KIU Journal of Social Sciences Copyright©2018
Kampala International University ISSN: *2413-9580*; 4(2): 123–130

Flexitime and Performance of Academic Staff in Polytechnics in North West Geo-Political Zones of Nigeria

HALILU DAHIRU ABBA
Kampala International University

Abstract. The study examined the influence of flexitime on performance of academic staff in polytechnic in North West Geo-Political Zones of Nigeria. The correlational study involved 285 respondents from six polytechnics. Data were collected using a self-administered a questionnaire whose validity and reliability was confirmed through Factor Analysis and Cronbach Alpha test. Descriptive analysis involved the use of means, while multiple regression was used to test the hypotheses. The results revealed that flexitime had a positive and significant influence on performance of academic staff. This led to the conclusion that that flexitime is a significant factor for the performance of academic staff. Therefore, it was recommended that managers of organisations such as polytechnics should establish flexible working arrangements to enhance performance of employees.

Keywords: Academic Staff, Employee, Flexitime, Performance, Regression.

1. Introduction

Employee performance is the ability (both physical & psychological) of the individual employee to perform a particular task in a specific method that can be evaluated as excellent, average or low in scale (Raza, Anjum & Zia, 2014). Employee performance is an important factor for enhancing services provision, growth of organisations, competitiveness and increased efficiency (Cania, 2014) such as polytechnics. Therefore, performing employees lead to efficient use of resources (Rahman & Rahman, 2009), better quality of output, workmanship, adherence to standards (Ayinde, 2014), effective performance of tasks (Yukl, 2008), customer satisfaction (Ayinde, 2014) and greater accomplishment of organisational goals and objectives (Raza et al., 2014). In learning organisations such as polytechnics, performance of academic staff involves teaching, supervision, research, publication (Ishak et al., 2009, Mawoli & Babandako, 2010), innovation, consultancy and services (Ishak et al., 2009, Jyoti & Bhau, 2015; Kessler, 2007; Pearce & Randel, 2004; Pekdemir & Turan, 2014; Saghi & Pursalimi, 2016; Welch & Cordon, 2010; Woods, 2007) have sought to establish factors that relate to it. However, these studies suggest a bias outside the context of Polytechnics and outside North West geo-political zones of Nigeria. This paper is therefore a survey on performance of academic staff in polytechnics in North West geo-political zones carried out with the purpose of linking academic staff performance with flexitime in the polytechnics.

The Social Exchange Theory (SET) suggests flexitime relates to employee performance. SET was developed by scholars such Homans (1958) and Blau (1964) to explain what influenced social behaviour. Homans (1958) stated that social behaviour is an exchange of both material goods and non-material ones. In an exchange, what one gives may be a cost, just as what one gets may be a reward. Blau (1964) analysed exchange processes as the micro-

foundation of macro-sociological phenomena. He stated that mutual bonds emerge in social interaction as persons who incur obligations reciprocate. SET suggests that exchanges contribute to positive exchange in relationships, between employees and the employer. This is especially so, when the employer considers the needs of individual workers to which employees reciprocate with favourable attitudes and behaviour (Marescaux, De Winne & Sels, 2010). Geetha and Mampilly (2012) explain that according to SET, rules of exchange usually involve reciprocity or repayment rules such that the actions of one party lead to a response or actions by the other party. Guided by SET theory, it was assumed that exchanges such as providing employees flexi-time could be reciprocated by staff with increased performance. Basing on the propositions of SET it is reasonable to suggest that flexitime may relate to performance of academic staff in polytechnics.

