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Family, friends and colleagues' support as correlates of job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in benue state: implications for counselling

Moses Mhide Kpum^{*)}

Department of Educational Foundations and General Studies, Joseph Sawuan Tarka University, Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated how family, friends and colleagues' support as correlates with job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State for counselling implications. The study adopted a correlation research design. The population comprises 2,703 non-teaching staff from three public universities in Benue State: Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University in Makurdi, Benue State University in Makurdi, and the Federal University of Health Sciences in Otuipo. The sample size for the study was 348 non-teaching staff. The sample was selected using proportionate stratified and accidental sampling techniques. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Family Support, Friend's Support, and Colleagues' Support, and Job Performance Questionnaire" (FSFSCSJPO). The questionnaire was validated by experts. The reliability of the questionnaire was established using Cronbach Alpha method which yielded coefficients of 0.81 and 0.84 for sections A and B respectively. Data collected for the study were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The study's findings revealed that there is a high positive relationship between family support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State, and that the relationship was significant. It was also found that, friends' support and colleagues' support had a high and significant positive relationship with job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. The study concluded that support networks, including family, friends, and colleagues; significantly contribute to the enhanced job performance of non-teaching staff in public universities in Benue State. Recommendation were made that public universities should organize employee assistance programs and workshops on communication and interpersonal skills using counsellors as facilitators to help build and maintain support networks and public universities in Benue State should establish or expand Counselling services for their non-teaching staff that can address both personal and professional challenges that may affect their job performance.



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Corresponding Author:

Kpum, M. M.,
Joseph Sawuan Tarka University, Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria
Email: tinagoshwe@gmail.com

Introduction

Support networks are integral components of individuals' personal and professional lives, contributing significantly to their well-being and overall performance. In both personal and work contexts, the presence of supportive relationships has been acknowledged as a crucial factor in enhancing job performance (Masten, 2011). Job performance can encompass a range of elements, including task accomplishment, quality of work, attendance, punctuality, and overall contributions to the organization. It is essential for the success of both the individual employees and the institutions they work for. Wayne et al. (2007) reported that support networks, including family and colleague support, can positively affect job performance by reducing stress and increasing overall well-being. Hence, the importance of support networks lies in their ability to offer a safety net during times of stress and their capacity to contribute to individual's overall physical and psychological health.

Support networks refer to the social connections and relationships that individuals maintain within various spheres of their lives. These networks include family, friends, and colleagues, each of which plays a unique role in providing emotional, social, and professional support. The presence of a robust support system can significantly impact an individual's psychological well-being and capacity to navigate challenges effectively (Cohen, 2004). The connection between support networks and job performance is well-established in the literature. Research has shown that individuals with strong support systems experience reduced job-related stress, increased job satisfaction, and greater engagement in their work (Cohen, 2004). The presence of support networks can mitigate the negative impact of stress on job performance, thus improving productivity and job satisfaction (Eisenberger et al., 2019). To Sias and Perr (2012), the presence of strong support networks has been associated with lower stress levels and greater psychological well-being, which, in turn, can enhance an individual's job performance. Staff who perceive high levels of support from their family, friends, and colleagues are more likely to experience lower burnout, increased job engagement, and heightened job satisfaction (Cohen, 2010).

Family Support and Job Performance

Family support is a fundamental component of an individual's personal support network, encompassing the emotional and social connections within one's family (Cohen, 2010). Family support is defined as the emotional, practical, and psychological assistance provided by family members to an individual. Family support can manifest in various ways, including emotional encouragement, understanding, and assistance with family responsibilities. These forms of support can directly or indirectly influence job performance, as non-teaching staff members often need to balance their work responsibilities with their family obligations. A supportive family environment could positively influence an individual's job performance. Studies have indicated that family support can enhance self-esteem, motivation, and stress coping mechanisms, all of which are critical for job performance (Grandey & Cropanzano, 2010). In a study conducted by Johnson et al. (2018), it was found that family support significantly impacted the job performance of non-teaching staff in a similar academic context.

