

**ACADEMIC STAFF ATTITUDE AND JOB PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED  
AGRICULTURAL COLLEGES OF THE FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF  
AGRICULTURE ABEOKUTA, NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The study assessed academic staff attitude in relation to their job performance in selected agricultural colleges of the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB). The study population comprised of the academic staff of the three main agricultural colleges of the University. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 90 respondents for the study. Study data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The study results showed that mean age of the respondents was 46years (SD=8.3). Majority (56.7%) of the respondents were male, married (91.1%) and some (30%) of them were in the Senior Lecturer cadre. The major factors that affected employees' performance were class structure ( $x = 3.79$ ), work environment ( $x = 3.48$ ), and absence of audio-visuals ( $x = 3.52$ ). Factors that affected the attitudes of the lecturers were, pride of being an academics ( $x = 4.47$ ), access to relevant leaves ( $x = 4.38$ ), and being a permanent staff ( $x = 4.26$ ). The study concluded that academic staff attitude played major roles in their job performance. This study recommended among others, that policies and structures that improve positive attitudes of lecturers should be put in place by the university management of universities.*

**Keywords:** Attitude, Academic staffs, Job performance, Evaluation indicator, Abeokuta

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**INTRODUCTION**

**Background of the study**

The performance level of an employed individual has remained a tasking challenge in an organisation's management, as the central objective of every business organisation is the task of devising operational methods to motivate an individual employee to succeed and deliver qualitative job performance, as well as surge the organisational competency level (Wu and Lee,

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2011, Inuwa *et al.*, 2017). Deteriorating level of employee performance in Nigerian tertiary institutions is fast becoming a serious threat to the survival of Nigerian universities, thus necessitating urgent attention (Ogbulafor, 2011). This might not be unconnected to the failure of government in developing countries like Nigeria to improve the skills and knowledge of their workers through effective human resource development programs that can boost employee performance, as well as inability to exploit the capability of well experienced and trained employees (Tessema *et al.*, 2015).

Attitude as defined by business dictionary is a predisposition or a tendency to respond positively or negatively towards a certain idea, object, person, or situation. Attitude influences an individual's choice of action, and responses to challenges, incentives, and rewards (together called stimuli). It has effect on how we relate with people around us both at home and at work. Job attitudes play a vigorous role in manipulating the work performances of employees in organisations. As such, most organisation looks out for employees with positive attitude towards people, their careers and the organisation itself. Ahmad *et al.*, (2010) define job attitude as paradigm that signifies a person's like or dislike as regards to different mode of behaviours.

Also, Liao *et al.*, (2012) define job attitude as a set of behaviour and judgements to work, and such behaviours and thoughts are redirected in form of work involvement and organisational commitment. Furthermore, Susanty and Miradipta, (2013) define job attitude as a conviction or predisposition to behave in a certain way at the workplace as a result of an individual experience as well as personality. By implication, job attitude can be viewed as actions and inactions of employee towards their work. As individuals have dispositions, so, too, do organisations. Organisations, like individuals, can be characterised and observed as rigid, welcoming, earnest, inventive, traditional or otherwise. Such qualities, as well, can serve as aspects to envisage attitudes and behaviours of the people within these organisations (George and Jayan, 2013).

Academic staff of an institution is a key resource and plays a crucial role in actualizing the objectives of the institution which might include: teaching, scholarly research and public service. Academic staffs influence the quality of education and technical skills students acquire, which in one way or the other contribute to the development of the society at large. The quality of knowledge and moral the academic staff who are the direct interface with students requires a keen attention. The attitude of academic staff can influence the use of this interface either positively or

negatively. Accordingly, it is critical to focus on the attitudes and the job performance of the academic staff, on which the achievement of quality workforce ultimately lies. Hence, attitude such as commitment, satisfaction and performance can or may aid in the achievement of set objectives. Abdul-Ghafoor and Maryam (2015) proclaimed that happier and satisfied employees are diligent, devoted worker, who are productive for organisation. Also, Vandenabeele (2009) suggested that positive impressions that involves sensation of satisfaction on the work might bring about extreme and enhanced performance, specifically when viewing performance as being extensive than just task performance. Although various researches have studied the issue of attitude and performance, and explored many facts, there is no study focusing on academic staff of Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta. In view of these, the study aims to assess the factors affecting job attitude and performance of academic staff of the Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAAB). Understanding the factors that influence the academic staff's job attitude and performance of the colleges of agriculture in FUNAAB gave rise to the following research questions:

#### **Research questions of the study:**

1. What are the personal characteristics of the target respondents?
2. What are the factors affecting the respondents' job attitude?
3. What is the level of employees' job performance?
4. What are the factors influencing the respondents' job performance?