2. Related Literature

Flexitime is the ability to schedule flexible starting and quitting times, sometimes with a core-hours requirement (Lee & DeVoe, 2012). Flexitime involves a variety of flexible work schedules that offer employees choices about the start and end of working hours. All employees must work a specific number of hours per week or month. However, they may vary their hours of work within limits (Downes & Koekemoer, 2011). Organisational support through providing the flexitime option to the employees is a very important factor that can drastically improve the performance and confidence levels, motivate the employees and reduce stress levels of employees at same time. Flexibility in the working hours plays an important role in the life of an employee and is very important that the employee is able to maintain the correct balance between the work and the personal life effectively. Flexible working hours is one of the methods, that can help the employees do their work efficiently, and balance their personal life perfectly, enhancing employee performance (Solanki, 2013). Flexitime supports significantly, higher levels of work life balance than do traditional, fixed-hour working schedules. Various additional benefits for organisations to implement flexitime successfully include savings on overtime and other premium employee payments; improved delivery time and response to client and work demands; better employee adaptability to workloads; increased employee motivation; and reduced tardiness and absenteeism (Downes & Koekemoer, 2011).

Flexible work time arrangements allow the weekly working hours to vary from one period to another (within a certain range) without any consequence for monthly wage earnings. Hence, actual weekly working hours are not fixed to contracted weekly hours any more. Often the deviations from contracted working hours are debited or credited to an individual work time account that has to be settled within a given time period. The maximum number of hours that may be debited or credited is usually limited (Wolf & Beblo, 2004). Variations of Flexitime often include different starting and finishing times for each day, the length and timing of lunch breaks, the length of the working day and compressed workweeks. A compressed workweek allows for varying the length of the week, so that, employees may work for only three days a week, whilst still working, the total number of hours required for a working week (Robbins, Ordendaal & Roodt, 2004). Providing employees with flexitime is likely to facilitate an increase in their performance through mechanisms such as a greater productive, window of work or decreased absenteeism (Lee & DeVoe, 2012). As a quality enhancement strategy focused on employees offer greater organisational alignment with flexitime, it has positive impact on organisational profitability when introduced within a context where the strategy was more employee-centred (Lee & DeVoe, 2012). A number of scholars (Altindag & Siller, 2014; Downes & Koekemoer, 2011; Mwebi & Kadaga, 2015; Solanki, 2013; Wolf & Beblo, 2004) have related flexitime and employee performance. For instance, Altindag and Siller (2014) carried out an empirical study on the effects of flexible working methods on employee performance using employees working in various sectors across Turkey. The study found that flexible working models led to

improvement of and the sustainability of employee performance.

Downes and Koekemoer (2011) explored, challenges and benefits associated with implementing flexitime with employees from the research field, an international auditing and consulting organisation in Johannesburg, South Africa, as units of analysis. Results revealed that that flexi-time led to increased performance because employees were able to manage responsibilities in their personal lives, to control their work, suffered reduce anxiety and stress, concentrated, became loyal, motivated and committed to the organisation. Mwebi and Kadaga (2015) investigated the effects of flexitime work arrangement on employee performance in banks in Nairobi, Kenya. The findings revealed that flexitime work arrangement was positively related to employee performance. Solanki (2013) studied flexitime association with job satisfaction, work performance, motivation and employees stress levels with staff of organisations (both in the manufacturing and service oriented industries) in United Arab Emirates as units of analysis. The study revealed a significant positive relationship between flexitime and work performance. Wolf and Beblo (2004) investigated, whether time flexibility worked with basing on German data from the IAB establishment panel covering the years 1999 to 2002 from establishments with at least one employee who paid social security contributions. The results of the study indicated that use of work time schedules with moderate flexibility were positively related to technical efficiency, while highly flexible work time arrangements seemed to be negatively correlated with an efficient organisation of the work flow. However, from the studies above contextual gaps arise. For instance, none of the studies was carried out in Nigeria and in polytechnics. These contextual gaps made it necessary for this study in the context of polytechnics in Nigeria to seek to find out whether the following hypothesis held.

H1: Flexitime influences employee performance of academic staff.

