



EFFECT OF MOTIVATION ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN NIGERIA PUBLIC HEALTH SECTOR

By

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Abstract

Employee performance in Nigeria's public health sector remains a critical challenge, contributing to medical tourism and financial losses. Violence against healthcare workers, including physical attacks, arrests, and facility looting, disrupts service delivery and affects staff well-being. Despite the significance of human capital development, investment in workforce motivation and training has been largely neglected by both the government and private sector (Adele & Ibieta, 2020). This study aims to assess the relationship between motivation and employee performance in Nigerian Federal Medical Centers. The research hypothesis states that motivation significantly influences employee performance in these institutions. A cross-sectional survey was conducted with 190 healthcare professionals from the University of Jos Teaching Hospital, using structured questionnaires. The study employed statistical methods such as stepwise regression analysis, Goodman and Kruskal's gamma analysis, and Somers' delta analysis to evaluate the correlation between motivation, career support, off-the-job training, and employee performance. The results indicated a strong positive relationship between motivation and employee performance ($R^2 = 0.632, 0.7082$), with motivation emerging as a key predictor ($\gamma = 1.000, p = 0.000$). Additionally, poor working conditions and lack of recognition were identified as major demotivating factors. The findings highlight the need for targeted interventions to enhance healthcare employees' motivation, including improvements in working conditions, provision of health insurance, implementation of performance-based rewards, and opportunities for professional growth.

Keywords: *motivation, employee performance, public health sector, Nigeria, healthcare professionals.*

1.0 Introduction

The declining performance of healthcare workers in Nigeria is a major concern, leading to increased medical tourism and financial losses. Even high-ranking officials, including former Presidents Muhammadu Buhari and Goodluck Jonathan, have sought medical care abroad, highlighting the sector's inefficiencies (Harvey, 2020; Njoku & Onyegbula, 2017). Despite the proven impact of human capital development on workforce performance, Nigerian Federal Medical Hospitals have not prioritized employee training and motivation (Paul et al., 2019).

Employee performance is essential for organizational success, with motivation playing a crucial role in enhancing productivity. Motivation, derived from the Latin movere ("to move"), drives individuals toward their goals and influences workplace behavior (Wade & Tavis, 2008). In healthcare, strong motivation fosters job satisfaction, improved service delivery, and better patient outcomes.



Nigeria's healthcare system operates under a multi-tiered governance structure, incorporating both public and private providers. However, ineffective employee performance assessments hinder workforce efficiency. Regular performance evaluations are essential for identifying weaknesses and ensuring continuous improvement, reinforcing the idea that a healthcare system is only as strong as its workforce.

Violence against healthcare workers is a major challenge in Nigeria's public health sector, leading to disruptions in service delivery and psychological distress. Since 2021, at least 18 healthcare professionals have been killed, resulting in 1,212 lost working days, significantly impacting healthcare accessibility (Lucero-Prisno & Ahmadi, 2020). Public fear of insecurity further limits access to medical services.

Nurses, who are essential to healthcare delivery, face staff shortages, excessive workloads, inadequate resources, and poor remuneration. Workplace hazards, restrictive policies, and lack of recognition further reduce motivation and job satisfaction. Additionally, resistance to innovation and limited career development opportunities hinder professional growth and service efficiency.

Despite the crucial role of human capital development, investment in workforce training and development remains insufficient. Unlike Southeast Asian countries that have prioritized healthcare workforce development, Nigeria's inconsistent policies have contributed to declining employee performance and healthcare standards (Adele & Ibieta, 2020; Gunu et al., 2019). Addressing these issues requires strategic investment in employee motivation, professional development, and improved working conditions to enhance service delivery.

Research objectives

- Is there any significant relationship between motivation and employee performance in Nigeria Federal Medical Centers?

Research Question

- To determine the significant relationship between motivation and employee performance in Nigeria Federal Medical Centers?

Research Hypothesis

- **H1:** There is a significant relationship between motivation and employee performance in Nigeria Federal Medical Centers.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Employees Performance

Employee performance refers to the measurable outcomes of an organization in relation to its established goals and objectives. According to Mathias and Jackson (2019), organizational success is largely dependent on minimizing employee performance deficiencies. High-performing employees are characterized by efficiency, productivity, and goal-oriented behaviors. However, employee performance remains a complex and multifaceted concept within management science and organizational theory. The Chartered Institute of Personnel Management (CIPM, 2017) defines employee performance as an individual-level construct that reflects an employee's contribution to



organizational outcomes. While there is no universal model for improving performance, organizations typically develop strategies that align with their unique operational contexts. Effective performance management involves structured task assignments, clearly defined expectations, and adequate support mechanisms to enhance employee efficiency (Tende Sam, 2021; Elarabi & Johari, 2019; Obi-Anike & Ekwe, 2019; Ofobruku & Nwakoby, 2020; Anike et al., 2021). Research further highlights the critical role of knowledge, skills, and professional development in determining employee performance.

