

Impact of Work Environment on Employee Productivity in Polytechnics in Edo State

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Abstract

The study examined the impact of work environment on employee productivity in Polytechnics in Edo State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted in the study and the two owned public polytechnics were used in the study. Academic and non-academic staff were the study population. Random sampling procedure was employed in selecting the sample of the study, with a sample size of 204. Questionnaire was the instrument used in the collection of data and data were analysed using simple percentage, correlation and regression. Results revealed that Findings showed that the level of employee productivity was moderate ($\bar{x} = 2.9$). The nature of work environment of employees in polytechnics in Edo State was moderately conducive ($\bar{x} = 2.6$). There was a significant positive relationship between work environment and employee productivity ($r = 0.417^{**}; p < 0.05$). it was also found work environment significantly influenced employee productivity ($t(200) = 0.518, R = 0.299 p < 0.05$). employers of labour should provide an enabling environment that is void of noise, well-equipped office, mutual cooperation between the employees and the employers as well as other coworkers as this could enhance the level of their productivity.

Keywords: Work environment, Employee productivity, Polytechnics, Edo State

DOI: 10.7176/EJBM/14-8-06

Publication date: April 30th 2022

Introduction

Overtime, higher institutions like polytechnics are concerned about the productivity of their employees. This is one of the determinants of assessing if the employees of the polytechnics are working towards meeting the goals and objectives of the institution. Inability of the employees to perform up-to-task could make such organisations to go into moribund. Employee productivity is defined as the value chain of an employee's contribution to the organization's goal, whether positive or negative. Other pertinent factors are taken into account when calculating employee contributions. Human resources are nearly every organization's most valuable asset. Physical assets, such as buildings, land, equipment, and vehicles, pale in comparison to these in terms of value and relevance. Employees play a vital role in enabling organisations to gain a competitive advantage over competitors around the world. Because employee productivity influences an organization's success, performing employee performance appraisals must be done correctly in order to evaluate if the organisation's goals and objectives are being accomplished. Economic growth, profitability, and social advancement are all aided by increased productivity. Employees can only get better wages/salaries, working conditions, and more job prospects if they increase their productivity

Due to strong rivalry, organisations aim to recruit others' top performers in order to get a competitive advantage in the market. As a result, it has become critical for organisations to keep their current personnel (Gitongu, Kingi & Uzel, 2016). Because organisation invest resources to bring out the best in their people, such as through training and development, trained individuals are an asset to the institution and no organisation wants to transfer their assets to someone else. Improving these employees' performance is advantageous not only to the organization, but also to the employees themselves. Because good performance can theoretically lead to higher levels of employee career advancement (Siahaan et al., 2016). One of the factors that could influence employee performance is work environment.

Work environment refers to those processes, systems, structures, tools or conditions in the workplace that impact favorably or unfavorably on employee productivity. The working environment also includes policies, rules, culture, resources, working relationships, work location, internal and external environmental factors, all of which influence employee's productivity. Study has revealed that an uncomfortable work environment such as poor interpersonal relationship, poor physical facilities among others could inhibit the productivity of employees which could in turn make them not to meet the goals of the organization (Thomas, 2018). Workplace environment could have either positive or negative influence on record management depending upon the nature

of working environment. Employees would perform better if they are provided good environment like comfortable office with enough space, computers, Internet among others. The type of workplace environment in which employees operate can also determine whether or not the organisation will excel (Agada and Tofi, 2020).

Physical working environment might determine whether or not employees are a good fit for the workplace. An ergonomic workplace is another term for a physical work environment. Research into the workplace environment is required in order to provide an ergonomic workplace for all employees. Employees will be less likely to suffer from nerve injuries if they have this ergonomic physical workplace at work. Organizations must ensure that the physical environment is favorable to organizational goals, promoting interaction and privacy, formality and informality, functionality, and cross-disciplinarity, in order to attain high levels of staff productivity (Salau, Worlu, Osibanjo & Ogueyungbo, 2020). Workload is the amount of work that an individual carries out from day to day. High workload can lead to stress among staff of polytechnics, if not well managed which could inhibit their productivity. Work load can result from organization of work such as lack of autonomy and control over work, shift work, wage scales and routine as well as repetitive work. Stress associated with work organization has been shown to contribute to cardiovascular disease, muscular skeletal problems and other conditions which could in turn affect employee's productivity (Daniel, Oyekunle, Olusegun, Omotosho & Olusola, 2020). Relationship with fellow co-worker is another component of work environment.