3. Method

Instrument: Using the quantitative approach, in particular the survey design, data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire (SAQ). The questionnaire comprised three sections namely A through C. Section A was on the background characteristics of the respondents with questions on the polytechnic, ownership of the polytechnic, position of the respondent in the polytechnic and terms of employment. Section B covered the items on flexitime (independent variable). Section C covered the dependent variable (DV) which is academic staff performance with five aspects namely teaching, supervision, research and publications, innovation and community services. The questions in section A were nominal questions with appropriate responses required. The questions in sections B and C were ordinal questions scaled using the four-point Likert scale from a minimum of 1 strongly disagree (SD), 2 disagree (D), 3 agree (A) and 4 strongly agree (SD).

Sample: Using the self-administered questionnaire (SAQ), data were collected from 285 respondents from six polytechnics that were three federal and state owned. The sample size was attained using two-stage sampling whereby in the first stage the polytechnics were clustered according to states. In stage two, the polytechnics were stratified according to ownership, that is federal or state owned. The polytechnics studied were as follows; State Polytechnic and Hussaini Adamu Federal Polytechnic in Jigawa State; Nuhu Bamalli State Polytechnic and Kaduna Federal Polytechnic in Kaduna; Mohammed Abdullahi Wase Federal Polytechnic and Kano State Polytechnic in Kano State; Hassan Usman Katsina State Polytechnic and federal Polytechnic Katsina in Katsina State; Kebbi State Polytechnic and Federal Polytechnic, Birnin-Kebbi in Kebbi; Sokoto State Polytechnic and Kaura Namoda Federal Polytechnic in Sokoto; Abdul Gusau Polytechnic and Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda in Zamfara State.

Data Management: The data collected were processed by coding all data questionnaires, entering them into the computer using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS),

summarising them using frequency tables and editing them to remove errors. To establish validity, Factor Analysis and only items that loaded 0.50 once on the component/ factor were adopted (Marsh, Morin, Parker & Kaur, 2014). Reliability was determined by calculating Cronbach alpha using SPSS. All the items attained reliability above the benchmark 0.7 (Amin, 2005) as follows; teaching ($\alpha = 0.873$), supervision ($\alpha = 0.763$), publication ($\alpha = 0.811$), innovation ($\alpha = 0.809$), community service ($\alpha = 0.930$) and flexitime ($\alpha = 0.822$). The data analysis involved descriptive and regression analyses. Descriptive analysis involved percentages from the frequency tables and the mean. Regression analysis involved building a predictive model by regressing the numerical index of the dependent variable that is academic staff performance on the numerical indexes of the independent variable (IV), namely flexitime. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to carry out data analysis.

4. Findings

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents. The data on demographic characteristics of the respondents of the study in Table 2 indicate that that a typical respondent was an academic staff of Kaduna Polytechnic Kaduna State (24.6%), from federal polytechnics (55.8%), principal lecturer (18.6%) and employed on permanent terms (90.4%).

Table 4. Respondents Demographic Characteristics

Item	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Polytechnic	Kaduna Polytechnic Kaduna State	70	24.6
	Federal Polytechnic Kazaure Jigawa State	59	20.7
	Katsina State Polytechnic	47	16.5
	Kano State Polytechnic	39	13.7
	Sokoto State Polytechnic	40	14.0
	The federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda	30	10.5
	Total	285	100.0
Ownership of the polytechnic	Federal	159	55.8
	State	126	44.2
	Total	285	100.0
Position of appointment	Assistant Lecturer	47	16.8
	Lecturer III	32	11.5
	Lecturer II	28	10.0
	Lecturer I	41	14.7
	Senior lecturer	46	16.5
	Principle Lecturer	52	18.6
	Chief lecturer	33	11.8
	Total	279	100.0
Terms of employment	Permanent	254	90.4
	Probation	6	2.1
	Contract	16	5.7
	Part-time	5	1.8
	Total	281	100.0

