SUPERVISION, REMUNERATION AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN NIGERIAN MARITIME UNIVERSITY, OKERENKOKO, DELTA STATE

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Abstract

Public tertiary institutions in developing countries face persistent performance challenges linked to weak managerial practices and inadequate compensation systems. This study examines the role of supervision and remuneration on employee performance in Nigerian public tertiary institution with evidence from the Nigeria Maritime University, Okerenkoko, Delta State. The paper is situated within the framework of Equity and Expectancy theories; a survey research design was adopted with 254 valid responses from both academic and non-teaching staff of the university. Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was adopted in testing the formulated hypotheses, and the findings reveal significant positive relationships between regular salary payments and employee commitment, performance-based incentives and goal attainment, effective monitoring and work quality, and evaluation/feedback and level of professionalism. The study concludes that supervision and remuneration are complementary drivers of employee performance hence a combination of performance-based rewards, timely remuneration, effective supervision, and monitoring will enhance employees' commitment, performance and professionalism in Nigerian public universities. The paper recommends among others, a clear design of performance evaluation/appraisal frameworks that ties measurable outcomes to tangible incentives; the strengthening of developmental leadership skills to provide constructive guidance to workers; and the consolidation of monitoring, supervision, evaluation and feedback mechanisms in public tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Keywords: Remuneration, Employee performance, Supervision, Monitoring, Performance outcomes

Introduction

Public tertiary institutions play a central role in national development through the education of human capital, innovative research and generation of community service-knowledge relevant to policies. But in several developing countries such as Nigeria, these institutions grapple with persistent governance and performance problems associated with deficient administrative system such as low pay and inadequate supervision. Supervision and remuneration have been recognized as important elements of employee performance that positively affect jobs, commitment levels and overall performance outcomes (Ubah, 2021; Salawu & Alfakoro, 2023; and Mafindi, 2024).

Public tertiary institutions operate within a multifaceted governance environment structure characterized by centralized control, fiscal constraints, and bureaucratic rigidity.

These structural challenges are often evident in weak human resource management practices, particularly in the areas of performance evaluation, monitoring and supervision. Consequently, employee performance remains inconsistent, affecting service delivery, research outcomes, and institutional credibility. Public universities in Nigeria frequently experience industrial actions by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU), and the Non-academic Staff Union of Educational and Associated Institutions (NASU) over pay disparities, delayed salaries, unpaid allowances, and poor working conditions (Ibrahim & Umeh, 2022). The quality of the academic and administrative personnel is largely determined by the degree of motivation that is usually associated with the type and sufficiency of the compensation package offered to them. Well-compensated employees are essential to high-quality education and institutional growth (Riza, Sudiro & Irawanto, 2024).

Supervision is a key management activity that involves guiding, controlling, and supporting employees in ensuring that organizational objectives are achieved efficiently. It focuses on giving accurate instructions, meaningful feedbacks and professional guidance that enhances the performance of employees (Owolabi, 2020). Effective supervision in public institutions of higher learning ensures that academic and non-teaching staff understands their roles, meet the standard set by the institution, and get motivated to perform at the highest level (Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson, 2019). Effective supervision promotes accountability, reduces errors, and fosters a philosophy of continuous improvement. When combined with the right compensation package, it can contribute significantly to job satisfaction, commitment, and productivity.

