

# People Performance Measures and Commitment of Academic Staff in Nigeria Universities

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<i>Abstract</i>	<i>Journal of Policy and Development Studies (JPDS)</i>
<p><i>People performance measure is critical for appraisal purpose to ensure sustainable commitment. The indices of performance are investigated to ascertain the extent of relationship to their commitment. The approach to people performance measure in our Universities affect commitment of people at individual and team levels and tend to reduce overall institutional performance. The study used survey research design. The primary data gathered through questionnaire were analysed using correlation. Based on the analysis, the findings revealed that people performance measures have significant positive effect on employee commitment among academic staff of Nigerian Universities. It is therefore recommended that task performance measure, contextual and adaptive performance measures be emphasised in appraising performance of academics in our Universities. This will imply a review of the academic appraisal policy to include more indices of the people's performance particularly in the areas of contextual, adaptive and task performance measures in order to achieve greater commitment and promote institutional achievements.</i></p>	<p>Vol. 14. Issue 2 (2023) ISSN(p) 0189-5958 ISSN (e) 2814-1091 Home page <a href="https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jpds">https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jpds</a> <b>ARTICLE INFO:</b> <b>Keyword:</b> <i>People, performance, measure, Commitment.</i> <b>Article History</b> Received 9<sup>th</sup> September 2023 Accepted: 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023 DOI: <a href="https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jpds.v14i2.13">https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jpds.v14i2.13</a></p>

## **1.Introduction**

The imperative of improving employee performance remains key issue for the Human Resource professionals. It is important in their decision making process. A high performance indicates that people have done excellent job. Low performance indicates that people can improve. However in most cases, employees don't understand the concept of people performance and how it can be measured. To reliably track and increase people performance, employees need a solid understanding of what constitutes performance, how it can be measured and reported and discover the factors that increase or impede it (Ball, 2022). Organisations may achieve its goals when employees understand their roles and responsibilities for the organisation (Katouu,2019). Paul and Anantharaman (2020) argue that the most important of the organisational performance is to achieve higher performance for the shareholders by employee commitment.

Performance is the single most important common outcome in management of organisations. In Business management, performance is probably the most widely used outcome measure to assess whether a person or group of persons have achieved goals. Yet the dimensions and measurement has not been widely understood among practitioners. It is recognised that if the employees are more committed, their performance will be increased positively in the organisations. (Porter, Mowday and Steers, (1982) found that organisations' performance depends on organisational commitment.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem and Objectives of the study**

People performance measures in the areas of task performance, contextual and adaptive performance constitute more comprehensive performance measures in all organisations. However, in the Nigerian Universities, appraisal for promotion is mainly measuring performance based on publications or creative output in ranked journals, Association/professional journals, other journals, conference papers, technical reports/ case reports and inventions. The major duties of academic staff in the Universities are mainly Teaching, Research and Community service whereas the appraisal is based on research for publications, hence the notion of 'publish or perish' which result in denial of most promotions. Assessment of teaching pedagogy and community service appear neglected in measuring performance for promotion purpose. It appears that the task performance measure of performance in Nigerian Universities is not exhaustive as long as teaching is a task.This has halted and sometimes delayed the ultimate promotion of most academics who have done exceptionally well in teaching and community activities. Based on the problem stated above the objective of this paper is to:

1. Establish the relationship between Task performance measure and commitment of senior lecturers for professorial appraisal in Nigerian Universities
2. Discover the relationship between Contextual performance measure and commitment of senior lecturers for professorial appraisal in Nigerian Universities
3. Ascertain the relationship between adaptive performance measure and commitment of senior lecturers for professorial appraisal in Nigerian Universities

## **2. Review of Related Literature**

### **2. Conceptual Review** **Task performance**

Task performance refers to the execution and outcome of job-specific activities that are part of one's formal job description. It concerns the core job responsibilities of an employee and is often tied to specific quantitative and/or qualitative work outcomes, as well as the way these outcomes are delivered (Borman 2017; Sonnentag et al 2008). For some occupations and functions, indicators of task performance are relatively straightforward.