The study revealed that non-teaching staff who received strong family support reported lower levels of work-related stress and a greater ability to focus on their job responsibilities. This support included emotional encouragement from family members, assistance with childcare or household tasks, and a general understanding of the demands of their work. Strong familial relationships can provide emotional stability, reducing the likelihood of burnout and absenteeism (Eisenberger & Huntington, 2010). Also, research by Sias and Perry, (2012) reports that family members often offer emotional encouragement, understanding, and a sense of belonging, which can boost an individual's self-esteem and motivation, ultimately improving their capacity to manage work-related stressors. Non-teaching staff members who receive financial support from their families may have a reduced financial burden, enabling them to focus more on their job without the added stress of financial difficulties (Smith & Brown, 2019). This support network not only helps in coping with the demands of the job but also contributes to a more positive overall work experience. For non-teaching staff in public universities, family support can extend to helping with work-life balance, providing emotional stability during challenging times, and offering encouragement for career development and achievements. Understanding and harnessing the potential of family support is crucial for Counselling and support programs tailored to the specific needs of non-teaching staff in Benue State's public universities.

Friends' Support and Job Performance

Friends' support refers to the emotional and social assistance provided by one's friends, and it has a positive impact on an individual's job performance and overall job satisfaction. Friends' support, as an essential part of an individual's personal support network could also impacts job performance. The presence of supportive friends can provide emotional assistance and encouragement in times of professional challenges (Masten, 2011). The emotional and psychological benefits of friendship networks can contribute to an individual's

resilience in the face of work-related stressors, improving overall job performance (Cohen, 2010). Their encouragement, advice, and companionship contribute to an individual's well-being and job satisfaction (Sias & Perry, 2012). To the authors, staff who perceive strong support from their friends are more likely to experience lower burnout and greater job engagement.

A study by Martinson and Garcia (2017) highlighted the importance of friends' support in the context of job performance among non-teaching staff. The findings indicated that having a supportive network of friends who offer emotional encouragement, provide opportunities for relaxation and socialization, and offer a listening ear during challenging times was positively associated with job satisfaction and performance. Non-teaching staff members who have friends who understand the demands of their job and provide a support system are likely to experience reduced stress and increased job performance. Friends' support can also serve as a buffer against workplace stressors. In a study by Robinson et al. (2019), it was noted that non-teaching staff members who received support from their friends were better equipped to cope with workplace challenges and maintain job performance. Furthermore, in a study by Roberts and White, (2017), staff who had close friends in the workplace reported improved job performance and overall job satisfaction. Friends can act as a source of advice and a sounding board for work-related issues, contributing to employees' overall ability to excel in their roles. Understanding the role of friends' support in the context of public universities in Benue State is essential for creating Counselling and support programs tailored to the specific needs of non-teaching staff. Identifying how non-teaching staff members access and leverage social support from their friends can lead to interventions and strategies aimed at improving their well-being and job performance

Colleagues' Support and Job Performance

The support received from colleagues is critical for job performance, especially among non-teaching staff in public universities. Colleagues' support refers to the assistance, collaboration, and emotional support provided by fellow staff members and colleagues in the workplace. It plays a crucial role in fostering a positive work environment and has positive implications for job performance and job satisfaction. This support can have a substantial impact on their job performance and overall workplace well-being. Colleagues can create a positive work environment that fosters collaboration, provides professional guidance, and offers emotional support. Research has shown that a supportive workplace can lead to higher job satisfaction, engagement, and performance (Eisenberger et al., 2018). Colleagues who offer support can help non-teaching staff navigate workplace challenges more effectively. Colleagues provide professional guidance, offer assistance, and create a collaborative work environment (Cohen, 2010). To Sias and Perry (2012), staff who perceive strong support from their colleagues are more likely to report higher job satisfaction and greater job performance. A study by Davis and Smith (2018) conducted in a similar academic setting found that colleagues' support was significantly associated with job performance among non-teaching staff. The research revealed that when colleagues offer assistance, share knowledge, and provides a supportive work environment, non-teaching staff members tend to report higher job satisfaction and increased job performance. This support may include collaboration on projects, assistance in managing workload, and mentorship by more experienced colleagues. Raeda (2004) investigated job stress, job performance, and social support among hospital nurses. The study found that perceived social support from coworkers enhanced the level of reported job performance and decreased the level of reported job stress. Additionally, according to a study by Johnson and Brown (2019), non-teaching staff members who experience strong support from their colleagues are more likely to have a sense of belonging and engagement in the workplace.

