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The Impact of Workplace Environment, Internal Communication, and Remuneration on Job Satisfaction among Lecturers in Private Universities in Ghana

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of workplace environment, internal communication, and remuneration on lecturers' job satisfaction in Ghana's private universities. Recognizing job satisfaction as a critical component of organizational human resource strategies, this research explores the key factors that influence lecturers' job satisfaction, aiming to provide insights for enhancing employee engagement and performance. The study adopts a survey research design, gathering primary data through a structured 40-item questionnaire distributed to a randomly selected sample of 94 lecturers from five private universities in Ghana. Secondary data were sourced from books, journals, and organizational reports. Statistical analyses, including Cronbach's Alpha for reliability, correlation, and regression analysis, were conducted using SPSS version 21.0. The findings reveal a strong positive correlation between job satisfaction and the three independent variables: workplace environment, internal communication, and remuneration. Internal communication emerged as the most significant factor, with a regression coefficient indicating that a 1% increase in internal communication leads to a 99.9% improvement in job satisfaction. Remuneration followed closely, suggesting that a 1% increase in remuneration results in a 96.6% rise in job satisfaction. The workplace environment also significantly influenced job satisfaction, with a 1% improvement leading to a 3.5% increase in satisfaction levels. The study concludes that effective internal communication, competitive remuneration, and a conducive workplace environment are essential for enhancing job satisfaction among lecturers in private universities. These findings underscore the importance of developing comprehensive human resource strategies that address these key areas to foster a motivated and committed academic workforce. The study recommends the implementation of regular job satisfaction assessments and enhancing non-financial benefits to improve lecturer performance and retention further. Future research should include more public and private universities to provide a broader understanding of the factors influencing job satisfaction in the Ghanaian higher education sector.

Keywords: Internal Communication, Job Satisfaction, Private Universities, Remuneration, Workplace Environment

INTRODUCTION

Job satisfaction is seen as an important component of an organization's human resource strategies. Simatwa [1] defined job satisfaction as a variable related to how well one's needs are met at work. It starts with identifying the most competent people and continues with tactics to keep them engaged and loyal to the organization [2]. Employees are happiest and most productive when they have the opportunity to contribute ideas and suggestions, participate in decision-making, have access to clear grievance procedures, are protected from financial pressure, and are recognized for their achievements [3]. Organizations with strong human capital outperform those with subpar people in terms of performance and shareholder returns [4]. As a result, internationally competitive organizations are emphasizing employee satisfaction more than ever before to maintain offering unique, creative, and useful solutions to whatever problems the organization may encounter.

Maintaining employee satisfaction has become harder for corporations recently, particularly in the higher education sector. These issues may be caused by several things, including the difficulty in finding qualified candidates in particular industries, manager-employee relationships, competition, disparities in the degree of employer and employee expectations, the high cost of employing fresh talent, and others [4, 1]. Employers must put in more effort than ever to maintain the loyalty of the current workforce to increase retention rates and lower the expenses associated with excessive turnover. According to Mickson and Anlesinya [5], in 2006, organizations had to contend with employees quitting to work for other firms. Between the ages of 18 and 37, the typical employee changes employment ten times. It has been said that for an organization to be successful, its leadership must adapt to these changes. Maintaining employee satisfaction is crucial to accomplishing this because they are what keeps the company moving forward.

An organization's most valuable asset has traditionally been its people because losing them might significantly impact how its strategic decisions are implemented and could eventually result in a loss in productivity. Therefore, an organization's long-term growth and performance depend on how satisfied its employees are. Succession planning and customer success would both be successful if employees were satisfied [6]. There is little question that a high staff turnover rate could harm the sustainability of the organization since investors are worried about the organization's ability to deliver results that would increase the value of their investment in the organization. Therefore, increased employee satisfaction would increase investor confidence. Simatwa [1] asserts that a well-managed firm frequently views the typical employee as the source of value for quality and productivity. Any organization that does not prioritize the needs of its staff is jeopardizing performance and reducing productivity. Within its sphere of influence, a perfect organization fosters fulfilment, a sense of commitment, and collaboration. Regardless of the level of technology present in an organization, it has been asserted that a good organization cannot be handled without qualified and motivated human resources [7]. An organization must ensure that the staff at all of its divisions, departments, and units are highly motivated or given effective incentives if it wants to see its employees happy and committed to their duties [7, 2]. Employee work satisfaction must be considered ineffective performance reviews. The primary goal of this research is to identify the critical factors that influence employee satisfaction by using lecturers from private universities in Ghana as a test group. Consequently, this study will assist organizations and administrators of private universities in better understanding employee satisfaction levels and how to motivate individuals to accomplish their tasks successfully and professionally.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job Satisfaction