The Dependent Variable: Employee Performance. The dependent variable was divided into aspects namely; teaching, supervision, publications, innovation and community services. The items were scaled using the four-point Likert scale ranging from a minimum of 1 for the worst case scenario (strongly disagree) to a maximum of 4, which is the best case scenario (Strongly agree). Table 2 (a) illustrates that for teaching, all the nine items had means of about 3, and an overall mean of about 3, which on the scale used corresponded to "agree" and hence a good overall self-rating of the respondents on teaching. Table 2 (b) also illustrates that for supervision, all the four items had means of about 3, and an overall mean of about 3, which on the scale used corresponded to "agree" and hence a good overall self-rating of the respondents on supervision. Table 2 (c) indicates that for publications, all the seven items had means of almost 3, and an overall mean of about 2.90, which on the scale used corresponded to "agree" and hence a

good overall self-rating of the respondents on publications. Table 2 (d) indicates that for innovation, all the four items had means of about 2, and an overall mean of about 2, which on the scale used corresponded to "disagree" and hence a poor overall self-rating of the respondents on innovation. Table 2 (e) reveals that for community service, all the eight items had means of about 3, and an overall mean of about 3, which on the scale used corresponded to "agree" and hence a good overall self-rating of the respondents on community service.

Table 2: Means on Employee Performance Constructs

Teaching Performance	Mean	Overall mean
I offer a simple, clear, concise language during lecturers.	3.19	3.23
I keep the interest of student alive during lessons	3.42	
I am compassionate and tolerant to students to some extent.	3.45	
I offer a sufficient number and quality of course related resources.	3.35	
I have consultation time to attend to the students.	3.20	
I facilitate my teaching on time	3.08	
I do extra time of teaching if it is necessary	3.21	
I finish my syllabus on time.	3.14	
Supervision Performance	**Mean**	**Overall mean**
Whenever my supervisees need me I am available	3.24	3.22
I help students to complete their dissertations/ research project within the stipulated time	3.30	
I motivate my students to work hard on their studies.	3.46	
visit students on industrial assignment/attachment	2.90	
Publication Performance	**Mean**	**Overall mean**
I have published locally and international	3.04	2.90
I have been able to produce an occasional paper.	3.12	
I have published a paper in conference proceedings locally and internationally	3.11	
I have produced a journal article	3.33	
I have written a technical report	2.95	
I have written a book chapter	2.33	
I have authored a scientific peer-reviewed bulletin	2.48	
Publication Innovation	**Mean**	**Overall mean**
I have patented some innovations I made.	2.19	2.26
I have made original products in the course of my duties with the students	2.43	
I spend time trying to create products invest machineries for industries.	2.21	
My products produced while working in this polytechnic are already in the market	2.21	
Community Service	**Mean**	**Overall mean**
As a member of staff of this polytechnic I participate in community events	3.33	3.26
I have participated in community improvement programmes as a member of this polytechnic	3.31	
I am involved in offering training sensitisation and mobilisation services to community	3.10	
I am involved in promoting the civic duties of the community	3.07	
I am Involved in collaborations with communities and stakeholders.	3.02	
As a member of staff, I participate in community activities	3.24	
As a member of staff I am involve in training the youth in community activities.	3.04	
As a member of staff, I personally make financial contributions to the community.	3.12	

The independent Flexitime. The independent variable in the study was flexitime. Table 3 (a) shows that most of the 10 items had means close to code 3, which on four-point Likert used corresponded to agreed. Thus, the respondents revealed a good overall rating of the use of the flexitime in the polytechnics.

Table 2: Means on Flexitime

Flexitime	Mean	Overall mean
My timetable allows me freedom to attend to and manage personal activities responsibilities, commitments and appointments	2.81	2.75
Management structured the working hours to suit my preferences/choice.	2.43	
My time table allows me time for relaxation, exercise, study, family and domestic responsibilities and social activities	2.72	

My working time gives me reduced anxiety and stress	2.78
When with a genuine excuse, management allow me to absent from work	3.08
Whenever it is necessary, I have the opportunity to work at convenient time	2.75
I am satisfied with my contractual hours	2.89
I can easily make emergency working time arrangements	2.86
I am entitled to regular leave opportunities	2.43
I am allowed sabbatical leave opportunities	2.43

Statistical Model for Prediction Employee Performance using Flexitime. To establish whether the flexitime predicted the employee performance of the academic staff in polytechnics, the dependent variable namely, employee performance was regressed against the independent variable flexitime and the results on the same results are in Table 4.