Arowolo (2020) contributes significantly to the study of employee performance by exploring key influencing factors such as job satisfaction, organizational culture, and training programs. His findings emphasize that investing in human resource management can lead to improved employee outcomes, particularly in Nigeria's healthcare sector. Additionally, a positive and well-structured work environment plays a crucial role in fostering high performance. Conversely, a negative work environment-characterized by inadequate resources, poor management, and low employee morale-can hinder productivity and negatively affect overall organizational efficiency. Creating a stimulating and supportive work environment is, therefore, essential for optimizing employee performance and ensuring long-term success (Untari et al., 2021).

2.2 Motivation Effect

Motivation is a critical determinant of employee productivity and overall organizational success. According to Sunyoto (2019), motivation enhances employees' enthusiasm and drives them to achieve higher performance levels. Mitchell (2020) similarly emphasizes that without adequate motivation, even the most skilled employees may fail to perform optimally. Gilbert (2021) identifies three key factors influencing performance: competency, capability, and motivation, highlighting that motivation is an essential component of effective job execution.

Hasibuan (2019) further asserts that motivation extends beyond individual benefits, serving as a strategic investment that contributes to long-term organizational growth. Factors such as competitive compensation, job security, career advancement opportunities, autonomy, and a supportive work environment significantly influence employee motivation. Providing professional development opportunities also enhances job satisfaction and retention. Ultimately, organizations that prioritize employee motivation benefit from higher productivity, improved job commitment, and enhanced performance outcomes. Based on these findings, this study posits that motivation directly impacts hospital performance, making it a key area of focus for healthcare management and policy development.

2.3 Barriers to Effective Performance of Health Employees

The Nigerian public health sector faces significant challenges that undermine employee performance, with workplace violence being a major concern. Healthcare workers frequently experience physical attacks, arrests, and facility looting, leading to service disruptions and psychological distress. Since 2021, at least 18 healthcare professionals have been killed, resulting in the loss of 1,212 working days and reduced healthcare accessibility (Lucero-Prisno & Ahmadi, 2020).

Nurses, who are central to healthcare delivery, face additional barriers such as staff shortages, excessive workloads, inadequate supplies, and poor remuneration. Restrictive hospital policies, exposure to infectious diseases, and lack of recognition further decrease motivation and job satisfaction. Resistance



to innovation, coupled with limited funding and mentorship, further hinders efficiency and patient care. Despite the importance of human capital development, investment in healthcare workforce training remains insufficient. Unlike Southeast Asian nations that have prioritized workforce development, Nigeria has failed to implement consistent policies to improve healthcare performance (Adele & Ibietan, 2020; Gunu et al., 2019). To enhance service delivery, there is a need for strategic workforce investment, improved working conditions, and professional development initiatives.

2.4 Expectancy Theory

Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory is one of the most widely recognized explanations of motivation in the workplace. The theory posits that an individual's motivation to act in a certain way is influenced by their expectation that their efforts will lead to a desired outcome. In simpler terms, employees are more likely to perform better when they believe that their efforts will result in a positive evaluation, which in turn will lead to rewards such as promotions, salary increments, or professional recognition (Salaman et al., 2018).

The theory highlights three key relationships:

1. Effort-performance relationship – Employees exert effort when they believe it will lead to better performance.
2. Performance-reward relationship – Strong performance is expected to result in desirable rewards.
3. Reward-personal goals relationship – Employees are motivated when the rewards align with their personal goals and aspirations.

This framework suggests that organizations should ensure that employees' workplace goals and values are aligned with the organization's mission and vision. Doing so fosters motivation, enhances productivity, reduces workplace dissatisfaction, and encourages teamwork. Employers who fail to motivate their workforce risk diminishing morale, which can negatively impact organizational success. Conversely, when employees feel valued and their needs are met, they are more likely to achieve job satisfaction and contribute effectively toward organizational goals (Salaman et al., 2018). This theory is particularly relevant to this study, as it underscores the crucial link between motivation and employee performance.

3.0 Methodology

This study employed a descriptive research design to analyze employee performance and motivation at Jos University Teaching Hospital (JUTH). The target population consisted of over 1,000 employees, as recorded in the hospital's staff directory (JUTH, 2022). A random sample of 120 respondents was selected to ensure representative data collection.

A similar approach was used in a study by Okafor et al. (2019) on human capital development in Nigerian public hospitals, where stratified sampling was applied to distribute questionnaires across departments. To determine the appropriate sample size, the Krejcie and Morgan Sampling Table was utilized. This method ensured that the sample accurately reflected the workforce composition, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of motivation and employee performance in the public health sector.



The Population and Sample Size			
S/N	Department	Population	Sample Size
1.	Clinical	68	19
2.	Nursing	620	172
3.	Pharmacy	53	15
4.	X-ray Unit	33	9
5.	Dental	25	7
6.	Eye Clinic	47	13
7.	Physiotherapy	27	8
8.	Nutrition Services	23	6
9.	Legal Counsel	28	8
10.	Med. Info. Officer	76	21
	Total	1000	278

Sources: Field Survey 2024.

Data collection involved both primary methods, such as questionnaires, and secondary sources, including relevant literature. The data was analyzed using percentages and presented in tables and charts, with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) employed for analysis. The methodology also emphasized the importance of reliability and validity in data collection, ensuring that the instruments used effectively measured the intended variables.