Various studies have defined "job satisfaction" in a variety of ways. Ampofo [8] defined job satisfaction as the subjective assessment of one's employment conditions or the consequences that result from having a position of employment. According to Ahmad [9], it is determined by how an employee feels about their position, as well as the rewards they receive in connection with the task they do and the setting in which they do it. Job satisfaction is an intriguing topic from the perspectives of both workers and management. Employees want to be treated fairly and respectfully to be happy at work, but they also have their attitudes and expectations. Conversely, managers desire contented employees who will approach their work with a positive attitude, be devoted, and have an emotional tie to it. Given that employees and their knowledge are becoming increasingly important for gaining a competitive advantage in today's extremely competitive organizational environment, there is little doubt that the increased interest in work satisfaction is reasonable. Artz [10] asserts that employees feel alienated from the organisation if they are dissatisfied with the task given to them. He also emphasized that businesses nowadays cannot afford disgruntled workers since they will not live up to their manager's standards or expectations and will be fired as a result, costing organizations extra money to hire new workers.

In the literature, numerous strategies have been used to ensure employee job satisfaction. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is the most significant theory. This theory claims that before a person can achieve self-actualization, they must first meet their basic needs (for food, clothing, and shelter). According to the theory of need, researchers like Holland et al [11] and Dilig-Ruiz [12] aimed to identify the variables affecting employee satisfaction. In addition to the job itself (the variety of tasks involved, the interest and challenge the job generates, and the clarity of the job description /requirements), factors that affect job satisfaction also include the work environment, working conditions, nature of the work, level of compensation, leadership, and social relationships. Job satisfaction has many advantages for employees, including reducing moral stress, generating fresh concepts and innovations that help them perform at a better level, an optimistic attitude, and great relationships with co-workers, managers, and clients [2, 5]. From the foregoing, it follows logically that job satisfaction is one of the key factors defining organizational success and that special attention should be paid to it to prevent adverse effects on organizational performance.

Workplace Environment and Job Satisfaction

The term "work" refers to all of the different facets of a job, such as the way it is carried out and completed, the tasks involved, including task activities, training and control over one's job-related activities, a sense of accomplishment from work, variety in the tasks, and the intrinsic value of a task. Numerous academic publications have discussed the intrinsic aspect of job satisfaction [7, 13]. The results show that intrinsic job satisfaction and a favourable work environment are strongly correlated. Additionally, they talked about the second aspect of job satisfaction, known as context, which includes the physical and interpersonal aspects of the workplace. These include the working environment, the employee's place of employment and regular activities (such as an office or construction site), the degree of noise, the availability of fresh air and refreshments, and any additional incentives.

According to Sahito et al, [14], a significant majority of organizations ignore workplace culture, which harms workers' productivity. A safe workplace, a stable job, solid relationships among coworkers, recognition of excellent performance, a desire to perform well, and involvement in strategic planning and decision-making are all components, in his opinion, of a productive workplace. He stated, "Once they understand how much the organization appreciates them, employees will be tremendously devoted and develop a feeling of ownership for their organization." According to a study by Lane et al, [15], most employees in organizations have issues with

their managers because they don't treat them with the respect they should. Employees do not feel safe discussing good and original ideas with their superiors because managers also exhibit harsh behaviour toward them.