Akintoye (2023) argued that the development of an effective compensation system is essential for promoting fairness; satisfy both the intrinsic and extrinsic needs of employees, and fostering a more productive and harmonious work environment. Employee performance and organizational efficiency are engendered through adequate incentives and compensation tactics by strengthening anticipated standards, enhancing competency, and reinforcing dedication and commitment (Armstrong, 2012). Previous studies have largely examined supervision and remuneration independently, with limited attention to their collaborating effects within governance and established contexts. This creates a critical gap in the understanding of how managerial and incentive structures jointly shape employee behaviour and organizational outcomes. This study addresses this gap by examining the role of supervision and remuneration in influencing employee performance at Nigeria Maritime University (NMU), Okerenkoko, Delta State. Specifically, the paper investigates how salary regularity, performance-based incentives, effective monitoring, and evaluation/feedback mechanisms affect commitment, goal attainment, quality of work, and level of professionalism in the institution. This paper is divided into five sections. The first section is the introduction which gives a preview of the study. Section two is the literature review which contains the conceptual framework, theoretical and empirical review, section three is the methodology which has the theoretical framework and the method employed in the study, while section four is the discussion of results, and finally section five is the conclusion and recommendations

Conceptual Review

Remuneration

The concept of remuneration encompasses all forms of financial and non-financial compensation provided to employees in exchange for their labour and contributions to the organization. It includes salaries, wages, bonuses, allowances, benefits, and other monetary and non-monetary rewards aimed at motivating employees and enhancing their productivity (Armstrong, 2022). Remuneration remains a central driver of employee motivation and organizational performance as timely and competitive compensation enhances job satisfaction, commitment, and productivity (Adegoroye, Usman & Moronfoye, 2025; and Ogunlana, Adewole & Samuel, 2024). Remuneration is an important organization practice that is meant to attract and retain the best talent as well as keeping the staff motivated and productive.

Mathis and Jackson (2022) note that remuneration is one of the mechanisms used to align the goals of the organization with the aspirations of employees. They argue that an HR-designed benefits package increases employee satisfaction, commitment and output. Poor compensation, on the other hand, may cause poor morale, staff turnover, and dissatisfaction. Nankervis, Baird, Coffey, and Shields (2023) describes remuneration as the total financial and non-financial value of all benefits that an organization pays as compensation to employees. They highlight the necessity of attractive remuneration packages to organization success especially where talent retention is paramount in an industry. According to Muo (2023), fair and adequate remuneration serves as a primary motivator for employees, enhancing job satisfaction, loyalty, and performance.

Supervision

Supervision is the process through which managers or supervisors direct, control, and assist the staff to carry out their job with the aim of achieving organizational goals (Cole, 2021). It includes the provision of direction, performance monitoring, provision of feedback and the promotion of professional growth of employees. Yukl (2023) defines supervision as the systematic process of guiding employees toward achieving performance targets while maintaining high levels of motivation and engagement. Effective supervision is most operative when clear goals are set, when there are consistent feedbacks, and when employees are made active participants in the decision-making process.

There is a connection between supervision and employee performance, as this has a way of shaping work behavior, strengthen organizational policies, and nurture a positive work environment. Employees who receive consistent and supportive supervision are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of dedication, commitment, accountability, and work performance (Taylor, 2022). Effective supervision includes both task-oriented guidance, such as setting priorities and monitoring deadlines, and people-oriented support, such as addressing employee concerns and promotion teamwork.

Employee Performance

Employee performance is described as the behaviours employees exhibits that contribute to organizational goals (Motowidlo, 2003; Luitel & Poudel, 2024). This behavioral pattern is critical due to the fact that it focuses on actions within an individual's control, acknowledging that outcomes are often influenced by external factors beyond direct employee influence. The modern conceptualization firmly establishes employee performance as a multidimensional construct comprising key behavioral dimensions which include task performance, contextual performance, adaptive performance, and counterproductive work behaviours. The task performance defines the core, role-prescribed behaviours that directly contribute to an organization's technical processes. It involves the expertise with which employees execute their central job duties, in addition to quality and quantity of work (Springer, 2026).

The contextual performance explains the discretionary behaviours that support the broader organizational, social, and psychological environment. These include helping colleagues, volunteering for additional tasks, and demonstrating organizational citizenship. An employee's capacity to adjust to changing circumstances, learn new tasks and technologies, and respond effectively to unforeseen challenges is referred to as adaptive performance. This dimension has gained prominence as organizations face increasingly dynamic and uncertain environments (Luitel, & Poudel, 2024). The counterproductive work behaviours are actions that harm organizational functioning or its members, including absenteeism, interpersonal deviance, and theft. The inclusion of counterproductive work behavior reflects recognition that performance encompasses both positive contributions and the avoidance of detrimental behaviours (Maryadi, 2026).