### **Contextual performance**

Contextual performance refers to activities that go beyond the formal job description. It concerns voluntary behaviour that contributes to the organisation's social and psychological climate: this acts in support of employee task activities, or benefits the organisation as a whole (Borman 2001; Harper 2015; Podsakoff et al 2009).

### **Adaptive Performance**

Adaptive performance refers to employees' ability to adapt and adjust to unforeseen changes and demands in the workplace. It concerns an employee's capability to efficiently deal with new, uncertain or unpredictable work situations (Harari et al 2016; Jundt et al 2015; Pulakos et al 2000; Sonnentag et al 2008).

### **Individual versus team performance**

In addition to these three performance dimensions, a distinction can be made between individual performance and team performance. In most cases, team performance is simply the sum of team members' individual performance. However, in some functions, key tasks are performed in collaboration with others; in particular where complex tasks require the input and expertise of multiple employees – in those cases, outcome measures at the team level should be used as member's individual performance.

### **Objective versus subjective measures of performance**

When measuring employees' performance, often a distinction is made between objective and subjective measures. Objective measures typically concern measures of countable behaviours or outcomes, whereas subjective measures consist of a supervisor's or co-workers' ratings of an employee's performance.

### **Performance appraisal measures**

Performance appraisal is the process of defining expectations for employee performance, measuring, evaluating and recording employee actual performance in relation to those expectations and providing the feedback (Eze, 2006). In theory it has been portrayed as something of a panacea, no surprise, it has generated a vast literature over the years. Unfortunately, the practice rarely lives up to these high theoretical expectations because of the system itself and the incomprehensive manner in which performance appraisal is carried out and therefore lead to greater degree of evaluation than for development of employees commitment.

### **Scales measuring task performance**

Most of the scales identified in this review measure (elements of) task performance. As explained, what constitutes task performance depends on the specific activities that are part of someone's formal job description. For this reason, numerous scales are available for different occupations and functions. For example, there are measurement scales for the task performance of nurses (Karayurt et al 2009), sales agents (Amyx et al 2009), account managers (Liu et al 2018), University lecturers (Molefe 2010), physicians (Wright et al 2012), and police officers (Tarescavage et al 2015). In addition, there are scales that focus only on a specific element of

task performance, such as service performance (Ali et al 2017) or safety performance (Valenzuela and Burke 2020).

### **Scales measuring contextual performance**

Although scales exist to measure contextual performance in a specific function or occupation (Carlos and Rodrigues 2016; Greenslade and Jimmieson 2017), most contextual performance scales are generic. Widely used scale is the Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) scale developed by Podsakoff et al (1990).

### **Scales measuring adaptive performance**

Some scales assessing task performance also measure elements of adaptive performance, such as responsiveness (Amyx et al 2009), behavioural flexibility (Darr et al 2017) or learning ability (Lo and Li 2005). Scales that solely measure adaptive performance, however, are often generic. A widely used generic scale is the Job Adaptability Inventory (JAI), a self-report scale developed by Pulakos et al (2000) that measures eight dimensions of adaptive behaviour.

Although sometimes ‘overall’ or ‘general’ measures of performance are used, in most cases task, contextual and adaptive performance is measured separately. In past decades, numerous primary studies and meta-analyses have measured task, contextual and adaptive performance as their main outcome variables.

### **Measures of task, contextual and adaptive performance assess different things.**

Task, contextual and adaptive performance are related but are empirically different dimensions of people performance. This means that measures of task, contextual and adaptive performance measure different things (Borman and Motowidlo 1997; Harari et al 2016; Rich et al 1999; Salgado and Moscoso 2019). Consequently, they cannot be used as a proxy for one another.

In the views of Singh, Kochar and Yuksel (2010), performance appraisal is one of the most important functions of Human Resource Management. It is concerned with identifying, measuring influencing and developing job performance of employees in the organisation in relation to the set norms and standards for a particular period of time in order to achieve certain purpose.