Relation with coworkers includes relation with employees who are at the same hierarchical level and have no authority over one another. If there is a mutual relationship among employees, it could enhance their sense of belonging which could also heighten their level of productivity (Salau, Worlu, Osibanjo, Oludayo & Falola, 2018). Incentive and recognition which is also one of the components of work environment is very germane for employees to be productive. When an organization gives its employees good incentive and also well recognized every third quarter of every year, it would make such employees to give their best to the organisation, hence enhance their productivity and organisation goals and objectives would be met.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, employers of labour are concerned about meeting the goals and objectives of their organisations. This is done by employing employees who have the experience and technical know-how on how to meet these goals and objectives. Unfortunately, most of these employers of labour sometimes do not provide enabling environment for their employees as this could inhibit their productivity and consequently spell doom on the organisation. However, the work environment in most of the higher institutions most especially polytechnics in developing country like Nigeria is abysmal and nothing has been done to provide solution to it. Most of the polytechnics have: poor incentive, recognition and remuneration, high work load, decrepit educational facilities and equipment, poorly planned lecture rooms, improper furniture, overcrowded and poorly designed lecture rooms, poor lighting, insufficient fire safety measures, and uncondusive offices among others. If employees (academic and non-academic staff) work in such environment they are more likely to be unproductive. Few studies have been conducted on the impact of work environment on employee productivity in polytechnics, but no study have been conducted on work environment on employee productivity in polytechnics in Edo State. Hence, this is the gap the study intended to fill to address the gap in the literature.

Objective of the study

The main objective of this study was to examine the impact of work environment on employees productivity in Polytechnics in Edo State. The specific objectives were to;

- i. find out the level of productivity of employees in Polytechnics in Edo State;
- ii. examine the nature of work environment in Polytechnics in Edo State;
- iii. examine the significant relationship between work environment and employee productivity in Polytechnics in Edo State;
- iv. examine the relative influence of work environment and employee productivity in Polytechnics in Edo State

Research questions

1. What is the level of productivity of employees in Polytechnics in Edo State?
2. What is the nature of work environment in Polytechnics in Edo State?

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between work environment and employee productivity in Polytechnics in Edo State.

H₀₂: Work environment does not significantly influence employee productivity in Polytechnics in Edo State.

Review of Related Literature

Shmailan (2016) affirmed that employee performance is an action what employees do in carrying out the work done by the organisation. Employee productivity is one of the most important aspects in determining the success of an organisation. In a study conducted by Hermina and Yosepha (2019) on the employee performance among employees in Trakindo Utama in Indonesia using survey design and sampling technique is census method. The population comprised 50 employees and questionnaire was the instrument used in the collection of data. Results revealed that the level of employee performance was average. Olasanmi, Olajide and Ojubanire (2021) did a study on employee productivity in manufacturing firms in southwestern Nigeria using the descriptive survey design and simple random sampling technique. Questionnaire was the instrument used in the collection of data and data was analysed using the descriptive and inferential statistics. Result showed that the level of productivity of employees was average. The author concluded that seminars, action-learning programs, on-the-job training, and other methods, according to the author, can be used to help employees gain critical skills for greater productivity as well as to boost employee morale while taking performance evaluation extremely seriously. Maduka and Okafor (2014) also did a study on employee productivity in some Nigerian companies in Eastern Nigeria and found that the level of employee productivity was low.

The work environment means everything that is part of the employee's involvement with the work itself, such as relationships with colleagues and superiors, organizational culture, space for self-development, and so on (Poh, 2013). Physical and nonphysical work environments are the two categories of work environments. All physical circumstances around the workplace that affect employees directly or indirectly are referred to as the physical work environment. The temperature of the air in the workplace, the size of the work area, noise, density, and distress are all examples of physical elements. The non-physical work environment, on the other hand, is more intangible but palpable. This non-physical component has to do with having a strong working relationship with one's boss or with one's coworkers and subordinates.