Additionally, Subarto et al, [16] adduces that top management restricts people to their tasks rather than instilling in them a sense of accountability by making them work in teams to achieve high performance. Employee contact inside an organization is essential for achieving organizational goals [7]. Lower turnover rates result from higher levels of satisfaction, which in turn improve staff morale [13]. According to Katere et al, [17], there is a clear link between turnover rates and work satisfaction as well as a positive correlation between job satisfaction and organizational success. Employee satisfaction and the current working environment are positively correlated in many organizations.

H2: Satisfaction with the workplace environment positively impacts job satisfaction.

Internal Communication and Job Satisfaction

The term "internal communication" refers to knowledge exchange and communication among staff members [18]. All forms of communication are included, and they improve organizational functionality, unite employees, and provide businesses with a competitive edge. According to Gomes et al, [19], the significance of internal communication goes beyond merely attempting to inform the internal public due to its strong strategic emphasis. All communication routes, whether upstream or downstream, vertical, horizontal, or lateral, are included in formal communication [19]. Formal communication is necessary regardless of format to control how an organization runs. Perini [20] claims that employees who rely on formal and official sources sometimes don't acquire information on time or get it wrong, whereas informal communication appears to be more dependable and useful in day-to-day interactions. Informal contact within an organization cannot be avoided since employees bringing their problems to work may cause unexpected behavior. Through their encounters, coworkers discover that they share a common set of beliefs, values, and worldviews. They decide to become friends after getting to know one another. Internal communication is one of the most important elements in boosting employees' job satisfaction. In prior studies, internal communication and job satisfaction appear to be positively correlated [19]. It also had an impact on how satisfied the organization was with its internal communications. However internal communication systems must be created to satisfy the members of the organization's informational needs [3]. Therefore, the second hypothesis was proposed as follows:

H2: Internal communication has a positive impact on job satisfaction.

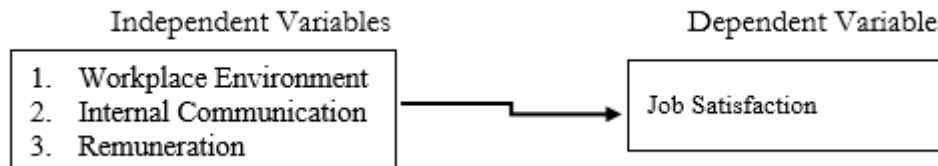
Remuneration and Job Satisfaction

Remuneration is one of the most important variables used to determine total job satisfaction [21]. Employee compensation satisfaction is defined as the fit between an employee's expectations and actual remuneration. Employees assess their compensation using the equity principle, which is defined as "a comparison between what people believe they ought to be paid and what others should be paid" [21]. Employees use two types of appraisal criteria: internal equity and external equity. While external equity evaluates an individual's remuneration concerning other members of the organization's remuneration and remuneration offered in comparable positions in other organizations, internal equity evaluates an individual's remuneration concerning their services to the organization. A person may feel underpaid as a result of these comparisons, which might lower compensation satisfaction, impair work productivity, reduce commitment to one's employment, or even increase fluctuation [22].

The results of a study done on 526 employees of a public sector company lend credence to the association between compensation and job satisfaction [22]. The impact of compensation satisfaction is limited to a person's work-related attitudes and behaviors, and it has little to no bearing on productivity at work. It may even reinforce

standards of behaviour meant to maintain the status quo. Furthermore, Bibi et al, [21] asserts that there is no relationship between compensation and job satisfaction. Furthermore, comparative study findings show that employees from work groups identified based on demographic parameters or country of origin do not all have the same opinions on the importance of salary for total job satisfaction [21]. The varied weights attributed to remuneration in different countries are mostly due to cultural and economic disparities. The study's findings will aid in understanding how remuneration affects lecturers' work satisfaction in Ghana's private universities.

The study model was drawn from the literature review on workplace environment, internal communication, remuneration, and job satisfaction.