#### **Objectives of the study**

In providing empirical answers, the main objective of the study is to examine the relationship between attitudes of academic staff of selected Agricultural Colleges of Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta, Ogun State in relation to their job performance. The specific objectives of study are:

1. To describe the personal characteristics of the target respondents.
2. To identify the factors affecting the target respondents' job attitude.
3. To determine the level of employees' job performance
4. To determine the factors influencing the respondents' job performance.

#### **Hypotheses**

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between respondents' socio-economic characteristics and the level of job performance.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Study Area:**

The research was carried out at the Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAAB), Ogun State, Nigeria. The Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta is one of the three agriculture institutions established by the Federal Government of Nigeria, with the acronym UNAAB until 2011 when “Federal” was added to its name. The population of the study comprised of the academic staff within the colleges of agriculture at the Federal University of Agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAAB), Ogun State.

### **Method of Data Collection**

To ensure an even distribution of the study sample, a multi-stage sampling technique was employed in the selection of the respondents in the study area. The first stage involved a purposive sampling of the three agricultural-based colleges in the university namely College of Agricultural Management and Rural Development (COLAMRUD), College of Animal Sciences (COLANIM), and College of Plant Sciences (COLPLANT). The second stage was a purposive selection of academic staff of the colleges given the research scope. The third stage followed a random selection 90 respondents across the three colleges’ academic staffs which were interviewed for the study.

Data for this study was sourced primarily with the aid of a well–structured questionnaire administered to the sampled respondents. The questionnaire was in four sections, capturing information which included personal characteristics of the respondents, factors affecting attitude of respondents in the study area, factors affecting job performance of the respondents and the varying of job attitudes displayed by the respondents.

### **Analytical Tools**

The data for this study were analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used in the analysis of the data obtained from the study.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

**Socio-economic Characteristics of Academic Staff:** Table 1 showed the sex distribution of respondents, it revealed that 56.7% were male while 43.3% were female. Table 1 showed the sex

distribution of respondents, it revealed that 56.7% were male while 43.3% were female. Table 4.1 also showed that 91.1% are married, 5.6% are single while 3.3% are widowed. Furthermore, the result revealed that 72.2% are Christian while 27.8% are Muslim. Also, 10.0% of respondent were below age 35years, 32.2% within range of 35-44years, 43.3% within 45-54years, 13.3% within 55-64year and 1.1% were above 65years, while the mean of the age of the respondents was 46years. This implies that respondents were in their active age.

**Table 1: Socioeconomic characteristics of respondents**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard Dev.
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	51	56.7		
Female	39	43.3		
<b>Age</b>				
<35	9	10.0	45.73	8.318
35-44	29	32.2		
45-54	39	43.3		
55-64	12	13.3		
>65	1	1.1		
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Single	5	5.6		
Married	82	91.1		
Widowed	3	3.3		
<b>Religion</b>				
Christian	65	72.2		
Islam	25	27.8		
<b>Rank</b>				
Assistant lecturer	7	7.8		
Lecturer II	19	21.1		
Lecturer I	15	16.7		
Senior Lecturer	27	30.0		
Reader	14	15.6		
Professor	8	8.9		
<b>Year of Work Experience</b>				
<5	11	12.2	15.21	9.172
5-14	36	40.0		
15-24	30	33.3		
25-34	8	8.9		
>35	5	5.6		
<b>Range of Income</b>				
<150000	15	16.7		
150000-249000	29	32.2		
250000-349000	23	25.6		
350000-449000	15	16.7		
>450000	8	8.9		

Source: Field survey.

### Factors Affecting Academic Staff Job Attitude

The descriptive analysis of factors influencing the attitude of academic staff in the study area towards service delivery was presented in Table 2. The result of the five level likert scale showed

that the respondents have remarkable similarities in the choice of factors which affect their attitudes. Based on the ranking of stated factors, the findings revealed that the pride of being in academics ( $\bar{x} = 4.47$ ), access to relevant leave as a good incentive ( $\bar{x} = 4.38$ ), being a permanent staff which give a high sense of job security ( $\bar{x} = 4.26$ ), presence of cordial relationship between them and their students ( $\bar{x} = 4.14$ ), and the prompt action of the management in listening to lecturers in the event of conflicts ( $\bar{x} = 3.84$ ) are the most important factors that influence the attitude of academic staff toward their service delivery.