Employees are required to show total commitment to desired standard of job performance. The purpose of performance appraisal is to measure employees performance as comprehensively as possible. Onah (2008) states that performance appraisal is a formal procedure that involves setting work standard, assessing employee’s standard and providing feedback to the employee with the aim of motivating that person to eliminate performance deficiency or to perform above par.

The dominant approach to organisational commitment has been Meyer and Allen’s three component concept. Meyer and Allen (1991) argue that commitment as a psychological state has at least three separate components reflecting a desire (Affective commitment) b. A need (continuance commitment) and c an obligation(normative commitment) to maintain employment in an organisation.

Affective commitment has been defined within the attitudinal framework as ‘a set of strong positive attitudes towards the organisation manifested by dedication to goals and a shared sense of values (Brown,1996). It has to do with an individual’s emotional attachment to , identification with and involvement in the organisation. In contrast continuance commitment refers to an individual’s loyalty to an organisation and its continued existence as a result of

required investment or sacrifices in the organisation. It is the tendency of an individual to stay with the organisation because of the personal cost of leaving (Brown, 1996). Normative commitment refers to individual's felt sense of obligation that forces them to act in a certain way. They feel ought to stay.

Employee commitment is a key element in achieving organisational performance (Vue and Zhang, 2009). Mathotaarachchi et al (2018) state that low level of employee commitment are found in employees who are not committed to organisational goals and objectives but to personal success.

## **2.1 Empirical Review**

Author and year	Setting/Population	Description measurement tool	Construct or outcome measure	Reliability	Validity	Comments
1 Ali (2017)	hospitality industry / staff/tourists	Resort Hotel Service Performance (RESERVE) – 3 dimensions, 23 items – third party rating	3 dimensions of service performance: setting, audience, and actors	internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha)	construct validity (convergent, discriminant)	
2 Allen (2020)	medical (maternity) / obstetricians and gynaecologists	performance indicators developed by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, , – 14 items – direct report	Maternity performance /quality of medical care	service not reported	criterion validity	performance indicators did not correlate with inspection rating score
3 Amyx (2009)	newspaper publishing industry / sales agents	SALESPERF: scale measuring the service performance of sales representatives, adopted from SERVPERF scale, – 14 items – third party rating	Salesperson's service performance (includes reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles)	internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha)	construct validity (convergent, discriminant) criterion validity (concurrent, predictive)	
4 Barker (2011)	healthcare / nurses	evaluates nurses' perceptions of their performance – 9 items – self-report	Aspects of mental, physical and general performance	internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha)	content validity (expert panel)	

during nurse work tasks

5	Brady (2002)	service, healthcare, entertainment, and fast food industry / customers	SERVPERF scale, (adopted from the SERVQUAL scale) – 4 dimensions, 28 items – third party rating	Consumer perceptions > service performance and expectations, service quality, satisfaction and purchase intentions	not reported	construct validity (convergent, discriminant)	performance-based measures of service quality (SERVPERF) represent a better operationalisation of the service quality construct than SERVQUAL
6	Carlos (2016)	higher education / lecturers	job performance measure – 29 items, – self-report	Task performance (knowledge, organisational efficiency) contextual performance (persistent effort, relational skills, co-operation, conscientiousness)	skills,	internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha, composite)	content validity (expert panel) construct validity
7	Chernikova (2016)	retail (supermarket) / employees	supervisors' perception of employees' performance – 4 items – third party rating	Job performance (quality and quantity)		internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha)	not reported

8	Darr (2017)	Canadian army / officers	computerised adaptive rating scales (CARS) – third party rating	Performance (based on five competencies: action orientation and initiative, behavioural flexibility/change management, teamwork, developing self and others, communication )	inter-rater reliability	validity (measurement precision data were compared between BARS and CARS, with CARS being better)	Criterion validity (measurement precision data were compared between BARS and CARS, with CARS being better)	CARS are similar to a behaviourally anchored rating scale (BARS) in that it contains specific performance-relevant behaviours of varying levels of effectiveness
9	DeArmond (2011)	construction industry / construction workers	safety measure, – 10 items, – self-report	performance Individual performance (safety participation, safety compliance)	safety	internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha)	construct validity (convergent) criterion validity (concurrent)	
10	Dhammika (2012)	public sector / employees	performance measurement tool, (adopted from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire)	Performance (job, career, innovation, team, organisation)	internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha)	construct validity (convergent, discriminant)	specific sample, limited generalisability	