More so, a study by Clark (2017) reported that colleague support significantly correlates with job performance, as individuals who felt supported by their colleagues performed better in their roles. The level of support an employee receives from their co-workers plays a crucial role in determining their job efficiency, productivity, and overall performance (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2017). Interestingly, various aspects of workplace collaboration, teamwork, shared organizational values, and the delegation of tasks to subordinates, as well as supervision, are common practices in formal work environments that tend to motivate employees and enhance their performance. Colleagues can offer emotional support during stressful times and create a sense of community, which, in turn, positively affects job performance. The implications of colleagues' support in the context of public universities in Benue State are significant. Understanding how this support system influences job performance can help in developing strategies to foster a positive work environment and improve overall job satisfaction and performance among non-teaching staff. This knowledge is essential for Counselling and support services, as they can utilize this information to provide targeted assistance and interventions to promote better workplace outcomes.

Problem Statement

In an ideal work environment, employees would consistently perform their job duties at the highest level of efficiency and effectiveness. Job performance would be influenced by various factors, including individual capabilities, motivation, and the support system available to them. Among the many factors contributing to job performance, the support received from one's family, friends, and colleagues would ideally play a significant role in promoting positive work outcomes. These support systems would provide employees with emotional, social, and professional backing, creating an environment conducive to exceptional job performance.

However, the reality often deviates from this ideal scenario. Non-teaching staff in public universities in Benue State, like many other workplaces, face a complex interplay of challenges that may affect their job performance. These challenges may include personal and professional stressors, conflicts, and a lack of adequate support systems. The researchers have observed that employees in these roles often encounter difficulties in balancing their personal lives with the demands of their job, and these difficulties may spill over into their work performance. The researchers have also noticed that there is limited empirical evidence regarding the specific impact of family, friends, and colleagues' support on the job performance of non-teaching staff within public universities in Benue State. While it is widely acknowledged that support systems are essential for overall well-being, there is a need to understand how these support networks, both within and outside the workplace, influence job performance in this specific context. This study emerges from the need to address the observed gap in understanding the relationships between family, friends, and colleagues' support and the job performance of non-teaching staff within public universities in Benue State.

Specifically, the study sought to: (1) Ascertain the relationship between family support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. (1) Determine the relationship between friends' support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. (1) Ascertain the relationship between colleagues' support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State

Method

The research design for this study was correlation-based. The study focused on a population consisting of 2,703 non-teaching staff from three public universities in Benue State: Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University in Makurdi, Benue State University in Makurdi, and the Federal University of Health Sciences in Otuokpo. The sample size, which comprised 348 non-teaching staff from these universities, was determined using the Yamane sample size determination formula. To select this sample, proportionate stratified and accidental sampling techniques were employed.

For data collection, a structured questionnaire titled "Family Support, Friend's Support, and Colleagues' Support, and Job Performance Questionnaire" (FSFSCSJPQ) was used. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section A and Section B. Section A was further divided into three clusters (Cluster A, B, and C). Cluster A contained 10 items to measure family support, while Cluster B also had 10 items to assess friend support, and Cluster C, with 10 items, aimed to measure colleagues' support. Section B of the questionnaire included 15 items to measure the job performance of non-teaching staff. Respondents were asked to rate their responses on a scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The questionnaire was validated by experts, and its reliability was assessed using the Cronbach Alpha method, which yielded a coefficient of 0.81 for Section A and 0.84 for Section B. All 348 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents, and they were all retrieved, resulting in a 100% return rate. Data were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The decision regarding the statistical test's significance was based on P-values and Alpha values. A p-value of less than 0.05 ($P < .05$) was considered a 'significant result,' while a p-value greater than 0.05 ($P > .05$) was considered 'no significant result.'

Results and Discussion

The relationship between family support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State

Table 1: Relationship between Family Support and Job Performance of Non-Teaching Staff in Public Universities in Benue State Using PPMC

		Family Support	Job Performance
Family Support	Pearson Correlation	1	.931**
	N	348	348
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.931**	1
	N	348	348

Table 1 shows the relationship between family support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. The Table revealed a correlation value of .931. This means that there is a high positive relationship between family support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. The implication of this is that, the more support the non-teaching staff receive from their families, the better they tend to perform in their roles at the university.

The relationship between friends' support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State

Table 2: Relationship between Friends' Support and Job Performance of Non-Teaching Staff in Public Universities in Benue State Using PPMC

		Friend's Support	Job Performance
Friend's Support	Pearson Correlation	1	.911**
	N	348	348
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.911**	1
	N	348	348

Table 2 shows the relationship between friends' support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. The Table revealed a correlation value of .911. This means that there is a high positive relationship between friends' support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. The implication of this is that, the more support the non-teaching staff receive from their friends, the better they tend to perform in their roles at the university.

