SAHEL INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
Volume 1 | Issue 2 | July–December 2026
ISSN: 0189-1774

EFFECT OF WORK ENVIRONMENT ON EMPLOYEES PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN MUBI, ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA

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DOI: 10.64290/SIJEDS.v1i2.7

Abstract

This study examined the effect of the work environment on employees' performance in public tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated the effects of the psychological, physical, and social work environments on employee performance. A quantitative research approach was adopted, using a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised academic and non-academic staff of selected public tertiary institutions in Mubi. A sample size of 396 respondents was determined, and questionnaires were administered using a convenience sampling technique. Out of the 396 questionnaires administered, 373 were returned, while 10 were rejected due to improper completion. Consequently, 363 questionnaires, representing a valid response rate of 91.7%, were used for data analysis. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. The findings revealed that the psychological work environment had a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.480, a t-value of 7.012, and a p-value of 0.000. The physical work environment also had a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.192, a t-value of 2.819, and a p-value of 0.001. Similarly, the social work environment had a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.779, a t-value of 11.565, and a p-value of 0.000. The overall regression model produced an R-value of 0.673 and an R-squared value of 0.563, indicating that the three dimensions of the work environment jointly explained 56.3% of the variation in employee performance. Based on the findings, the study concludes that a supportive psychological environment, adequate physical facilities, and positive social relationships are essential for enhancing employee performance in public tertiary institutions. The study recommends the implementation of employee-welfare and stress-management programmes, improvement of workplace facilities and safety conditions, and the promotion of fairness, teamwork, effective communication, and respectful supervision.

Keywords: *Employees, environment, institutions, performance and work.*

INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria, public tertiary institutions are expected to drive national development through quality human capital formation; however, their effectiveness is often constrained by environmental challenges within the workplace. Scholars such as Ogunna (2019) and Abdo (2021) argue that employee performance in Nigerian public institutions is not only influenced by compensation and policies but significantly shaped by the nature of the work environment. The work environment, therefore, becomes a critical independent variable that determines how well employees perform their duties in tertiary institutions such as universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education.

The work environment refers to the totality of physical, psychological, and social conditions under which employees perform their duties. According to Olaniyan and Ojo (2018), a conducive work environment is one that provides comfort, safety, motivation, and positive interpersonal relationships, all of which

 ISSN: 0189-1774 | DOI: 10.64290/SIJEDS.v1i2.7

enhance productivity. In contrast, an unconducive environment leads to stress, dissatisfaction, and reduced efficiency. In Nigerian tertiary institutions, issues such as inadequate infrastructure, poor staff welfare, weak interpersonal relationships, and high workload have been widely identified as major environmental constraints affecting employee performance (Akinwale and George, 2020).

The psychological work environment represents the mental and emotional conditions of employees within the workplace. It includes job stress, workload, job security, motivation, emotional stability, and overall mental well-being. A positive psychological work environment enhances employee confidence, commitment, and creativity, while a negative one leads to stress, burnout, and reduced productivity. The physical work environment refers to the tangible and observable features of the workplace, such as office space, lighting, ventilation, furniture, equipment, and general infrastructure. A well-structured physical environment promotes comfort, safety, and efficiency, thereby enhancing employee performance. According to Kalsoom (2019), the quality of physical facilities in Nigerian public institutions is often poor due to inadequate funding and poor maintenance culture. The social work environment involves interpersonal relationships, communication patterns, leadership styles, teamwork, and organizational culture within the workplace. A positive social environment fosters collaboration, trust, and mutual respect, which are essential for effective performance. In contrast, poor communication, conflicts, and weak leadership structures lead to dissatisfaction and reduced productivity.

The work environment in public tertiary institutions in Nigeria has increasingly become a major determinant of employee performance. In many institutions, including those in Mubi, Adamawa State, employees operate under unfavourable physical, psychological, and social working conditions, characterized by inadequate office space, insufficient teaching and administrative facilities, poor ventilation, irregular power supply, excessive workload, job insecurity, and weak interpersonal relationships. These conditions negatively affect employees' morale, job satisfaction, commitment, and overall productivity. Scholars have consistently observed that a conducive work environment enhances employee motivation and performance, while poor working conditions contribute to reduced efficiency, absenteeism, and low organizational commitment (Asiegbu et al., 2023; Ezenwakwelu et al., 2018).