Theoretical Literature review

Influence of Effective Supervision and Remuneration on the Employee Performance

Compensation is the sum total of all the money that workers get as a reward for their labour in the form of wages, salaries, benefits, and incentives. Okoro and Akpan (2021) affirm that good pay schemes are vital towards boosting employee motivation, job satisfaction, and overall performances within firms. However, a low or poorly structured pay schemes may result in dissatisfaction among the employees, causing demoralization and declining productivity (Ajayi, Adewale & Omoboriowo, 2022). Monitoring workers to reveal their levels of engagement, satisfaction and adherence to corporate objectives is an essential part of an organizational success.

A competitive and equal pay/compensation packages are directly related to employee behaviour which form a positive attitude for workers such as commitment, loyalty, and a sense of belonging (Owolabi, 2020). Poor working conditions and delayed remuneration tend to be linked with low morale, absenteeism, and even hostility towards the management (Chukwuemeka, Nwakwo & Okeke, 2023). Olagunju and Adeoye (2022) also state that a well robust pay structure is a motivator, which influences willingness of workers to make more efforts than the regular call of duty and make an impact to organization goals. Performance bonuses also known as performance incentives are offered to employees who meet or even exceed particular targets or performance indicators.

A study by Mbukwana and Ayandibu (2023) at one of the universities in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, confirms that there exists a huge positive correlation between employee productivity and performance bonuses. The researchers discovered that monetary rewards would encourage employees to put in more effort to achieve performance levels. Mathafena, and Grobler (2020) demonstrated that total reward systems which include performance pay, positively correlate with organizational commitment among academic staff. When employees perceive that their performance is fairly recognized, they tend to be more loyal, engaged, and motivated, which can lead to sustained performance improvements. However, the effectiveness of performance-based bonuses is not without risks.

According to Batrakova (2023), performance-based pay systems in academic institutions may create dependency and power imbalances; because bonuses are often not contractual guarantees, administrators can exercise discretion over them, which may lead to exploitation or recession-linked reductions in bonus payouts. Adegoroye, Usman, and Moronfoye (2025) observed that academic staff pay structure increase academic performance, especially in the domains of professional development, research production, and teaching effectiveness in the Kwara and Osun State institutions. In addition to improving individual outcomes, performance-based bonuses may enhance organizational commitment.

Remuneration and Effective Supervision

Good remuneration and effective supervision are two significant factors that affect the performance of workers in the public tertiary institutions. They influence the perceptions employees have about their roles and their suitability to organizational objectives. Employees tend to exhibit good working behavior such as dedication, commitment, job satisfaction, professionalism and excitement when they feel that their pay is reasonable, fairly and consistently paid and when they receive supervision that is reliable and encouraging towards them. This dual relationship has been evidenced by a number of studies. Karim and Roger (2021) discovered that an integrated supervisory approach and clear reward system were the strongest predictors of employee motivation and productivity in the public universities of Uganda.

Inadequate supervision and dissatisfaction with salary especially when associated with delays, inconsistency and unfair treatments can negatively impact employee performance. For instance, Kawugana's (2020) study on Kenya's public institutions revealed that ineffective supervision coupled with frozen salary regime led to dissatisfaction and demoralized staff who became uncooperative to institutional goals. In such circumstances, staff opted out of optional modules, dodged duties and refused identification with school development initiatives. These negative attitudes disrupted cohesion within institutions making it difficult for creativity to thrive while eventually eroding the scholastic spirit needed for quality service delivery.