4.0. Result

A total of ten (10) questions were adopted by the researcher from a similar research carried out by Okafor C.N., et. al. (2019) of which four of the questions are gotten from dependent variable in order to ascertain the productivity of employees. The questions were adequately examined and tested using the OLS statistical tool and were presented on tables below:

TABLE 3				
Regression Result on CS AND EPP				
Stepwise regression Analyses of career analysis examining the influence of career support				
Dependent Variable: employees performance (productivity)				
$R^2 = .632$; $F = 10.95$; $Sig = .064$				
Independent Variables	Beta	t-value	Pearson Correlation (r)	Probability Value
Career Support	0.24	2.29	0.7518	0.0064

Authors Computation, 2024 (Using EvIEWS – 9.0).

Table 3 indicates regression result on CS and EPP. This table presents the results of a stepwise regression analysis examining the impact of career support (CS) on employee performance (EPP). Findings showed that Career support significantly predicts employee performance ($\beta = 0.24$, $t = 2.29$, $p = 0.0064$). The model explains 63.2% of the variance in employee performance ($R^2 = 0.632$). The relationship between career support and employee performance is strong ($r = 0.7518$). This indicates that career support has strong positive impact on the employees performance.

Table 4: Goodman and Kruskal's gamma analysis (Symmetric Measure) of the relationship between motivation and employee professional performance

	Value	Asymp.Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma	1.000	.000	31.648	.000
N of Valid Cases	190			

Authors Computation, 2024 (Using Eviews, 9.0).

Table 4: Using Goodman and Kruskal's Gamma Analysis, this table examines the relationship between motivation and employee professional performance using Goodman and Kruskal's gamma analysis. The gamma value is 1.000, indicating a perfect positive relationship between motivation and employee professional performance. The relationship is statistically significant ($p = 0.000$). Therefore, motivation is strongly and positively related to employee professional performance.

Table 5: Somers' delta (Directional Measures) of the relationship between motivation and employees professional Performance.

	Value	Asymp.Std. Error ^a	Approx. T ^b	Approx. Sig.
Ordinal by Ordinal Somers'd symmetric	.875	0.13	31.648	.000
Motivation Dependent	.894	.014	31.648	.000
Performance Dependent	.857	.017	31.648	.000

Source: Authors Computation, 2024 (Using Eviews – 9.0).

Table 5: Somers' Delta (Directional Measures). This table assesses the directional relationship between motivation and employee professional performance using Somers' delta. Somers' delta is 0.875, indicating a strong positive relationship. Motivation is a significant predictor of employee professional performance ($p = 0.000$). The relationship is symmetric, with motivation and performance depending on each other. This indicates that motivation strongly predicts employee professional performance.

Table 6. REGRESSION RESULT ON OTJT AND EPADG

Stepwise Regression Analyses of off-the-Job training on Outcome Variables				
Dependent variable: employees performance (achieving departmental goals)				
$R^2 = 0.7082$; $F = 7.10$; $Sig = 0.012$				
Independent Variable	Beta	t-value	Pearson Correlation (r)	Probability Value
Off the Job training	0.66	2.66	0.61892	0.0128

Source: Authors Computation, 2024 (Using Eviews9.0).

Table 6: Regression Result on OTJT and EPADG This table presents the results of a stepwise regression analysis examining the impact The influence of off-the-job training (OTJT) on the attainment of departmental objectives. (EPADG). Key findings indicates Off-the-job training significantly predicts achieving departmental goals ($\beta = 0.66$, $t = 2.66$, $p = 0.0128$). The model explains 70.82% of the variance in achieving departmental goals ($R^2 = 0.7082$). A moderate positive relationship ($r = 0.61892$) was observed between off-the-job training and the attainment of departmental objectives, suggesting a significant positive influence of training on departmental performance.

5.0 Conclusion And Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed to improve motivation and enhance employee performance within Nigeria's public health sector:

1. Improving the Work Environment – Enhancing workplace conditions, including workspace layout and humidity control, can create a more comfortable and engaging environment that fosters employee motivation and productivity.
2. Enhancing Employee Competency – Strengthening employees' mastery of their job roles and promoting teamwork can improve overall performance. Management should also enhance communication regarding workplace policies to ensure employees feel more confident and motivated in their roles.
3. Implementing Effective Motivation Strategies – Management should introduce initiatives such as health insurance, performance-based rewards, and professional development opportunities. These factors have been identified as significant drivers of motivation and directly impact employee commitment and productivity. Without effective motivation strategies, organizations may struggle to achieve their goals.
4. Statistical Validation of Motivation's Role in Performance – The chi-square test results indicate that motivation plays a statistically significant role in employee performance ($p < 0.05$). This underscores the need for organizations to prioritize motivation-enhancing policies.
5. Future Research Directions – Further studies should explore additional variables that influence employee performance, as a deeper understanding of these factors can contribute to more effective organizational strategies.

By implementing these recommendations, the public health sector can create a work environment that promotes higher performance, job satisfaction, and long-term organizational success. A well-motivated workforce is essential for achieving institutional objectives and improving healthcare service delivery.



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