These challenges are largely associated with inadequate funding, weak institutional management, poor maintenance culture, lack of modern facilities, ineffective human resource policies, frequent industrial disputes, delayed salaries, inadequate welfare packages, and insufficient staffing, which expose employees to stressful working conditions and reduce their effectiveness and quality of service delivery (Odoh & Moluno, 2023; Zakariya et al., 2025). Similarly, physical hazards, excessive workload, and poor organizational climate have been identified as significant factors influencing employee performance in Nigerian tertiary institutions (Olanipon et al., 2023). Despite existing studies on work environment and employee performance, gaps remain, as most previous research has examined either the physical or general work environment without adequately integrating its psychological, physical, and social dimensions. Furthermore, much of the available empirical evidence is concentrated in southern Nigeria, with limited studies focusing on northeastern Nigeria, particularly Mubi, Adamawa State. There is also a practical gap, as institutional reforms have not sufficiently addressed persistent workplace challenges or substantially improved employee performance in many public tertiary institutions. Therefore, this study seeks to address these geographical, conceptual, empirical, and practical gaps by examining the influence of psychological, physical, and social work environments on employee performance in public tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria.

The following research questions guide the study:

i. What is the effect of psychological work environment on employees' performance in public tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria?

ii. What is the impact of physical work environment on employees' performance in public tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria?

iii. What is the influence of social work environment on employees' performance in public tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria?

The main objective of this study examined the effect of work environment on employee's performance in public tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria. While the specific objectives are to:

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i. examine the effect of psychological work environment on employee's performance in public tertiary in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria.

ii. determine the effect of physical work environment on employee's performance in public tertiary in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria.

iii. evaluate the effect of social work environment on employee's performance in public tertiary in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria.

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

H_{01}: Psychological work environment has no significant effect on employees' performance in public tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria.

H_{02}: Physical work environment has no significant effect on employees' performance in public tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria.

H_{03}: Social work environment has no significant effect on employees' performance in public tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Work environment

Yusuf and Metiboba (2022) conceptualized work environment as a multidimensional system made up of technical, human, and organizational components that collectively influence employee behaviour and performance. The technical dimension includes tangible workplace resources such as buildings, office equipment, ICT tools, furniture, and other physical infrastructure that enable employees to perform their tasks effectively. The human dimension focuses on interpersonal relationships, communication patterns, leadership styles, and teamwork among employees and management. The organizational dimension, on the other hand, involves policies, rules, procedures, organizational structure, and administrative systems that guide how work is carried out. Together, these three components form an integrated system that determines how employees function within an organization.

Psychological Work Environment

Psychological work environment refers to the mental and emotional conditions that exist within a workplace and influence how employees think, feel, and behave while performing their duties. It includes stress levels, emotional stability, motivation, job satisfaction, and overall psychological comfort experienced by workers in their work setting. Kukiqi (2017) explains that the psychological work environment emerges when job demands, expectations, and organizational structures are designed in ways that either support or strain employees' mental wellbeing. In Nigerian organizations, this concept is particularly important because employees often operate under pressure from workload, limited resources, and organizational demands. When psychological conditions are favorable, employees tend to be more productive, creative, and committed. However, poor psychological conditions often result in anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and reduced performance, especially in public institutions where stress levels are relatively high.

Physical Work Environment

Nzewi et al. (2024) defined the physical work environment as the tangible and observable aspects of the workplace that directly support employee job functions. These include office layout, furniture, lighting, ventilation, equipment, and the general spatial arrangement of the workplace. The authors emphasized that these physical elements are essential because they create the immediate setting in which employees perform their daily tasks. In the Nigerian context, especially within industrial and educational institutions, the adequacy of these physical facilities plays a major role in determining how efficiently employees can discharge their responsibilities. Furthermore, Nzewi et al. (2024) argued that poor physical work conditions such as overcrowded offices, poor ventilation, and lack of functional equipment significantly reduce employee productivity and morale. They noted that when workers operate in unconducive environments, they are more likely to experience fatigue, stress, and reduced motivation. As a result, organizations that fail to improve their physical environment often record low performance outcomes and increased employee dissatisfaction.