These findings reveal that while lecturers love their job and feel secured, available teaching aids are inadequate. It also shows that on-the-job trainings are provided for lecturers but the training opportunities are not sufficient. In summary, the motivation sought toward service delivery by the lecturers is job specific and not just financial remunerations. Liao *et al.*, (2012) define job attitude as a set of behaviour and judgements to work, and such behaviours and thoughts are redirected in form of work involvement and organisational commitment. Furthermore, Susanty and Miradipta, (2013) define job attitude as a conviction or predisposition to behave in a certain way at the workplace as a result of an individual experience as well as personality.

**Table 2:** Distribution of factors affecting academic staff job attitude

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
I am proud to be an academic	4.47	0.737
Having access to relevant leave is a good incentive	4.38	0.758
Being a permanent staff gives a high sense of security which is like a tonic towards effective teaching	4.26	0.758
There is cordial relationship between me and my students	4.14	0.787
In case of conflict, management listens to lecturers	3.84	0.886
There is lack of teaching facilities to aid practical work	3.76	1.183
I receive training when required	3.51	1.114
Lecturing is very tedious	3.50	1.256
Strike has been favourable to me in a way	3.30	1.386
I would be interested in trading off some workplace benefits in lieu of financial pay	3.30	1.328

**Note:** S.A = Strongly Agree (5), A = Agree (4), I = Indifference (3), D = Disagree (2), S.D = Strongly Disagree

### **Level of employees' Job Performance**

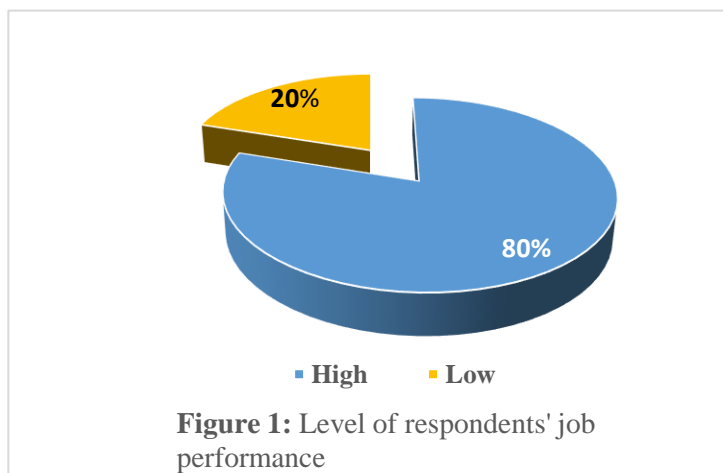
In Table 3, results indicate that respondents always co-operate with other employees ( $\bar{x} = 4.60$ ), as they look for ways to improve their performance on their job ( $\bar{x} = 4.49$ ), as well as they set

priorities when carrying out their task consistently ( $\bar{x}$  =4.29) and that they always focus on the result that is to be achieved ( $\bar{x}$  =4.28) by planning and managing their time well when carrying out a task ( $\bar{x}$  =4.24) in the study area. This shows that there is positivity in all that employees in the organization does and they are not so much concern about minor work-related issues due to the positive energy they show towards their work and others which implies that they performed well on their jobs. Furthermore, result presented in Figure 1 reveals further categorisation of the level of job performance of respondents in the study area. The result showed that 80% of the respondents had high job performance level score while 20% had low job performance level score. This supports Gordon and Miller, (2012) who stated that performance is associated with quantity of output, quality of output and timeliness of output, presence, attendance on the job, and efficiency of the work completed.

**Table 3:** Distribution of responses according to the level of employees' job performance

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev.
I always co-operate with other employees'	4.60	0.54
I look for ways to improve my performance on my job.	4.49	0.66
I set priorities when carrying out my task consistently.	4.29	0.85
I always focus on the result that is to be achieved.	4.28	0.79
I plan and manage my time well when carrying out a task.	4.24	0.80
I work on keeping my job knowledge up-to-date.	4.23	0.97
I always plan to finish task assigned to me at the stipulated time.	4.18	0.76
I accept extra responsibilities.	4.10	1.02
I come up with creative solutions to new problems.	4.08	0.97
On my own initiative, I started new tasks when my old tasks were completed.	4.00	0.89
I have the ability to cope with stress, difficult situation and adversities.	3.80	1.16
I talk to colleagues about the negative aspect of my job.	3.62	1.20
I complain about minor issues related to my job.	3.47	1.31
I focus on negative aspect of work situation instead of positive situation.	3.12	1.49
I talk to outsiders about the negative aspect of my job.	2.92	1.40
I always co-operate with other employees'	4.60	0.54