The relationship between colleagues' support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State

Table 3: Relationship between Colleagues' Support and Job Performance of Non-Teaching Staff in Public Universities in Benue State Using PPMC

		Colleague's Support	Job Performance
Colleague's Support	Pearson Correlation	1	.923**
	N	348	348
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.923**	1
	N	348	348

Table 3 shows the relationship between colleagues' support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. The Table revealed a correlation value of .923. This means that there is a high positive relationship between colleagues' support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. The implication of this is that, the more support the non-teaching staff receive from their colleagues, the better they tend to perform in their roles at the university.

The relationship between family support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State

Table 4: Significance of Relationship between family support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State using PPMC

		Family	Job Performance
Family	Pearson Correlation	1	.931
	P-value (Sig. (2-tailed))		.000**
	N	348	348
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.931	1
	P-value (Sig. (2-tailed))	.000**	
	N	348	348

Table 4 shows the significance of the relationship between family support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. The Table revealed a p-value = .000 which is less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$). Since $P < 0.05$, the result is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between family support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State

The significant relationship between friends support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State

Table 5: Significance of Relationship between friends support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State using PPMC

		Friends	Job Performance
Friends	Pearson Correlation	1	.911
	P-value (Sig. (2-tailed))		.000**
	N	348	348
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.911	1
	P-value (Sig. (2-tailed))	.000**	
	N	348	348

Table 5 shows the significance of the relationship between friends support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. The Table revealed a p-value = .000 which is less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$). Since $P < 0.05$, the result is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between friends' support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State

The significant relationship between colleagues support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State

Table 6: Significance of Relationship between colleagues support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State using PPMC

		Colleagues	Job Performance
Colleagues	Pearson Correlation	1	.911
	P-value (Sig. (2-tailed))		.000**
	N	348	348
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.911	1
	P-value (Sig. (2-tailed))	.000**	
	N	348	348

Table 6 shows the significance of the relationship between colleagues support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. The Table revealed a p-value = .000 which is less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$). Since $P < 0.05$, the result is significant, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant relationship between colleagues' support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State

Discussion

The first finding of the study revealed that there is a high positive relationship between family support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. This finding was supported by the test of hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between family support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. The finding implies that, the more support the non-teaching staff receive from their families, the better they tend to perform in their roles at the university. This finding corroborate with that of Johnson et al. (2018), who found that family support significantly impacted the job performance of non-teaching staff and that that non-teaching staff who received strong family support reported lower levels of work-related stress and a greater ability to focus on their job responsibilities. The finding also corroborate with the report of Sias and Perry, (2012) that family members often offer emotional encouragement, understanding, and a sense of belonging, which can boost an individual's self-esteem and motivation, ultimately improving their capacity to manage work-related stressors. Also, the report of Smith and Brown (2019) that staff members who receive financial support from their families may have a reduced financial burden, enabling them to focus more on their job without the added stress of financial difficulties which in tandem with the findings of this study. This finding also aligns with the submission of Eisenberger and Huntington, (2010) that strong familial relationships can provide emotional stability, reducing the likelihood of burnout and absenteeism. This finding as observed could be that family members often provide emotional encouragement, understanding, and a sense of belonging. This emotional support can boost an individual's self-esteem and motivation, leading to improved job performance. When employees feel emotionally supported by their families, they are more likely to approach their work with a positive mindset, which can enhance their performance. Also, the findings could be that when individuals have a reliable support system at home, they may be better equipped to handle work-related challenges and stressors, thus leading to a greater ability to focus on their job responsibilities and perform more effectively.

The second finding of the study revealed that there is a high positive relationship between friends support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. This finding was supported by the test of hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between friends' support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. The finding implies that, the more support the non-teaching staff receive from their friends, the better they tend to perform in their roles at the university. This finding aligns with that of Martinson and Garcia (2017) who reported that having a supportive network of friends who offer emotional encouragement, provide opportunities for relaxation and socialization, and offer a listening ear during challenging times was positively associated with job satisfaction and performance. The finding also corroborate with the Cohen (2010) that emotional and psychological benefits of friendship networks can contribute to an individual's resilience in the face of work-related stressors, improving overall job performance. The finding further agree with that of Robinson et al. (2019) that aff members who received support from their friends were better equipped to cope with workplace challenges and maintain job performance. More so, the finding in in agreement with Roberts and White, (2017) that, staff who had close friends in the workplace reported improved job performance and overall job satisfaction. The findings of the present study can be attributed to several possible reasons. First, social support from friends can have a significant impact on an individual's emotional well-being and motivation. When non-teaching staff receive support from their friends, it can boost their morale and help them maintain a positive attitude, which is crucial for job performance. Second, the support from friends may serve as a buffer against work-related stressors. In the face of challenges and stressful situations at the workplace, having a supportive network of friends can provide emotional and psychological benefits. Additionally, the presence of close friends in the workplace can create a more pleasant and supportive work environment. When non-teaching staff have close friends at their workplace, they are likely to feel more comfortable, satisfied, and motivated, which can positively impact their job performance.