Table 4: Regression of Employee Performance on Flexitime

	Beta β	Significant p
Flexitime	0.166	0.009

Adjusted $R^2 = 0.028$
$F = 6.861$, $p = 0.009$

Dependent Variable: Performance of Academic Staff

The results in Table 4.6 show that, flexitime explained 2.8% of the variation in performance of academic staff (adjusted $R^2 = 0.028$). This means that 97.2% was accounted for by other factors not considered under this model. The regression model was significant ($F = 6.861$, $p = 0.009 < 0.05$). These results showed that flexitime ($\beta = 0.166$, $p = 0.009$) was a positive significant correlate of performance of academic staff. Therefore, the hypothesis that flexitime is a correlate of performance of academic staff was supported.

5. Discussion

The findings showed that that the hypothesis to the effect that flexitime influences employee performance was supported. This is consistent with the findings of previous scholars. For instance, Altindag and Siller (2014) found that flexible working models led to improvement of and the sustainability of employee performance. Downes and Koekemoer (2011) revealed that that flexi-time led to increased performance because employees were able to manage responsibilities in their personal lives, to control their work, suffered reduce anxiety and stress, concentrated, became loyal, motivated and committed to the organisation. Mwebi and Kadaga (2015) revealed that flexitime work arrangement was positively related to employee performance. Solanki (2013) found a significant positive relationship between flexitime and work performance. Similarly, Wolf and Beblo (2004) established that that use of work time schedules with moderate flexibility were positively related to technical efficiency, while highly flexible work time arrangements seemed to be negatively correlated with an efficient organisation of the work flow.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Summary

Existing literature reviews shows that employee performance enhances services provision, growth of organisations, competitiveness and increased efficiency. Therefore, performing employees lead to efficient use of resources, better quality of output, workmanship, adherence to standards, effective performance of tasks, customer satisfaction and greater accomplishment of organisational goals and objectives. This paper therefore was survey on performance of academic staff in polytechnics in North West geo-political zones carried out with the purpose of linking academic staff performance with flexitime in the polytechnics. In this effort, the study closed gaps such as the investigations being carried out in the context of polytechnics and in the context of Africa which previous scholars had not given attention. The

study emphasises that flexitime is a significant factor for the performance of academic staff.

6.2 Recommendations

The findings of this study have practical importance to managers of academic institutions in Nigeria such as polytechnics. Specifically, the finding that flexitime has a positive and significant influence on performance of academic staff suggests that it is crucial factor for performance of academic staff. Therefore, this study recommends that managers of organisations such as polytechnics should establish flexible working arrangements to enhance performance of employees.

References

Altindag, E., & Siller, F. (2014). Effects of flexible working method on employee performance: An empirical study in Turkey. *Business and Economics Journal, 5*(3), 1-7.

Amin, M. E. (2005). *Social Science Research: Conception, Methodology and Analysis.* Kampala, Uganda: Makerere University.

Ayinde, H. (2014). Employee welfare programmes: Panacea towards improving labour productivity in the service sector in Nigeria. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 5*(10), 78-81.

BIau, P. M. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life.* New York, USA: Wiley Publishers.

Cania, L. (2014). The Impact of Strategic Human Resource Management on Organizational Performance. *Economia. Seria Management, 17*(2), 373-383.

Downes, C., & Koekemoer, E. (2011). Work-life balance policies: challenges and benefits associated with implementing flexitime. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management, 9*(1), 1-13.

