. Engaging academic staff in policy formulation, curriculum design, and institutional planning encourages a sense of ownership that significantly enhances commitment to organisational goals. For instance, research in Nigerian universities shows that institutions incorporating academic staff members into governance structures such as academic boards and committees experience higher levels of job satisfaction and productivity among their staff (Akomolafe & Ogunmakin, 2014). In a similar vein, Ofoegbu and Alonge (2016) assert that shared governance mechanisms stimulate innovation and greater engagement from academic personnel. Closely related to this is the adoption of transformational leadership styles, which have proven effective in motivating academic staff. Leaders who act as mentors, inspire a shared vision, and acknowledge individual achievements create environments conducive to higher motivation and productivity. In Malaysia, Yusof, Shah, and Ahmad (2012) found that transformational leadership had a direct positive impact on lecturers' job satisfaction and research output. This finding resonates with observations in Finland, where university leaders providing personalised support and fostering collective vision have promoted greater intrinsic motivation and performance among academic staff members (Tirri & Kuusisto, 2013).

Financial incentives and competitive compensation schemes constitute another pivotal strategy for enhancing academic staff motivation globally. Many universities link remuneration to tangible outputs such as research publications, student evaluations, and community involvement. In China, Wang and Cheng (2010) documented that tiered reward systems and merit-based bonuses effectively increased both research productivity and teaching commitment. Similarly, South African institutions, particularly those historically disadvantaged, reported improvements in staff morale and reductions in turnover following the implementation of more competitive pay structures (Barkhuizen & Rothmann, 2008). In the United States, merit pay and internal grant competitions are widely used as motivational tools, provided these systems are perceived as equitable and transparent by academic staff (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002).

Theoretical Framework

Several theoretical frameworks have been proposed to underpin research into employee productivity and job satisfaction, including Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, the Job Characteristics Model (JCM), and Equity Theory. However, this particular study adopts Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory due to its robust and structured approach in explaining the multifaceted factors that influence both job satisfaction and productivity among academic staff. Herzberg's theory stands as a foundational model within workplace motivation literature, offering valuable insights into the conditions required to enhance employee performance in meaningful ways. It posits that organisations seeking to improve employee satisfaction and productivity must do more than simply rectify environmental or external conditions, often referred to as hygiene factors; they must also actively provide motivating factors that create engaging and fulfilling work experiences.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, also known as the Motivation-Hygiene Theory, was developed by the psychologist Frederick Herzberg in 1959. The model arose from extensive qualitative research involving interviews with a broad sample of employees from various professional backgrounds. Herzberg's primary aim was to identify the underlying causes of employees' feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction in their work environments.

Within the context of Taraba State University, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory offers a useful framework for exploring the factors that affect academic staff job satisfaction and productivity. For instance, while ensuring adequate salaries and job security – which are hygiene factors – can help to prevent dissatisfaction among academic personnel, it is the provision of motivators such as opportunities for academic advancement, professional development, and recognition that is essential for enhancing job satisfaction and stimulating higher productivity.

This theoretical framework aligns closely with the aims of the present study, which seeks to understand how different factors influence academic staff performance at Taraba State University. By examining both the presence of motivators and the adequacy of hygiene factors, the study aims to generate valuable insights that could inform institutional policies and practices designed to enhance job satisfaction and improve academic productivity

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a mixed method research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a holistic understanding of the relationship between job satisfaction and employee productivity among academic staff at Taraba State University, Jalingo and Taraba State Polytechnic. The use of a mixed methods design is particularly suitable for exploring multifaceted phenomena such as job satisfaction and productivity, as it allows for the collection and triangulation of both numerical data and rich, contextual narratives. The population of this study consist exclusively of all permanent academic staff members currently employed at Taraba State University, Jalingo and Taraba State Polytechnic, Jalingo and Suntai. According to institutional records, the total number of academic staff at TSU stands at 609 (Tyopuusu, 2024). On the other hand, the total number of academic staff members at TSP is 240 (85, Suntai Campus and 155, Jalingo Campus), totaling the population of the study to 849.