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Social Work Environment

Justin and Asawo (2025) define the social work environment as the interactive space within an organization where employees and management engage through communication, relationships, and behavioural expectations that shape work outcomes. They emphasize that this environment is not limited to physical structures but includes the quality of human interactions that exist within the workplace. In Nigerian public institutions, this involves how staff relate with supervisors, colleagues, and subordinates, which ultimately influences morale and productivity. Hessle (2024) describes the social work environment as a workplace system where individuals from diverse social and cultural backgrounds interact to achieve organizational objectives. He highlights that this environment is shaped by both formal structures, such as hierarchy, and informal relationships, such as friendships and peer interactions.

Employee's Performance

According to Ukwandu and Onyema (2019), employee performance refers to the degree to which workers successfully accomplish assigned duties in alignment with organizational goals and expectations. Their definition emphasizes that performance is not a single-dimensional concept but includes both task performance and contextual performance. Task performance involves the direct execution of job responsibilities, while contextual performance includes behaviors such as cooperation, discipline, teamwork, and voluntary commitment to organizational success. In the Nigerian public sector context, this definition is particularly relevant because employee output is often influenced by interpersonal relationships, workplace culture, and administrative support systems. Thus, performance reflects not only what employees are required to do formally but also how positively they contribute to the organizational environment. Anitha (2024), as cited in Nigerian HRM research, explains that performance encompasses both tangible outputs, such as productivity and service delivery, and intangible outcomes such as employee commitment and quality of work.

Effect of Psychological Work Environment on Employee's Performance in Public Tertiary in Nigeria

The psychological work environment is a critical component of the overall workplace climate that influences employees' emotions, attitudes, and behaviors in public tertiary institutions in Nigeria. It refers to the mental and emotional conditions within which employees perform their duties, including stress levels, motivation, job security perception, interpersonal relationships, organizational support, and leadership style (Osazevbaru and Agbor, 2022; Aderibigbe et al., 2018). In Nigerian tertiary institutions, a psychologically supportive environment enhances staff confidence and reduces anxiety, thereby improving performance outcomes (Nkporbu et al., 2016). Conversely, a hostile psychological climate contributes to emotional exhaustion and reduced productivity among academic and non-academic staff.

Effect of Physical Work Environment on Employee's Performance in Public Tertiary in Nigeria

The physical work environment is one of the major factors influencing employees' performance in public tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Physical work environment refers to the physical conditions and facilities within the workplace that affect employees while carrying out their duties. It includes office accommodation, classroom facilities, lighting, ventilation, temperature, furniture, safety measures, electricity supply, technological facilities, and general workplace cleanliness. In Nigerian public tertiary institutions, employees' effectiveness and productivity are greatly determined by the quality of the physical environment provided by management. A conducive physical environment motivates employees to work efficiently, while poor working conditions reduce morale, commitment, and overall performance (Nwokah, 2024).

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Effect of Social Work Environment on Employee's Performance in Public Tertiary in Nigeria

The social work environment is a critical determinant of employee performance in public tertiary institutions in Nigeria because it shapes how employees interact, collaborate, and emotionally relate with one another in the workplace. It encompasses the network of social relationships, communication structures, collegial support, trust, and organizational culture that exist among academic and non-academic staff. In tertiary institutions, where tasks are largely interdependent, employees rely heavily on social cohesion to achieve institutional goals such as teaching, research, administration, and community service. When the social work environment is supportive, employees tend to demonstrate higher levels of commitment, creativity, and job satisfaction. However, when the environment is characterized by distrust, poor communication, and interpersonal conflict, employee performance tends to decline significantly. Empirical evidence in Nigerian universities and polytechnics shows that a healthy social work environment improves employee engagement and institutional effectiveness (Fakunmoju, 2024; Abubakar, 2023).

Theoretical Framework

Herzberg Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory explains employee motivation using hygiene factors and motivators. Hygiene factors include working conditions, salary, institutional policies, supervision, and interpersonal relationships, while motivators include recognition, achievement, responsibility, and growth. In public tertiary institutions in Mubi, poor office facilities, inadequate teaching resources, and unstable power supply represent hygiene factors that can lead to dissatisfaction among staff. When these conditions are poor, employees are likely to experience frustration, low morale, and reduced performance (Herzberg, 1968; Matakhitswen et al., 2023).

However, when hygiene factors are adequately provided such as comfortable offices, ICT facilities, and supportive administration they prevent dissatisfaction and allow motivators to enhance performance. For example, recognition of academic output, promotion opportunities, and professional development encourage employees to perform better. Recent studies in Nigerian tertiary institutions confirm that improved working conditions significantly enhance academic staff productivity and commitment (Roberts et al., 2025). Thus, Herzberg's theory remains relevant in explaining how work environment directly affects employee performance.