Geetha, J., & Mampilly, S. R. (2012). Satisfaction with HR practices and employee engagement: a social exchange perspective. *Journal of Economics and Behavioural Studies, 4* (7) 423-430.

Geetha, J., & Mampilly, S. R. (2012). Satisfaction with HR practices and employee engagement: a social exchange perspective. *Journal of Economics and Behavioural Studies, 4* (7) 423-430.

Homans, G. C. (1958). Social behaviour as exchange. *American Journal of Sociology, 63*(6), 597-606.

Ishak, M. I., Suhaida, M. S., & Yuzainee, M. Y. (2009, April 14-17). Performance measurement indicators for academic staff in Malaysia Private Higher Education Institutions: A Case Study in UNITEN. *In performance measurement association conference PMA, University of Otago, New Zealand.*

Jyoti, J., & Bhau, S. (2015). Impact of transformational leadership on job performance. *SAGE Open, 5*(4), 1–13.

Kessler, S. R. (2007). *The effects of organizational structure on faculty job performance, job satisfaction, and counterproductive work behavior.* Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of South Florida, USA.

Lee, B. Y., & DeVoe, S. E. (2012). Flexitime and profitability. *Industrial Relations, 51*(2), 298-314.

Marsh, H. W., Morin, A. J., Parker, P. D., & Kaur, G. (2014). Exploratory structural equation modelling: An integration of the best features of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology, 10*, 85-110.

Mawoli, M. A., & Babandako, A. Y. (2011). An evaluation of staff motivation, dissatisfaction and job performance in an academic setting. *Australian Journal of Business and Management Research, 1*(9), 1-13.

Mwebi, M. B., & Kadaga, M. N. (2015). Effects of flexitime work arrangement on employee performance in Nairobi CBD Commercial Banks. *International Journal of Novel Research in Marketing Management and Economics, 2*(3), 111-121.

Pearce, J. L., & Randel, A. E. (2004). Expectations of organisational mobility,

workplace social inclusion, and employee job performance. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, 81-98.

Pearce, J. L., & Randel, A. E. (2004). Expectations of organizational mobility, workplace social inclusion, and employee job performance. Journal of Organizational Behaviour, 81-98.

Rahman, S., & Rahman, M. (2009). Impact of land fragmentation and resource ownership on productivity and efficiency: The case of rice producers in Bangladesh. *Land Use Policy, 26*(1), 95-103.

Raza, H., Anjum, M., & Zia, S. M. (2014). The impacts of employee's job performance behaviour and organisational culture on organizational productivity in pharmaceutical industries in Karachi. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business, 5*(12), 285-400.

Robbins, S.P., Ordendaal, A., & Roodt, G. (2004). *Organisational behaviour: Global and Southern African perspectives.* Pretoria, South Africa: Pearson Publications.

Saghi, S., & Pursalimi, M. (2016). Investigating the effect of organizational structure on job performance considering the mediation role of job stress amongst the employees of Ferdowsi University of Mashhad. *International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research, 14*(3), 2199-2216.

Solanki, K. R. (2013). Flexitime Association with Job Satisfaction, Work Productivity, Motivation & Employees Stress Levels. *Journal of Human Resource Management, 1*(1), 9-14.

Welch, J. L., & Cordon, D. (2010). Assessing the impact of flexitime on performance of faculty staff. *Business Horizons*, *23*(6), 61-65.

Wolf, E., & Beblo, M. (2004). Does work time flexibility work? An empirical assessment of the efficiency effects for German firms. *Discussion Paper No. 04-47*. Available at: ftp://ftp.zew.de/pub/zewdocs/dp/dp0447.pdf

Woods, T. J. (2007). Motivating faculty through transactional and transformational leadership strategies. *Journal of Leadership Studies, 1*(2), 64-73.

Yukl, G. (2008). How leaders influence organizational effectiveness. *The leadership quarterly, 19*(6), 708-722.