Having identified the population of the study, the sample sizes for each category of respondents were differently, therefore, the study employed the Taro Yamane (1967) formula, which is suitable when the population size is known. The formula is expressed as follows:

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

Where:

n = sample size
N = population size
e = margin of error or level of precision (0.05)

Thus, substituting the values for Taraba State University, Jalingo with a population size of (609):

$$n = \frac{609}{1 + 609(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{609}{1 + 609(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{609}{2.5225}$$

$$n = 241.43$$

On this basis, the sample size was approximated to 241 academic staff, selected to represent the broader academic community of the university. Additionally, substituting the formula for Taraba State Polytechnic with a combined population size of 240,

$$n = \frac{240}{1 + 24(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{240}{1 + 240(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{240}{1.6} = 150$$

This was presented on the table below:

Table 3.1 Population and Sample Size Allocation

S/N	Institution	Population	Sample Allocation
1	Taraba State University, Jalingo	609	241
2	Taraba State Polytechnic	240	150
	Total	**849**	**391**

Source: Compiled by the Researcher

This study adopted a mixed sampling strategy, combining both probability and non-probability sampling techniques in accordance with the mixed methods research design. A self-administered questionnaire was distributed to the 391 selected academic staff from both institutions to obtain quantitative data. The questionnaire consist of close-ended items structured on a five-point Likert scale, covering dimensions such as remuneration, promotion, recognition, work environment, academic autonomy, and perceived productivity.

Quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations was used to summarize the data. Inferential analysis was carried out using multiple regression analysis to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between job satisfaction variables and employee productivity. Statistical analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Table 4.2.1: Bio-Data of Respondents

Variables	Category	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
(1) **Gender**	Male	240	63.2
	Female	140	36.8
	Total	**380**	**100**
(2) **Age Group**	25-34	92	24.2
	35-44	148	38.9
	45-54	95	25.0
	55 and above	45	11.8
	Total	**380**	**100**
(3) **Qualification**	B.SC/B.A	48	12.6
	M.SC/M.A	214	56.3
	PhD	98	25.8
	Others	20	5.3
	Total	**380**	**100**
(4) Academic Rank	Graduate Assistant	50	13.2
	Assistant Lecturer	76	20.0
	Lecturer II	96	25.3
	Lecturer I	84	22.1
	Reader	40	10.5
	Professor	34	8.9
	Total	**380**	**100**
(5) Years in Service	1-5	72	18.9
	6-10	122	32.1
	11-15	106	27.9
	15 and above	80	21.1
	Total	**380**	**100**
(6) Institution	TSU	237	62.4
	TSP	143	37.6
	Total	**380**	**100**

Source: Field Survey, (2026).

The majority of the respondents were male (63.2%), reflecting the typical gender distribution within academic institutions in the region. This implies that male perspectives dominate the data, though female voices are also significantly represented. Respondents are mostly within the active and mid-career age brackets (35–44 and 45–54), which collectively account for 63.9% of the sample. This suggests that responses reflect experienced academic staff likely to be engaged in key productivity functions. A majority of respondents hold postgraduate degrees (M.Sc./M.A and Ph.D.), making them highly qualified to provide informed responses on institutional policies, satisfaction, and productivity. This adds credibility to the findings. Mid-level academic staff (Lecturer II and Lecturer I) dominate the sample, accounting for 47.4%. Senior staff (Reader and Professor) make up 19.4%, providing a balanced view from junior and senior academic perspectives. Most respondents have over 6 years of service (81.1%), indicating they have adequate exposure to institutional policies and work conditions. Their experience adds depth to the understanding of job satisfaction issues. Respondents are drawn from both TSU and TSP, with a higher representation from TSU. The distribution allows for comparative analysis between a university and a polytechnic in the same state context. The demographic profile of respondents shows a well-distributed, experienced academic workforce with strong qualifications and varying years of service. This makes them suitable for evaluating the relationship between job satisfaction and productivity, as well as institutional challenges and strategies.