Empirical Review

Salisu (2026) examined the relationship between psychological work environment and employee performance in selected federal universities in North-West Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and targeted academic and non-academic staff across three universities. A sample size of 420 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling technique to ensure proportional representation of staff categories. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and analyzed using mean scores, standard deviation, and multiple regression analysis. The findings revealed that psychological factors such as job security, emotional support, and organizational trust significantly influence employee performance. The study concluded that a positive psychological work environment enhances staff productivity and commitment. It was recommended that university management should strengthen staff counseling services, reduce job insecurity, and improve emotional support systems. However, the study was limited to federal universities, leaving out state-owned institutions. The authors suggested that future studies should conduct comparative analysis between federal and state tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Jones and Drolet (2026) investigated psychological safety and employee performance in selected public polytechnics in South-East Nigeria. The study employed a correlational research design and focused on both academic and administrative staff. The population consisted of staff from five public polytechnics, with a sample size of 350 respondents selected through simple random sampling technique. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and regression analysis. The findings showed that psychological safety significantly enhances employee performance by encouraging open communication, innovation, and reduced fear of punishment or victimization. The study concluded that

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institutions with high psychological safety tend to experience improved staff productivity and innovation. The researchers recommended that management should promote open communication systems and reduce authoritarian supervision styles. However, the study was limited to polytechnics only. It suggested that future research should include universities and colleges of education to broaden the scope of understanding.

Philip (2026) carried out studied on emotional wellbeing and employee performance in public universities in Northern Nigeria using an ex-post facto research design. The population consisted of academic and administrative staff from selected universities, and a sample size of 380 respondents was drawn using proportionate stratified sampling technique. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to determine the relationship between variables. The study found that emotional wellbeing positively affects employee performance, while emotional exhaustion and job stress negatively affect productivity. It was also discovered that heavy workload and poor work-life balance were major contributors to psychological distress among staff. The study concluded that emotional wellbeing is a key determinant of employee effectiveness in tertiary institutions. The authors recommended the introduction of mental health support programs and workload redistribution strategies. However, the study did not consider social psychological factors such as interpersonal relationships. It recommended that future studies should integrate both social and psychological dimensions of the work environment.

Anthony and Chukwu (2026) studied the influence of organizational psychological climate on employee performance in selected state universities in South-West Nigeria. The study used a descriptive and explanatory survey research design. The population consisted of non-academic staff, and a sample size of 410 respondents was selected through multistage sampling technique. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The findings revealed that psychological climate variables such as trust, fairness, motivation, and leadership style significantly influence employee performance. Employees working in a positive psychological climate demonstrated higher productivity and job satisfaction compared to those in negative environments. The study concluded that organizational psychological climate is a strong predictor of employee performance in tertiary institutions. It recommended that management should improve fairness in promotion processes, communication systems, and reward structures. However, the study excluded academic staff, thereby limiting the comprehensiveness of its findings. The authors suggested that future studies should include both academic and non-academic staff for balanced analysis.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The study was carried out in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria. The population was determined which comprised of Adamawa State University, Mubi, Federal Polytechnic, Mubi, and College of Health Technology, Mubi, who were both academic and non-academic, made up the study's population.

Table1: Population of the study

Staff Category	Adamawa State University, Mubi	Federal Polytechnic, Mubi	College of Health Technology, Michika	Total
Academic Staff	294	797	146	**1237**
Non-Academic Staff	556	1523	174	**2253**
Total				**3,490**

Source: Institutions' Registry Depts. (2026)

Sampling Technique

During this study, the selection of respondents was accomplished utilizing the Yaro Yamane simplified formula, ensuring a 95% level of confidence. Subsequently, the proportionate allocate size for academic and non-academic staff at each of the institutions under investigation. The Yaro Yamane formula is given by:

Where: n = corrected sample size

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N = Population size

e = Margin of error (0.05 at 95% level of confidence).

This sample size is calculated thus;

$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$

Where (N) is the total population size, and (e) is the margin of error (0.05).

N = 3490

$n = 3490 / (1 + 3490(0.05)^2)$

$n = 3490 / (1 + 3490(0.0025))$

$n = 3490 / 9.7 = 359.7 \approx 360$

Therefore, the sample size for this study is 360 However, 10% of the sample size was added to the 360 actual sample to guide for non-return instrument, therefore, the sample size for this study was 360 + 36 = 396. The sample size of this study is therefore adjudged to be 396 respondents. This is further calculated as shown below to ascertain the strata sample size.