Empirical Literature Review

Salawu and Alfakoro (2023) investigated the influence of remuneration and welfare policies on employees' attitude and institutional stability in Kwara state university and the University of Ilorin. The study adopted a mixed-method research design involving the administration of questionnaire and interview with 400 employees across the two institutions. The findings revealed that inadequate remuneration, delays in salary payments, and insufficient welfare provisions were strongly associated with negative employee attitude, including low commitment to work, increased absenteeism, and greater involvement in industrial actions. The study recommended prompt payment of salaries, improvement of health insurance schemes, and enhancement of housing and transportation allowances as strategies for improving employee morale, reducing burnout, and minimize occurrence of industrial disputes.

Olatunji and Akinwale (2022) investigated the effect of compensation on staff morale and productivity at Lagos state university. Using a sample of 350 academic and non-academic staff, the study found that satisfaction with salary, as well as access to housing and healthcare benefits, had a significant positive relationship with employee motivation and commitment. Staff who expressed satisfaction with their remuneration packages demonstrated higher levels of classroom engagement, reduced absenteeism, and greater participation in institutional decision-making processes. The study concluded that both monetary and non-monetary rewards, such as health insurance and housing allowances, are essential in enhancing employee performance, morale, and retention within tertiary institutions.

Eze and Nnaji (2021) investigated the relationship between organizational commitment and wage administration amongst academic employees of universities in southeast Nigeria. The study examined the relationship between unclear promotion policies, the absence of performance bonuses and delayed compensations among 280 academics in three public institutions using a regression analysis. The study revealed that unclear pay schemes and inconsistent compensation have a significant negative correlation. The study recommended that a consistent pay system should be adopted by all institutions.

Chinyere and Okafor (2020) investigated the relationship between remuneration and employee retention in public colleges of education in Anambra and Enugu States. The researchers adopted a stratified sampling technique to administer questionnaire to 300 staff. The results indicated that inadequate remuneration was a major reason for high turnover rates and the loss of experienced lecturers to private institutions. The study recommended institutional salary reviews and retention bonuses for long-serving staff. The studies conducted by Salawu and Alfakoro (2023), Olatunji & Akinwale (2022), Eze & Nnaji (2021), and Chinyere & Okafor (2020) revealed that workers commitment, job satisfaction, and motivation are highly boosted by fair compensation, staff welfare policies, and efficient supervision. These researchers further emphasize the importance of adequate compensation structure, timely payments of salaries and effective supervision as essential element for employee performance and satisfaction.

Theoretical framework

This study is anchored on Equity Theory (Adams, 1965) and Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964). Equity theory posits that individuals in the organization compare the ratio of their inputs (such as effort, skills, experience, and time) to outputs (such as salary, recognition, promotion, and other rewards) against the ratios of others within the same work environment. When employees perceive a balance or fairness in this comparison, a state of equity exists; however, when they perceive imbalance, a feeling of inequity arises, which can lead to dissatisfaction and reduced motivation. It also explains how employees evaluate fairness in the workplace and how their perception impact on their attitude and performance. In the context of supervision, Equity theory emphasizes the relevance of fairness, accessibility, and consistency in managerial practices. The role of supervisors is critical in shaping employees' perceptions of equity through role-assignment, performance evaluation, and feedback mechanisms.

Expectancy theory, developed by Victor Vroom (1964), explains that employees are highly enthusiastic about their jobs based on the expected outcomes of their actions. Employees are intentional about the efforts they invest in their work, guided by their expected gains. The theory is built on expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Expectancy refers to an employee's belief that increased effort will lead to improved performance. Instrumentality is the belief that good performance will be rewarded, while Valence relates to the value an individual places on those rewards. In the context of supervision, Expectancy theory highlights the critical role of supervisors in improving employees' confidence and clear expectations. Supervisors influence expectancy by ensuring that employees have the necessary skills, resources, and support to perform their tasks effectively. Employees are more likely to believe that their effort will yield improved performance when supervisors provide clear guidance, training and helpful feedback.