4.2.2 Research Question 1: *What strategies are in place at Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic to enhance job satisfaction among academic staff?*

Table 4.2.2 Provision of Competitive Salary Package

Taraba State University				Taraba State Polytechnic			
S/N	Option	Frequency	%	S/n	Option	Frequency	%
1	SA	22	9.3	1	SA	12	8.4
2	A	44	18.6	2	A	20	14.0
3	N	48	20.3	3	N	26	18.2
4	D	71	29.9	4	D	45	31.5
5	SD	52	21.9	5	SD	40	28.0
6	**TOTAL**	**237**	**100**	**6**	**TOTAL**	**143**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2026)

The total mean score of 2.63 (TSU) and 2.49 (TSP) both fall below 3.00, indicating that most respondents disagreed that their institutions offer competitive salary packages. The majority of academic staff either disagreed or strongly disagreed, especially in TSP (59.5%) and TSU (51.8%). Only a small proportion of staff agreed or strongly agreed (TSU: 27.9%, TSP: 22.4%) This suggests that perceived salary inadequacy is a major concern in both institutions, more pronounced in the Polytechnic. The finding supports previous research (e.g., Eze et al., 2019) that poor compensation is a key factor affecting academic staff motivation and job satisfaction in public tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This stresses the need for policy reforms to review salary structures as a strategy to enhance job satisfaction and, by extension, employee productivity

Table 4.2.3 Opportunities for Promotion are Clearly Defined

Taraba State University				Taraba State Polytechnic			
S/N	Option	Frequency	%	S/n	Option	Frequency	%
1	SA	28	11.8	1	SA	14	9.8
2	A	53	22.4	2	A	24	16.8
3	N	52	21.9	3	N	28	19.6
4	D	66	27.8	4	D	45	31.5
5	SD	38	16.0	5	SD	32	22.4
6	**TOTAL**	**237**	**100**	**6**	**TOTAL**	**143**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2026)

TSU Mean Score (2.81) and TSP Mean Score (2.66) are below the neutral point (3.00), indicating that respondents generally disagreed that opportunities for promotion are clearly defined. In both institutions,

more than 43% of respondents disagreed, while fewer than 30% agreed, suggesting uncertainty or lack of clarity about promotion policies. These findings revealed that lack of transparency in promotion procedures is a barrier to job satisfaction. When staff are unsure about promotion criteria, it can reduce motivation and productivity. This supports studies such as Okafor and Anichebe (2015), which emphasize that clearly defined career progression paths are essential for employee engagement and organizational performance in academic institutions.

Table 4.2.4 Response on Staff Rewarded for Good Performance

Taraba State University				Taraba State Polytechnic			
S/N	Option	Frequency	%	S/n	Option	Frequency	%
1	SA	27	11.4	1	SA	12	8.3
2	A	46	19.4	2	A	22	15.4
3	N	54	22.8	3	N	26	18.2
4	D	70	29.5	4	D	47	32.9
5	SD	40	16.9	5	SD	36	25.2
6	**TOTAL**	**237**	**100**	**6**	**TOTAL**	**143**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2026)

Both TSU (2.72) and TSP (2.53) fall below the neutral mark (3.00), indicating general disagreement that staff are regularly or fairly rewarded for good performance. At TSP, 58.1% disagreed or strongly disagreed; at TSU, 46.4% disagreed, while only 30.8% agreed. A significant portion of respondents chose "neutral," suggesting either uncertainty or inconsistency in performance reward practices. The implication is that lack of performance-based rewards appears to be a demotivating factor in both institutions. This supports findings by Armstrong (2010) and Aguinis (2013) that reward and recognition systems are essential for reinforcing desirable behavior and improving productivity. Inadequate or unclear reward systems can lead to reduced morale, loss of initiative, and employee disengagement, affecting the institution's overall effectiveness.

Table 4.2.5 Workload Assigned to Academic Staff is Manageable

Taraba State University				Taraba State Polytechnic			
S/N	Option	Frequency	%	S/n	Option	Frequency	%
1	SA	31	13.1	1	SA	12	8.4
2	A	53	22.4	2	A	22	15.4
3	N	49	20.7	3	N	26	18.2
4	D	68	28.7	4	D	43	30.1
5	SD	36	15.2	5	SD	40	28.0
6	**TOTAL**	**237**	**100**	**6**	**TOTAL**	**143**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2026)

The TSU mean of 2.87 suggests staff are nearly neutral but leaning toward disagree on workload being manageable. The TSP mean of 2.56 shows a clearer disagreement, with 58.1% indicating unmanageable workload. This implies that academic staff feel overburdened, which can reduce effectiveness and satisfaction.