Table 2: Apportionment of Sample Size

Institution	Cadre	Population	Sample Size
Adamawa State University, Mubi	Academic	294	294 x 396 = 33 3490
	Non-Academic	556	556 x 396 = 63 3490
Federal Polytechnic Mubi	Academic	797	797 x 396 = 90 3490
	Non-Academic	1523	1523 x 396 = 173 3490
College of health Technology, Mubi	Academic	146	146 x 396 = 17 3490
College of health Technology, Mubi	Non-Academic	174	174 x 396 = 20 3490
Total		**3490**	**396**

***Source**: Researcher's computation (2026).*

This study adopted the convenience sampling technique to select respondents from the public tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria. The study relied on primary data. The main instrument for data collection was structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), to Strongly Disagree (SD).

The data collected in this study was analyze using inferential statistical techniques. Inferential statistics, particularly multiple regression analysis, were employed to test the relationship between work environment variables (such as physical, social, and psychological environments) and employee performance.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

A total of 396 questionnaires were administered, representing 100.0% of the total questionnaires distributed. Out of this number, 373 questionnaires (94.2%) were returned, while 23 questionnaires (5.8%) were not retrieved. Of the returned questionnaires, 10 (2.5%) were rejected because they were invalid or improperly completed. Consequently, 363 questionnaires (91.7%) were retained for data analysis. The findings indicate that the study achieved a valid response rate of 91.7%, which provides a substantial and adequate number of usable responses for the analysis and interpretation of the research findings.

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Hypotheses Testing

The hypotheses of this study were tested using multiple linear regression statistics at 5% level of significance as indicted in table 3 below.

Table 3: Model summary of Effect of Work Environment on Employee's Performance in Public Tertiary in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	T-Values	P-Values	Hypotheses
(Constant)	1.493	1.888	0.791	0.000	
PSWE	0.480	0.068	7.012	0.000	Rejected H01
PWE	0.192	0.068	2.819	0.001	Rejected H02
SWE	0.779	0.067	11.565	0.000	Rejected H03
R	0.673				
R^2	0.563				
Adjusted R	0.560				
F-Stats	287.946				

a. Dependent Variable: EP** = **Employee Performance

***Note: PWE =** Physical Work Environment**, PSWE =** Psychological Work Environment**, SWE =** Social Work Environment*

(Source: Computed using SPSS 21. 2026)

Table 3 presents the regression analysis of the effect of work environment on employee performance in public tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria. The model summary indicates that the multiple correlation coefficient (R) is 0.673, showing a positive association between the combined work environment variables and employee performance. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.563, which indicates that approximately 56.3% of the variation in employee performance is explained by the combined effects of psychological, physical, and social work environment variables included in the regression model. The adjusted R^2 is 0.560, suggesting that the model explains approximately 56.0% of the variation in employee performance after adjusting for the number of predictors. The remaining 43.7% of the variation in employee performance may be attributed to other factors not included in the model, random variation, or measurement-related influences. The F-statistic of 287.946 indicates that the overall regression model is statistically significant, although the corresponding model p-value is not explicitly reported in the table. Given the large F-statistic, the model provides evidence of a substantial joint relationship between the work environment variables and employee performance.

Summary of Findings

The following findings were derived from the above analysis:

The study found that the psychological work environment has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance in public tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State. The regression coefficient was 0.480, with a t-value of 7.012 and a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 significance level. This indicates that factors such as mental comfort, stress reduction, psychological well-being, and job satisfaction are positively associated with employee performance. Consequently, the null hypothesis $H_0$1 was rejected.

The findings revealed that the physical work environment has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance. The regression coefficient (β) was 0.192, with a t-value of 2.819 and a p-value of 0.001. Therefore, the null hypothesis $H_0$2 was rejected.

The study further established that the social work environment has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance. The regression coefficient was 0.779, with a t-value of 11.565 and a p-value of 0.000. Hence, the null hypothesis $H_0$3 was rejected. Among the three dimensions, the social work environment recorded the largest regression coefficient, suggesting the strongest estimated association with employee performance in the model.