Source: Authors Construct, 2024.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a survey research design as its chosen methodology. This design was selected due to its ability to facilitate a comprehensive description and analysis of the research variables, allowing the researchers to describe and identify the properties of these variables and explain their relationships without making any modifications [22]. The survey research design is particularly advantageous as it enables the collection of a large amount of data from a sizable population, providing a broad perspective on the subject matter. Additionally, this design supports the formulation of generalizations by utilizing both inductive and deductive reasoning processes. Inductive reasoning allows for the development of theories based on observed patterns, while deductive reasoning enables the testing of these theories against empirical data. This dual approach ensures a robust and nuanced understanding of the variables under investigation, contributing to the study's overall validity and reliability.

Data Source

The research employed a comprehensive data collection strategy, incorporating both primary and secondary sources to ensure a robust analysis. Primary data were meticulously gathered through direct personal interviews conducted with participants, utilizing a well-structured questionnaire designed to elicit detailed responses. This hands-on approach allowed the researchers to obtain firsthand information and insights directly from the respondents, ensuring the data's relevance and accuracy. In addition to primary data, the study also incorporated a wealth of secondary data. This secondary information was sourced from a variety of reputable and authoritative materials, including academic books, peer-reviewed journals, and organizational papers. These secondary sources provided a valuable context and background, enriching the primary data with established knowledge and supporting evidence from existing literature. By integrating primary and secondary data, the research achieved a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter, grounded in empirical evidence and theoretical frameworks.

Population and sample size

The study population comprised a random sample of lecturers from five private universities located in Ghana. To ensure a representative sample, the researchers employed a simple random sampling procedure, which allowed every lecturer in the target population an equal chance of being selected. The initial pool consisted of 165 lecturers, from which the researchers needed to determine an appropriate sample size. Following the size decision rules suggested by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the researchers identified that a sample size of 94 would be statistically significant for this population. Krejcie and Morgan's formula for determining sample size is widely recognized for its reliability and accuracy in ensuring that the sample adequately represents the larger population while maintaining manageable numbers for in-depth analysis.

Consequently, from the pool of 165 lecturers, a total of 94 lecturers were randomly chosen to participate in the study. This selection process ensured that the sample was not only random but also sufficient to provide reliable data for the analysis. The random sampling technique minimized selection bias, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the study findings to the broader population of lecturers in private universities in Ghana. The participation of these 94 lecturers provided a solid foundation for examining the various factors impacting job satisfaction within this specific educational context.

Data Collection Method

A structured 40-item survey was used to collect the data for this study. Ten questionnaires were given to pilot project participants to evaluate the validity and dependability of the instruments. Of those, eight were returned. The pilot testing defined the format, language, order, meaning, task difficulty, and responder interest and attention. This made it easier to determine the questionnaire's advantages and disadvantages. Before the distribution of the final questionnaire, all of the concerns raised by the pre-test were resolved. It took over a week to collect the questionnaires from the respondents. 94 questionnaires were distributed in all, and 94 questionnaires were returned.

Data Analysis Techniques

After gathering the survey data, several critical procedures are necessary to analyze it and generate meaningful insights. The initial step involves ensuring the accuracy of the collected statistics. To evaluate the reliability and internal consistency of the pre-test data, Cronbach's Alpha was utilized. Cronbach's Alpha is a measure of scale reliability or internal consistency, where a higher value indicates greater reliability. According to the reliability study, internal consistency is deemed more reliable when the Alpha value approaches 1.0. The interpretation of Cronbach's Alpha follows specific standards: ratings of reliability of 0.6 or below are considered poor, a reliability value around 0.7 is deemed acceptable, and reliability values exceeding 0.8 are considered good. These standards guide the assessment of the data's reliability, ensuring that the instruments used for data collection are consistent and dependable. This step is crucial as it validates the pre-test data, confirming that the survey tools are measuring the variables accurately and consistently across different respondents. By adhering to these reliability benchmarks, the research ensures the robustness of its findings, thereby enhancing the overall quality and credibility of the study [24].