Table 4.2.6 Training Opportunities are Readily Available for Academic Staff

Taraba State University				Taraba State Polytechnic			
S/N	Option	Frequency	%	S/n	Option	Frequency	%
1	SA	45	19.0	1	SA	21	14.7
2	A	65	27.4	2	A	34	23.8
3	N	45	19.0	3	N	28	19.6
4	D	54	22.8	4	D	38	26.6
5	SD	28	11.8	5	SD	22	15.4
6	**TOTAL**	**237**	**100**	**6**	**TOTAL**	**143**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2026)

TSU's mean of 3.10 indicates general agreement that training opportunities are available. TSP mean of 2.94 is borderline neutral, suggesting staff are uncertain or feel access is inconsistent. Overall, training is seen as more accessible at TSU than at TSP, supporting productivity and satisfaction more effectively in TSU.

Table 4.2.7 Physical Work Environment and Job Satisfaction

Taraba State University				Taraba State Polytechnic			
S/N	Option	Frequency	%	S/n	Option	Frequency	%
1	SA	39	16.4	1	SA	16	11.2
2	A	60	25.3	2	A	26	18.2
3	N	50	21.1	3	N	28	19.6
4	D	58	24.5	4	D	40	28.0
5	SD	30	12.7	5	SD	33	23.1
6	**TOTAL**	**237**	**100**	**6**	**TOTAL**	**143**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2026)

TSU staff moderately agree that the physical environment supports satisfaction (mean = 3.06). TSP staff lean toward disagreement (mean = 2.76), indicating infrastructure gaps are more severe in TSP.

Table 4.2.8 Effectiveness of Communication between Management and Academic Staff

Taraba State University				Taraba State Polytechnic			
S/N	Option	Frequency	%	S/n	Option	Frequency	%
1	SA	34	14.3	1	SA	16	11.2
2	A	58	24.5	2	A	25	17.5
3	N	55	23.2	3	N	30	21.0
4	D	61	25.7	4	D	42	29.4
5	SD	29	12.2	5	SD	30	21.0
6	**TOTAL**	**237**	**100**	**6**	**TOTAL**	**143**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2026)

TSU's mean is borderline neutral, suggesting communication effectiveness is inconsistent. TSP's lower mean reflects perceived communication gaps, possibly affecting trust and policy implementation.

Table 4.2.9 Institutional Policies and Healthy Work-Life Balance

Taraba State University				Taraba State Polytechnic			
S/N	Option	Frequency	%	S/n	Option	Frequency	%
1	SA	33	13.9	1	SA	14	9.8
2	A	57	24.1	2	A	22	15.4
3	N	51	21.5	3	N	28	19.6
4	D	62	26.2	4	D	44	30.8
5	SD	34	14.3	5	SD	35	24.5
6	**TOTAL**	**237**	**100**	**6**	**TOTAL**	**143**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2026)

TSU respondents are near neutral on work-life balance support (2.89), while TSP shows clear disagreement (2.58). Many staff, especially at TSP, feel institutional policies do not support personal wellbeing and flexibility.

This was corroborated by an interview with staff from both institution, when they were probed about the strategies that enhance job satisfaction in their institution. A respondent from Taraba State University responded that:

> "In TSU, job satisfaction initiatives like staff development training and promotion opportunities exist, but they are not always consistent. For instance, although there are salary structures in place, promotions are often delayed due to bureaucratic bottlenecks. Training is available, but mostly dependent on external funding. The physical work environment has improved slightly, especially in newly built faculties, but some offices still lack basic amenities. Communication

between management and staff is formal, yet not consultative enough."(TSU Staff, Male, 12-11-2025)

Another respondent from Taraba State Polytechnic believed that:

> "At TSP, we appreciate the periodic trainings and academic workshops, but we believe more needs to be done in terms of competitive remuneration and incentives for performance. Promotion guidelines are available but poorly implemented, creating dissatisfaction. While classrooms have improved, many academic offices are overcrowded. Communication is top-down, with little opportunity for academic staff to contribute meaningfully to institutional decisions that affect us directly." (TSP Staff, Male, 22-11-2025)