**Note:** S.A = Strongly Agree (5), A = Agree (4), I = Indifference (3), D = Disagree (2), S.D = Strongly Disagree



### Factors Affecting Job Performance

Table 4 reveals that respondents strongly indicated that they feel secured with their job ( $\bar{x} = 4.28$ ), as their supervisors' corrections helped them improve their job performance ( $\bar{x} = 3.91$ ), as well as there was freedom of expression between superior and subordinate ( $\bar{x} = 4.11$ ) and that they could be better at work if they had some professional development ( $\bar{x} = 4.28$ ). All these point to the fact that human attitude is fluid and varies from person to person. A similar trend can be observed from the frequency counts and percentages. However, the work environment and motivation at work has profound impact on staff job performance. This negates the opinion of Ali *et al.*, (2013) who maintained that although many factors may influence the performance of an organisation, there can be little doubt that the quality of leadership available to it will be one of the most critical determinants of ultimate success.



**Table 4:** Distribution of responses according to factors affecting job performance

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>
I feel secured with my job	4.28	0.687
I could be better at my work if I had some professional development	4.28	0.719
I use my skill effectively	4.18	0.628
There is freedom of expression between superior and subordinate	4.11	0.771
I have ready access to the information I need to get my job done	3.96	0.847
There is improvement in performance of students offering my course	3.93	0.818
I think the management appreciate the work I do	3.92	0.838
My supervisor's correction help me to improve in my performance	3.91	0.729
My work environment is conducive	3.79	0.772
Academic staff are highly motivated to work	3.77	5.292
Class structure is okay for lecturing	3.6	1.026
Absence of audio-visual aids limits my performance in class	3.52	1.265
I have been promoted overtime for excellent performance	3.48	1.114
I find it difficult to lecture without public address system	3.44	1.35
When change is about to happen, I am consulted	3.43	1.102
I undergo training periodically	3.38	1.077
Class size is not within conventional range	3.34	1.334
I receive institutional support for family medical care when the need arises	3.33	1.263
I would be interested in trading off some workplace benefits in lieu of financial pay	3.27	1.279
I observed on-the-job training regularly	3.2	1.114
Family challenges affect my performance at work	3.03	1.302

**Note:** S.A = Strongly Agree (5), A = Agree (4), I = Indifference (3), D = Disagree (2), S.D = Strongly Disagree

### **The effects of socio-economic characteristics of respondents on their job performance**

The hypothesis was tested in a null form that there is no significant relationship between respondents' socio-economic characteristics and level of job performance (Table 5). The socio-economic characteristics considered were sex, age, and marital status, year of working experience, qualification and monthly income. The significance of the relationship was determined at 0.05 levels. Findings in this table revealed that there is no significant association between the respondents' socio-economic characteristics and the level of job performance.

**Table 5:** Relationship between respondents' socio-economic characteristics and level of job Performance

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Chi square (<math>\chi^2</math>)</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Sex	-0.034	0.748	NS
Age	0.089	0.407	NS
Marital status	-0.199	0.061	NS
Year of work experience	0.091	0.392	NS
Qualification	-0.033	0.760	NS
Income	0.056	0.598	NS

**r = correlation value**

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study was carried out to assess the factors influencing academic staff job attitude and job performance in agricultural colleges of federal university of agriculture Abeokuta (FUNAAB). Based on findings, it has been deduced that respondents were in their active age, who are fairly experienced on academic duties. The pride of being in academics, access to relevant leave, being a permanent staff, cordial relationship between staff and their students, management listening to lecturers in the event of conflicts, i.e. involving staff in conflict management decision are the key factors that influence academic staff's job attitude. Similarly, the senses of job security, adequate mentorship, freedom of expression between superior and subordinate, as well as professional development, promote better job performance among academic employee. Furthermore, the study concluded that respondents performed well on their jobs in the study area. There is no significant relationship between the between respondents' socio-economic characteristics and level of job performance. It implies that motivational management variables as against socioeconomic characteristics, may be the important influencing factors of employee job attitude and performance with the academic staff included.

This study recommended among others, that policies and structures should be put in place by the managements of universities to further improve the attitudes of lecturers in universities. Also, further research should be conducted of the findings of this study.

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