Many academics agree that statistical software programs are the best and most reliable tools for thoroughly analyzing massive amounts of data [25]. Therefore, the "Statistical Package for Social Sciences" software is used to perform the statistical analysis (SPSS). Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to assess the data that had been gathered. Correlation and regression analyses were conducted to determine the associations between the variables. Pearson's Moment of Correlation was employed to test the study's hypotheses. ANOVA was performed to test the hypothesized model, and regression analysis was done to assess how well it explained the connections between the variables.

RESULTS

Reliability Statistics

Table 1: Reliability Analysis Result

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
0.934	40

Source, SPSS version 21

Table 1 shows that the test of measurement reliability scale's Cronbach's alpha for all questionnaire items was 0.934, exceeding the generally accepted threshold of 0.70. Therefore, the measurement is accurate.

Correlation Analysis

Table 2: Correlation Matrix's

	Work Environment	Internal Communication	Remuneration	Job Satisfaction
Work Environment	1			
Internal Communication	1.000**	1		
Remuneration	1.000**	1.000**	1	
Job Satisfaction	0.999**	0.999**	0.999**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 shows the correlation matrix of the impact of the working environment, internal communication, and remuneration on lecturers' job satisfaction in private universities. The results demonstrated that it is positively significant and that there is a substantial correlation between these variables at a level of 0.01.

Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis is used in the research study to examine how independent variables affect dependent variables. The following is the multiple regression model:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

α is constant

X is another factor affecting Performance

β is the regression coefficient that may positively or negatively affect dependent and independent variables.

$$\text{Job satisfaction (Dependent Variable)} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{ Workplace environment} + \beta_2 \text{ Internal communication} + \beta_3 \text{ Remuneration} + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

Table 3: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	13.012	1	13.012	1064.592	0.000 ^b
Residual	1.124	92	0.012		
Total	14.136	93			

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Remuneration

The results in Table 3 show an F value of 1064.592. The result shows that the significance value is less than the $P \leq 0.05$ value. This implies that the overall regression model is statistically significant, valid, and fit. The valid regression model implies that all independent variables explain that there is a positive and significant relationship with the dependent variable.

Model Summary

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change	F
1	0.999 ^a	0.999	0.999	0.01188	0.999	43409.744	2	91	0.000	

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Loyalty, Remuneration

According to Table 4, the dependent variable and independent variables have a relationship with a regression coefficient of $R = 0.999$, or 99.9%. According to the coefficient of determination " R^2 " = 0.999, the working environment, internal communication, and remuneration account for 99.9% of the variation in job satisfaction.

Correlation Coefficient

Table 5: the correlation coefficients for the variables under study

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	0.019	0.007		2.944	0.004
	Remuneration	0.957	0.014	0.966	67.229	0.000
	Workplace Environment	0.034	0.014	0.035	2.409	0.018
	Internal Communication	0.990	0.003	0.999	287.240	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to ascertain whether the working environment, internal communication, and remuneration substantially impacted the job satisfaction of lecturers in Ghana's private universities. The research study's hypotheses were evaluated using SPSS version 21.0, a robust statistical software for data analysis [1]. The findings of the study supported hypotheses 1, 2, and 3, indicating that each of these factors significantly affects job satisfaction among lecturers. Notably, internal communication emerged as the primary factor influencing job satisfaction. The regression analysis revealed that internal communication had a regression coefficient (β_1) of 0.999, or 99.9% [2]. This high coefficient suggests that assuming all other variables remain constant, a 1% increase in the quality of internal communication would lead to a substantial 99.9% improvement in the level of job satisfaction among lecturers at private universities in Ghana [3]. This underscores the critical importance of effective internal communication in enhancing job satisfaction and highlights the need for

university administrations to prioritize and foster robust communication channels within their institutions. At a significance level of 0.000, the T value is 287.240. Thus, the alternative hypothesis is supported, according to which internal communication significantly influences job satisfaction among lecturers at private universities. The findings are in line with a study by Ruck [26], which discovered a substantial link between internal communication and work satisfaction among staff members of higher educational institutions. The results confirmed those of earlier studies [27] that indicated a link between effective internal communication and workers' job satisfaction.