The Equity and Expectancy theories provide a strong analytical lens for understanding the interrelationship between supervision, remuneration and employee performance within the context of Nigeria public tertiary institution. While equity theory highlights fairness in supervision and remuneration, expectancy theory elucidates the cognitive processes linking effort, performance, and rewards. When employees perceive fairness in managerial practices and a clear connection between effort and reward, they are more likely to exhibit higher levels of dedication, commitment, and performance. Conversely, perceived injustice and weak reward relations contribute to discontent, low productivity, and organizational inefficiency.

Methodology

The study adopts a survey research design, suitable for the examination of perceptions and behavioral outcomes within public organizations. The population consists of 1,001 staff members (academic and non-teaching) of Nigeria Maritime University, Okerenkoko, Delta state. A sample of 278 respondents was selected using systematic and stratified sampling techniques, to ensure representation across staff categories. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale. Reliability testing yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.76**,** indicating acceptable internal consistency. A total of 254 (85%) valid responses were analysed. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and Pearson Correlation Analysis was utilize for testing the hypotheses formulated, enabling the examination of relationships between the variables.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Hypotheses Testing (Correlation and ANOVA)

Hypothesis	Variable Pair	Pearson r	p-value	Decision
H1	Regular salary → Employee commitment	0.748	<0.05	Reject Ho
H2	Performance incentives → Goal attainment	0.781	<0.05	Reject Ho
H3	Effective monitoring → Work quality	0.748	<0.05	Reject Ho
H4	Evaluation/feedback → Professionalism	0.726	<0.05	Reject Ho

ANOVA results confirmed significant overall effects of compensation variables on work outcomes ($F = 18.392$, $p = 0.000$).

Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed the following:

1. The correlation analysis indicated a strong positive relationship between the regular payment of salaries and employee ($r = 0.748$, $p < 0.05$). This indicates that as regular payment of salaries boost employees' productivity, task understanding, and dedication to work also improve. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between regular payment of salaries and employee's commitment.
2. The correlation result indicates a positive and significant relationship between performance-based incentives and employee goal attainment, suggesting that the provision of incentives is associated with improved achievement of work-related goals among employees ($r = 0.781$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that adequate pay, timely salary payments, and goal attainment enhance responsibility, commitment, and overall work output. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, performance-based incentives affect goal-attainment.
3. Effective monitoring and work quality are positively correlated, according to the Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.748$, $p < 0.05$). This result suggests that regular supervision, monitoring, and guidance from supervisors improve workers' accuracy, thoroughness, and overall quality of work. Because the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. As a result, there is a clear relationship between effective monitoring/supervision and the quality of work that employees produce.
4. The study's findings demonstrate a positive correlation between employee evaluation/ feedback and level of professionalism ($r = 0.726$, $p < 0.05$). This implies that frequent evaluations and encouraging comments increase staff commitment, motivation, and loyalty to organizational goals. Because the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. As a result, workers evaluation and feedback are closely related to their level of professionalism.

The findings revealed that administrative behaviour, particularly through supervision, monitoring and evaluation, compensation, incentives, and allowances, significantly influences employee performance at Nigeria Maritime University, Okerenkoko, Delta State. The study found that supervision, monitoring, and evaluation have a significant positive effect on employee performance. The survey results showed that employees perform their duties more effectively when supervisors provide regular oversight, monitor work progress, and offer constructive feedback, indicating that supervision enhances discipline, accountability, adherence to organizational procedures, and overall work quality.

This finding is consistent with the views of Herbert Simon's administrative behaviour theory, which emphasizes that effective administrative decisions and managerial oversight are essential for achieving organizational goals. The result also supports the findings of Salawu & Alfakoro (2023)**,** who reported that effective supervision improves employee productivity and enhances organizational performance in public institutions. Similarly, Eze and Nnaji (2021) found that regular monitoring and evaluation contribute significantly to employee accountability and service delivery by ensuring compliance with organizational standards and performance expectations. The implication is that effective supervision serves not only as a control mechanism but also as a developmental tool that guides employees toward improved performance and greater organizational commitment.