## 2.2 Theoretical Framework

This paper is based on McClelland's Achievement Motivation theory. The importance of achievement is emphasized by McClelland(1961). The theory is based on three sets of needs which includes Affiliation, Power and Achievement. Although all three needs are important, McClelland's research concentrated mainly on how to develop the need for achievement in the people. He identified three common types of people with high achievement needs; the preference for personal responsibility, the setting of moderate goals and the desire for specific feedback. Personal satisfaction is derived from the accomplishment of the task itself. However in the context of the McClelland's theory, it seems to emphasize achievement based on task performance all to the neglect of contextual and adaptive performance measures. Also this theory recorded that if task is too difficult or too risky, it would reduce the chances of success and gaining need satisfaction and employee commitment.

### 3 Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design which used a correlation design. Correlation measures how variables or rank order are related. Specifically, Pearson product moment correlation coefficient which as a measure of lines association is applied since the study concerns variables that have linear relationship and perfectly related. Co relational research design adopted for this investigation is appropriate because it reduced error, bias and maximized the reliability of data gathered.

To derive the correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) for correlated variables, a survey instrument was used for the investigation whereby the questionnaire was structured and administered on the respondents from the 37 State Universities under study. A 5 - point Likert scale was used in designing the questionnaire.

### 4. Result and Discussion

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics**

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
PPM	3.0810	.50169	200
TPM	3.0760	.51179	200
CPM	3.1260	.60527	200
APM	3.0330	.60775	200

**Table 2: Correlation Results of the variables Studied**

		<b>Correlations</b>			
		PPM	TPM	CPM	APM
PPM	Pearson Correlation	1	.392**	.471**	.513**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	200	200	200	200
TPM	Pearson Correlation	.392**	1	.624**	.599**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	200	200	200	200
CPM	Pearson Correlation	.471**	.624**	1	.296**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	200	200	200	200
APM	Pearson Correlation	.513**	.599**	.296**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	200	200	200	200

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

N=200.PPM=People performance Measure; TPM=Task Performance Measure; CPM= Contextual Performance Measure; APM= Adaptive Performance Measure

The relationship between people performance measure and commitment of senior lecturers in the state Universities as measured by people performance scale was investigated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There was moderate positive correlation between TP and PP ( $r=0.392, n=200, P<0.5$ ); CPM and PP,  $r=0.471, n=200, P<0.5$  and APM and PP,  $r=0.513, n=200, P<0.5$  which is considered large. Analysis of the correlation matrix indicates that independent variable has a significant positive relationship between people performance measures and commitment ( $r=0.392, 0.471$  and  $0.513$ ). The positive result implies that the effect of people performance measure on the employee commitment is high in the state Universities with adaptive performance measure requiring the highest commitment amongst senior lecturers seeking professorial appointment.

### 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

In the state Universities, individual performance measure is adopted to the neglect of team member performance. Again the emphasis is on objective and not on subjective performance. Scales measuring responsiveness such as outbreak of Covid'19, developed by Amyx et al, 2009 or learning ability such as new technology adoption developed by Lo and Li (2000) are not applicable. Also, the emphasis of performance measure is on objective with no subjective performance measures whereas these measures are not interchangeable.

Task, contextual and adaptive performance are the main outcome variables. Lecturers' promotion is not to be based on one aspect of task performance measure that account for objective outcome without looking at comprehensive performance of individual employee, including their team member performance.

Scales developed by Koopmans et al 2014, 2016 for measuring task performance, Carlos and Rodrigues, 2016, Podsakoff et al 1990 for measuring contextual performance as well as scales

measuring adaptive performance Responsiveness (Amyx et al 2009 and Learning ability developed by Lo and Li,2000) are highly recommended for adoption in order to ensure overall commitment of academic staff of Nigerian University academics.

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