4.2.3 Research Question 2: *How have the strategies of job satisfaction implemented by Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic influenced the productivity of academic staff?*

Table 4.2.10 Job Satisfaction and Improved Teaching Performance

Taraba State University				Taraba State Polytechnic			
S/N	Option	Frequency	%	S/n	Option	Frequency	%
1	SA	57	24.0	1	SA	27	18.9
2	A	82	34.6	2	A	40	28.0
3	N	41	17.3	3	N	30	21.0
4	D	35	14.8	4	D	28	19.6
5	SD	22	9.3	5	SD	18	12.6
6	**TOTAL**	**237**	**100**	**6**	**TOTAL**	**143**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2026)

TSU's mean of 3.51 indicates agreement that job satisfaction has significantly improved teaching performance. TSP's mean of 3.29 also shows moderate agreement, though slightly lower. In both institutions, over 58% of staff agreed or strongly agreed with the claim. This finding affirms that higher job satisfaction positively correlates with teaching effectiveness, aligning with Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and studies like Owoyemi and Ekwoaba (2014) which highlight motivation as a critical driver of employee performance. This implies that when academic staff are satisfied through adequate support, recognition, and conducive environments, they are more likely to deliver quality teaching, contributing to student learning and institutional goals.

Table 4.2.12 Job Satisfaction and Increased Participation in Institutional Activities

Taraba State University				Taraba State Polytechnic			
S/N	Option	Frequency	%	S/n	Option	Frequency	%
1	SA	49	20.7	1	SA	23	16.1
2	A	85	35.9	2	A	38	26.6
3	N	49	20.7	3	N	33	23.1
4	D	34	14.3	4	D	30	21.0
5	SD	20	8.4	5	SD	19	13.3
6	**TOTAL**	**237**	**100**	**6**	**TOTAL**	**143**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2026)

Higher mean in TSU shows stronger belief that job satisfaction boosts institutional involvement like attending meetings or contributing to committees. TSP responses are more spread, showing weaker organizational citizenship behavior due to relatively lower job satisfaction.

Table 4.2.13 Job Satisfaction and Quality Service Delivery to Students

Taraba State University				Taraba State Polytechnic			
S/N	Option	Frequency	%	S/n	Option	Frequency	%
1	SA	60	25.3	1	SA	31	21.7
2	A	89	37.6	2	A	40	28.0
3	N	41	17.3	3	N	32	22.4
4	D	29	12.2	4	D	26	18.2
5	SD	18	7.6	5	SD	14	9.8
6	**TOTAL**	**237**	**100**	**6**	**TOTAL**	**143**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2026)

Both groups agreed that job satisfaction enhances student service quality. This aligns with scholarly findings (e.g., Amah, 2016) showing that satisfied staff tend to be more responsive and dedicated to student needs.

Table 4.2.14 Job Satisfaction and Employees Punctuality

Taraba State University				Taraba State Polytechnic			
S/N	Option	Frequency	%	S/n	Option	Frequency	%
1	SA	54	22.8	1	SA	25	17.5
2	A	88	37.1	2	A	38	26.6
3	N	44	16.6	3	N	34	23.8
4	D	32	13.5	4	D	29	20.3
5	SD	19	8.0	5	SD	17	11.9
6	**TOTAL**	**237**	**100**	**6**	**TOTAL**	**143**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2026)

TSU staff generally agreed that job satisfaction improves punctuality, indicating strong workplace motivation. TSP shows moderate agreement, though a significant proportion remain neutral or disagree, suggesting less consistent punctuality culture possibly due to weaker satisfaction drivers.

Table 4.2.15 Job Satisfaction and Institutional Motivation

Taraba State University				Taraba State Polytechnic			
S/N	Option	Frequency	%	S/n	Option	Frequency	%
1	SA	59	24.9	1	SA	30	21.0
2	A	91	38.4	2	A	40	28.0
3	N	43	18.1	3	N	32	22.4
4	D	28	11.8	4	D	26	18.2
5	SD	16	6.8	5	SD	15	10.5
6	**TOTAL**	**237**	**100**	**6**	**TOTAL**	**143**	**100**

Source: Field Survey (2026)

At TSU, the high mean score shows strong agreement that job satisfaction motivates alignment with institutional goals such as academic excellence and service delivery. TSP shows moderate agreement, suggesting a need to improve satisfaction strategies to better align staff with institutional vision.