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Discussion of Findings

The first major finding of the study established that the psychological work environment has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance in public tertiary institutions in Mubi. The result also agrees with the study by Yusha'u et al. (2026), which examined work environments and employee performance among academic staff in selected higher institutions in Yobe State. The study reported that work environment had a positive influence on employee performance and that psychological well-being was significantly related to employee performance. This similarity is important because both studies focus on higher education institutions in northeastern Nigeria. It suggests that psychological well-being may be an important consideration in understanding the performance of employees working in tertiary education.

The second major finding of the study revealed that the physical work environment has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance in public tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State. The regression analysis produced a coefficient of 0.192, a t-value of 2.819, and a p-value of 0.001. Since the p-value is below the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis H02 was rejected. This finding indicates that favourable physical workplace conditions are significantly associated with improved employee performance. The positive and significant effect of the physical work environment is consistent with the findings of Dappa and Onuoha (2020), who reported a significant relationship between work environment and employee performance in selected private business organizations in Rivers State, Nigeria. Their study emphasized the importance of workplace conditions, supervisory support, and other environmental factors in improving productivity and service quality. Although their study was conducted in private organizations rather than tertiary institutions, the similarity in findings suggests that a conducive physical workplace may support employee effectiveness across different organizational settings.

Social Work Environment and Employee Performance

The third major finding established that the social work environment has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance in public tertiary institutions in Mubi, Adamawa State. The regression analysis recorded a coefficient of 0.779, a t-value of 11.565, and a p-value of 0.000. The finding is consistent with Dappa and Onuoha (2020), who found that social factors and supervisory support were among the work environment factors associated with employee performance in selected private organizations in Rivers State. Their study emphasized the importance of supporting employees' social needs and encouraging supervisors to provide assistance. This supports the present finding that positive interpersonal conditions may contribute to employee performance. The result also agrees with research by Tu et al. (2022), which examined job demands, job resources, and task performance among social workers in China. Their findings showed that job resources were associated with lower burnout, higher work engagement, and better task performance. Although the occupational and geographical contexts differ, the results support the broader argument that supportive work conditions can enhance employee effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

First, the study found that the psychological work environment has a significant positive effect on employee performance. Employees who experience reduced work-related stress, job satisfaction, mental comfort, and emotional well-being are more likely to demonstrate commitment, effectiveness, and improved performance. This implies that public tertiary institutions should pay adequate attention to employees' psychological needs by reducing unnecessary stress, promoting work–life balance, providing counselling and welfare services, and creating conditions that support employees' mental well-being.

Second, the study established that the physical work environment significantly affects employee performance. Adequate office equipment, workplace safety, cleanliness, and suitable working conditions enhance employees' ability to perform their responsibilities effectively. Conversely, poor physical conditions, inadequate facilities, uncomfortable temperatures, and insufficient work materials may reduce productivity and employee motivation. The study therefore concludes that the provision and maintenance of functional facilities, modern equipment, safe workplaces, and comfortable working spaces are essential for improving employee performance in public tertiary institutions.

Third, the study revealed that the social work environment has a significant positive relationship with employee performance. Respectful supervision, fairness, effective communication, trust, teamwork, and positive interpersonal relationships contribute to employees' willingness and ability to perform their duties. A supportive social environment promotes cooperation, commitment, and a sense of belonging among employees. Consequently, management of public tertiary institutions should encourage participatory leadership, fair treatment, open communication, teamwork, and healthy relationships between supervisors and subordinates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Management of public tertiary institutions in Mubi should introduce measures that reduce work-related stress and promote employees' psychological well-being. These measures may include counselling services, stress-management programmes, reasonable workloads, recognition of employees' contributions, opportunities for professional development, and policies that support work–life balance. Such initiatives would improve job satisfaction, mental comfort, motivation, and overall employee performance.

The institutions should prioritize the provision of functional office equipment, reliable electricity, adequate ventilation, suitable office space, clean working environments, and effective workplace safety measures. Regular inspection and maintenance of buildings, furniture, equipment, and other work facilities should also be undertaken. Providing employees with the physical resources required to perform their duties would reduce work-related difficulties and enhance efficiency, accuracy, and productivity.

Management should encourage respectful supervision, fairness, teamwork, trust, and open communication between employees and supervisors. Supervisors should treat employees equitably, involve them in relevant decisions, provide constructive feedback, and resolve workplace conflicts promptly. In addition, team-building activities and effective communication channels should be established to strengthen colleague relationships and cooperation. These measures would promote employee commitment, a sense of belonging, and improved performance.

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