Lastly, the finding of the study revealed that there is a high positive relationship between colleagues' support and job performance of non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. This finding was supported by the test of hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between colleagues' support and job performance among non-teaching staff of public universities in Benue State. Essentially, this finding suggests that when non-teaching staff receive more support from their friends, their performance in university roles tends to improve. This finding corroborate with that of Davis and Smith (2018) who found that colleagues' support was significantly associated with job performance among non-teaching staff, and that, when colleagues offer assistance, share knowledge, and provide a supportive work environment, non-teaching staff members tend to report higher job satisfaction and increased job performance. Also, the findings aligns with that of Raeda (2004) who found that perceived social support from coworkers enhanced the level of reported job performance and decreased the level of reported job stress. Additionally, the findings agree with Johnson and Brown (2019) that non-teaching staff members who experience strong support from their colleagues are

more likely to have a sense of belonging and engagement in the workplace. More so, the report by Clark (2017) that colleague support significantly correlates with job performance, as individuals who felt supported by their colleagues performed better in their roles is in corroboration with the findings of this study. This finding as observed could be attributed to several factors. First and foremost, colleagues' support plays a crucial role in creating a conducive and collaborative work environment. When non-teaching staff receive support from their colleagues, such as assistance, knowledge sharing, and a supportive atmosphere, they are more likely to feel valued and motivated. Second, the provision of social support by coworkers can alleviate job stress and enhance job performance. Third, a sense of belonging and engagement in the workplace, facilitated by strong support from colleagues, can have a significant impact on job performance. When employees feel a strong sense of community and belonging within their work environment, they are more likely to be motivated and dedicated to their roles, resulting in higher job performance.

Counselling Implications

The findings of this study have several Counselling implications for non-teaching staff in public universities in Benue State: The study's first finding highlights the pivotal role of family support in the job performance of non-teaching staff. Counselling services should emphasize the importance of maintaining healthy family relationships and open communication. Non-teaching staff may benefit from Counselling sessions aimed at addressing family-related stressors, resolving conflicts, and enhancing their ability to manage work-life balance. By improving family support and interpersonal skills, non-teaching staff can experience improved job performance and overall well-being. Counselors should also provide resources and guidance on how to engage families in understanding and supporting the demands of their roles in public universities.

The study's second finding underscores the significance of friends' support for non-teaching staff. Counselling can play a role in helping staff members cultivate and maintain positive friendships that contribute to their job performance. It should include workshops on relationship-building, effective communication, and conflict resolution. Counselors can guide staff in fostering healthy friendships and leveraging these relationships for mutual support in their university roles. Non-teaching staff should be encouraged to recognize the value of their friends and to seek out or provide the necessary support within these relationships.

Lastly, the study's finding highlights the importance of colleagues' support in non-teaching staff's job performance. Counselling services should focus on enhancing workplace relationships and fostering a supportive work environment. Staff should be provided with strategies to collaborate effectively, build strong work relationships, and manage any conflicts that may arise. Additionally, workshops on teamwork and communication can help non-teaching staff learn how to leverage the support of colleagues to improve their performance. Counselling should also encourage non-teaching staff to engage in professional networks and social circles within the workplace.

In summary, counselling services should consider the role of support systems in the lives of non-teaching staff in public universities. By addressing the implications of family, friends, and colleagues' support, counselors can assist non-teaching staff in developing a holistic approach to their well-being and career, ultimately leading to improved job performance and job satisfaction.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that support networks, including family, friends, and colleagues; significantly contribute to the enhanced job performance of non-teaching staff in public universities in Benue State. This highlights the importance of fostering a supportive work environment and recognizing the role of these relationships in improving performance. Ultimately, promoting and nurturing these support systems within the university setting is crucial for optimizing the job performance of non-teaching staff.

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