The study also established that compensation significantly affects employee performance. It reveals that employees who receive their salaries regularly and promptly demonstrate higher levels of commitment, loyalty, and productivity. Respondents agreed that timely payment of salaries provide financial security and reduce workplace discontent and dissatisfaction, thereby enabling employees to concentrate on their responsibilities. The result agrees with the findings of Olatunji and Akinwale (2022), who posited that equitable and timely remuneration increases employee morale, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment within public-sector institutions. The finding further suggests that delays in salary payments may negatively affect employee motivation, productivity, and organizational loyalty.

Another important finding of the study is that performance-based incentives positively influence employee performance. The study found that employees are more willing to exert additional effort, improve work quality, and demonstrate greater accountability when they perceive that exceptional performance will be recognized and rewarded. Participants indicated that incentives encourage diligence, innovation, and commitment to organizational objectives. This finding is in agreement with Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964)**,** which posits that employees are motivated to perform better when they believe their efforts will result in desirable rewards. The result also corroborates the findings of Chinyere & Okafor (2020), who reported that performance-based incentives improve goal-attainment, accountability and efficiency among employees in Nigerian universities. Similarly, Aremu and Ayoola (2022) found that financial incentives are among the most effective strategies for enhancing employee productivity and performance in higher educational institutions. The implication of this finding is that organizations can improve employee output by establishing transparent and performance-driven reward systems that recognize and reward excellence.

The study further revealed that evaluation and feedback significantly contribute to employees' commitment, satisfaction, and performance. Employees indicated that frequent evaluation, appraisal, feedbacks and encouraging comments have a way of increasing employee's commitment, motivation and loyalty to organizational goals and their level of professionalism.

Conclusion and recommendations

This study conveys empirical evidence from Nigeria Maritime University, Okerenkoko, Delta State, that effective supervision and timely remuneration significantly influence employee performance in Nigerian public tertiary institutions. According to this study adequate supervision and remuneration have a significant impact on worker performance at Nigeria Maritime University in Okerenkoko Delta State. Supervision, guidance and constructive criticism are essential techniques which helps to significantly increase workers ability to complete tasks, maintain work standards and stay committed to organizational goals. Additionally, adequate remuneration, performance-based bonuses, cash incentives and additional perks have a significant impact on employees work attitude and performance. The study also concludes that promoting the best possible employee outcomes necessitates a comprehensive approach that includes both compensation and oversight strategies. Bonuses and financial incentives are powerful motivators but supervision makes sure that employees are positively motivated, follow organizations guidelines and accept responsibility. Therefore, matching fair compensation with organized and structured supervision methods is essential to enhancing long-term performance in public higher education institutions.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that:

1. In order to ensure timely payment of salaries, the federal government should invest in improving the automated payroll processing system to eliminate administrative bottlenecks, delays and human errors.
2. To reinforce organizations' commitment to employee welfare, tertiary institutions should introduce a regulated interest-free salary advance policy for workers to cater for emergency situations.
3. The federal government should reduce the period of review of minimum wage from five years to three years as part of measures to curb the adverse effect of inflation-induced hardship presently being experienced by workers and citizens in the country.
4. In order to enhance goal attainment, tertiary institutions in the country should develop a clearly written policy that links specific, measurable performance indicators to financial bonuses. This would reinforce the connection between effort and reward.
5. Tertiary institutions' management should establish a policy on training in effective performance monitoring and constructive feedback. Regular monitoring and coaching leads to improvement in quality of work.
6. The university management should replace the traditional annual performance evaluation review with a system of quarterly review in order to reinforce professionalism and loyalty. A policy that allows employees to receive feedback not just from supervisors, but also from peers and subordinates should be introduced.

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