This was equally supported by an interview with some staff in both institution. They were quiz on the effectiveness of job satisfaction on their productivity. A staff at TSU revealed that:

> "Personally, job satisfaction greatly influences my performance. When I received my promotion last year, I became more motivated in my teaching and research. Job satisfaction also pushes me to supervise more students and engage in university development activities. However, when salaries are delayed or support for research is lacking, my enthusiasm drops significantly." (TSU Staff, Male, 14-11-2025).

Another respondent from Taraba State Polytechnic responded that:

> "There's a clear connection between how satisfied I feel and how productive I am. When I'm recognized for my efforts, I invest more in preparing quality lectures and mentoring students. But in times when administrative support is lacking or when there are delays in reimbursements for conferences, it's hard to stay motivated. Job satisfaction definitely improves punctuality, focus, and goal alignment.

Test Of Hypotheses

In any empirical research, hypothesis testing is a critical step used to determine the statistical significance of relationships between variables under investigation. In the context of this study on the impact of job satisfaction on employee productivity in Taraba State University and Taraba State Polytechnic, hypothesis testing serves as a tool to objectively assess whether observed patterns in the data are due to chance or reflect actual associations. It helps validate or refute the assumptions underpinning each research objective by comparing the null hypothesis (which posits no significant relationship) against the alternative hypothesis (which posits a significant relationship). Using statistical techniques such as

regression analysis and ANOVA, the study tests hypotheses related to the influence of job satisfaction strategies, the effect of job satisfaction on productivity, the impact of challenges on satisfaction levels, and the effectiveness of proposed strategies to overcome such challenges.

Test of Hypothesis 1

H_0: There are no specific strategies in place at TSU and TSP to promote job satisfaction among academic staff.

H_1: There are specific strategies in place at TSU and TSP to promote job satisfaction among academic staff

Table 4.3.1 Regression Output (Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction Score)

Predictor	B	Std.Error	t	p-value
Constant	2.112	0.201	10.51	0.000
Strategies in Place	0.487	0.065	7.49	0.000

$R^2 = 0.376$; $F(1, 378) = 56.13$; $p < 0.001$

The regression analysis yielded a significant positive coefficient ($B = 0.487$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that strategies such as competitive pay, promotion opportunities, training, and work-life balance policies have a measurable influence on job satisfaction. This finding shows that both institutions have, to some extent, implemented identifiable strategies that influence how satisfied academic staff feel in their roles. The relatively high R^2 value (0.376) suggests that these strategies explain a considerable portion of the variation in satisfaction levels. This aligns with studies by Armstrong (2012) and Herzberg (1968), which emphasize the centrality of organizational practices in employee satisfaction.

Test of Hypothesis 2

H_0: The strategies implemented by TSU and TSP have no significant influence on productivity of academic staff.

H_1: The strategies implemented by TSU and TSP have significant influence on productivity of academic staff.

Table 4.3.2 ANOVA Table (One-Way ANOVA)

Source of Variation	SS	Df	MS	F	p-value
Between Groups	24.25	1	24.25	34.70	0.000
Within Groups	263.15	378	0.069		
Total	287.40	379			

Source: SPSS OUTPUT

The ANOVA result shows a statistically significant difference ($F = 34.70$, $p < 0.001$) in productivity based on satisfaction strategies. This confirms that job satisfaction strategies—such as reward systems, training, and communication positively impact academic staff performance in teaching, research, and institutional participation. The result supports Robbins and Judge (2017), who argued that satisfied employees are more productive and committed. It also reinforces McGregor's Theory Y, which views employees as self-motivated when their work environment is supportive.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Strategies to Enhance Job Satisfaction at TSU and TSP

The results showed that a majority of respondents at both institutions disagreed that competitive salary packages are provided. This suggests that remuneration is perceived as inadequate and not aligned with expectations. In line with Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943), inadequate pay fails to satisfy basic physiological and security needs, undermining job satisfaction. This echoes findings by Armstrong (2012) and Robbins and Judge (2017), who identify competitive pay as a critical determinant of employee morale and motivation. The study revealed that policies do not support work-life balance. Work–life imbalance is a common source of dissatisfaction in academia (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985), often leading to stress, poor health, and reduced commitment.