In this study, the second-most significant factor influencing job satisfaction was the remuneration which has a value of its regression coefficient (β_2) = 0.966. The coefficient value of (β_2) = 0.966 implies that, when all other factors are kept constant, every 1% increase in remuneration raises job satisfaction for academics in private universities by 96.6%. The T value is 67.229, and the degree of significance is 0.000. Therefore, sufficient evidence supports the claim that remuneration has a major impact on lecturer's job satisfaction in Ghana's private universities. According to a study conducted by Bibi et al. [21], organizations that offer better remuneration to their workers will enjoy high levels of employee loyalty because of the satisfaction they receive, and the likelihood that they will want to quit their professions is decreasing. As a result, organizations must create formal compensation-based structures to promote job involvement. To support a certain performance level, departments and employees should be recognized for their exceptional work on related tasks.

Workplace environment was the third most significant variable that had an impact on the job satisfaction of lecturers in private universities in Ghana. The workplace environment has a significant value of (β_2) = 0.35 or 3.5%, which indicates that, when all other variables are held constant, an improvement of 1% in the workplace environment results in an improvement of 3.5% in job satisfaction for lecturers in private universities. The T value is 2.409, and the significance level is 0.018 (less than P 0-.05.), which is significant. This means that the alternative hypothesis is true and that the working environment greatly impacts the satisfaction of lecturers with their jobs in private universities. The findings are consistent with an earlier study showing that employees with a high-quality work environment are more likely to feel fulfilled and stay in their jobs [7]. The standard of the physical environment in which they carry out their work can affect how satisfied they are with their jobs. Work is done in a setting combining social and physical elements, whether physical or cognitive. Working environments include a comfortable workspace, sufficient lighting, noise levels, a comfortable temperature, concerns with usability, and office supplies. The position of the organization is improved through pleasant office design.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to investigate the impact of workplace environment, internal communication, and remuneration on lecturers' job satisfaction in Ghana's private universities. The findings underscore the significant role these factors play in influencing job satisfaction, which affects organizational performance and employee retention. Internal communication emerged as the most crucial factor, demonstrating a 99.9% positive impact on job satisfaction. This finding aligns with previous research, emphasizing the necessity for effective communication channels within organizations to foster a sense of inclusion and value among employees. Private universities must establish robust internal communication systems that not only disseminate information effectively but also encourage feedback and participation from lecturers. This two-way communication can significantly enhance job satisfaction by making employees feel heard and valued. Remuneration was the second most influential factor, with a 96.6% positive impact on job satisfaction. This result highlights the critical role of fair and competitive compensation in maintaining high levels of employee satisfaction. Private universities must ensure that their remuneration packages are competitive and reflect the value and contributions of their lecturers. This helps retain talent and attracts qualified professionals to the academic sector.

The workplace environment also significantly affects job satisfaction, albeit to a lesser extent (3.5%). A conducive working environment, characterized by adequate facilities, a safe and healthy workspace, and positive interpersonal relationships, is essential for lecturers to perform their duties effectively. Private universities should invest in creating and maintaining a supportive and pleasant working environment to boost the morale and productivity of their academic staff. The study's findings provide valuable insights into managing private universities in Ghana. To enhance job satisfaction and, consequently, organizational performance, it is recommended that these institutions focus on improving internal communication, ensuring fair remuneration, and providing a conducive working environment. Implementing a periodic appraisal system to assess job satisfaction levels can help identify areas needing improvement and facilitate the development of targeted interventions. Job satisfaction is a multifaceted construct influenced by various factors, including internal communication, remuneration, and the workplace environment. By addressing these factors, private universities in Ghana can significantly improve the job satisfaction of their lecturers, leading to enhanced organizational performance, reduced turnover rates, and sustained institutional growth.

Future research should expand the scope of this study to include public universities and other sectors to provide a comprehensive understanding of job satisfaction determinants across different contexts. Additionally, exploring the impact of other variables, such as professional development opportunities, work-life balance, and institutional policies on job satisfaction, could offer further insights into improving the work environment for academic staff.

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