The study revealed low agreement regarding performance-based rewards. Reward systems act as motivators (Herzberg, 1968), and their absence can result in loss of initiative and employee

disengagement. Without formal recognition mechanisms, staff may feel undervalued, negatively impacting job satisfaction. Respondents largely disagreed that workloads are manageable. Excessive workloads can lead to stress and burnout, reducing satisfaction and performance (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Academic staff overloaded with teaching, research, and administration often report job dissatisfaction, especially where support structures are weak.

The study revealed that physical work environment was perceived as more supportive at TSU than at TSP, indicating institutional differences in facilities. According to systems theory in public administration, organizational inputs (infrastructure) directly affect staff outputs (satisfaction and productivity). Poor facilities at TSP may contribute to frustration and reduced morale. It was also revealed that communication effectiveness was near neutral at TSU (2.97) and lower at TSP (2.72). Effective communication is critical in fostering inclusion and understanding of institutional policies (Robbins & Judge, 2017). Poor communication feeds uncertainty, negatively affecting satisfaction and reinforcing perceptions of administrative disconnect. It was shown that TSU respondents showed strong agreement that satisfaction increases participation in institutional governance, while TSP showed moderate agreement. This supports the idea that satisfied staff engage more in organizational citizenship behavior (Organ, 1988).

Effect of Job Satisfaction on Employee Productivity at TSU and TSP

The study revealed that job satisfaction enhanced teaching performance. This suggests a positive link between satisfaction and core job tasks. Judge et al. (2001) found that satisfied employees generally exhibit higher performance levels, consistent with these findings. Both TSU and TSP agreed that satisfaction encourages research engagement, though less strongly than for teaching. Satisfaction can foster intellectual curiosity and dedication to scholarly activities, which aligns with McClelland's (1961) need for achievement. It was revealed that TSU staff tended to agree that training is available while TSP hovered near neutral. Professional development is strongly linked to intrinsic job satisfaction (learning and growth) and aligns with Herzberg's motivating factors. Poor or uneven access to training at TSP may hinder skill acquisition and career growth, lowering satisfaction.

The study revealed a high means at TSU and TSP indicating that satisfaction improves service quality, reinforcing the link between staff attitudes and student experience. Effective services are often outcomes of engaged, motivated staff (Amah, 2016). It was equally revealed that TSU and TSP reported improved punctuality with satisfaction. Punctuality reflects organizational commitment and discipline, which are higher when staff feel valued (Robbins & Judge, 2017). Findings from the study show a high agreement that satisfaction enhances alignment with institutional objectives, a key dimension of performance management and strategic commitment.

CONCLUSION

This study critically examined the impact of job satisfaction on employee productivity in Taraba State University (TSU) and Taraba State Polytechnic (TSP). The findings revealed that both institutions have implemented several strategies aimed at improving job satisfaction, including training programs, communication channels, and institutional policies. However, these strategies are often inconsistently applied, and in some cases, inadequately resourced. The research confirmed that job satisfaction has a direct and significant effect on employee productivity manifested in improved teaching performance, research commitment, punctuality, and participation in institutional development. Nevertheless, several challenges such as inadequate funding, bureaucratic delays, poor communication, and infrastructural deficiencies were found to limit the success of these strategies. Importantly, the study established that targeted interventions, including increased funding, streamlined promotions, effective communication, and provision of adequate facilities, can significantly mitigate the identified challenges. Thus, institutions that prioritize staff welfare and satisfaction are more likely to experience higher levels of productivity, commitment, and institutional growth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusion drawn from the study, the following recommendations were made in line with the research objectives:

1. Management of TSU and TSP should formalize and consistently implement strategies that promote job satisfaction, including clear promotion policies, performance-based rewards, and supportive work-life balance practices. These strategies must be institutionalized rather than dependent on administrative discretion.
2. Since job satisfaction significantly impacts productivity, it should be integrated into performance evaluation frameworks. Management should use satisfaction levels as a diagnostic tool to identify low productivity zones and apply appropriate motivation interventions.

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