Ali (2013) conducted a study on the impact of work environment on employee productivity and found that the productivity of employees will increase by keeping working conditions and working environment up to certain threshold level and subsequently will decrease if work load will increase from above certain threshold level. Awan (2015) did a study on the impact of work environment on employee productivity among bankers using the descriptive survey and purposive sampling. Questionnaire was the instrument used in the collection of data and data were analysed in descriptive and inferential statistics. Result revealed that components of work environment (incentives and recognition plans, adequate work load at work place) had positive impact on employee productivity. It was recommended that organizations should make a frantic effort to develop strategies which are useful in developing a conducive work environment at the workplace. In another similar study conducted by Fithri, Mayasari, Hasan & Wirdianto (2019) did a study on the impact of work environment on employee productivity in Padang City, Indonesia using survey design and proportionate stratified sampling method. Questionnaire was used in the data collection and result showed that there was a significant relationship between work environment and employee productivity. The authors recommended that management of organisation should provide enabling environment for its employees for effective performance.

Setiyantoa and Natalia (2016) examined the impact of work environment on employee productivity in shipyard manufacturing company in Indonesia using survey design and simple random sampling technique. The sample size comprised 315 employees and the instrument that was used in the collection of data was the questionnaire. Result showed that components of work environment (physical and non-physical) positively and significantly impacted employees' productivity at 63.4%. It was recommended that organizations should develop strategies which are useful in developing a conducive working environment at the workplace. Kamanja (2020) did a study on influence of work environment on employee productivity among government officials in Meru, Kenya adopting the descriptive survey and simple random sampling. Result revealed that psychological work environment had a positive significant relationship with employee productivity. The study recommends that devolved central government ministries improve their physical and social work environment as a priority.

Hafeez, Yingjun, Hafeez, Mansoor, & Rehman (2019) did a study on impact of work environment on employee productivity: mediating role of employee health using survey design and purposive sampling. The sample size comprise 250 employees and questionnaire was the instrument used in the collection of data and data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Result revealed that there was significant impact of work environment on employee productivity. It is recommended that organisations must maintain a better environment in order to enhance employee productivity. Prathayini, Ganga, Maryselesteena (2020) did a study on work environment on employee productivity in India using survey design and purposive sampling. The instrument used in the collection of data was the questionnaire and result revealed that there was significant impact of work environment on employee productivity. It was recommended that organization should make the work environment more conducive for employees by making sure the employees are devoid from any external threat.

Duru and Shimawua (2017) examined the effect of work environment on employee productivity among

employees in transport services in Edo State adopting the survey design and purposive sampling technique. Questionnaire was used in the collection of data and data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Result showed that work environment had significant influence on employee productivity. It was recommended that organization should ensure that the office of its workers is always clean, tidying up and properly arranged for easy movement and comfortable to the workers and customers. Oyerinde and Mayowa-Adebara (2019) did a study on the influence of work environment on employee effectiveness in polytechnics libraries in South-west Nigeria adopting survey research design and simple random sampling technique. The instrument used in the collection of data was the questionnaire and data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Result revealed that there was significant influence of components of work environment on employee effectiveness. It was recommended that employers of labour should ensure that work environment is conducive so as to gain or earn employees' commitment and therefore boost productivity. For work environment to be conducive, employers of labour should ensure frequent training and development programme, appreciate and empower employees, among other factors.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study and the two polytechnics were selected based on distribution of ownership of polytechnics in Edo State: one federal and one state owned. The two polytechnics were: Auchu Polytechnic, Auchu and Edo State Polytechnic, Usen. The population of the study comprised both academic and non-academic staff in these two polytechnics. Random sampling procedure was employed to choose 80 academic and 124 non-academic staff from the two polytechnics given a total of 204 employees. The instrument that was used in the collection of data was the questionnaire. The questionnaire was adapted from Fithri Mayasari Hasan & Wirdianto (2019) and Buuri (2020). Data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science version 21 (SPSS) for the analysis to get frequency and percentages, correlation and regression.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Demographic information of respondents

Varibales	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	116	56.9
Female	88	43.1
Educational qualification		
OND	18	8.8
HND	38	18.6
B.Sc	79	38.7
Masters'	53	25.9
Ph.D	9	4.4
Others	7	3.4
Years of service		
0-5	23	11.3
6-11	64	31.4
12-17	82	40.2
18 -23	28	13.7
24 years and above	7	3.4

Table 1 showed that 56.9% were male and the rest 43.1% were female. This means that male participated more in the study than the female. Also, 8.8% had ND as their highest educational qualification, 18.6% had HND, 38.7% had B.Sc, 25.9% had masters while 4.4% had Ph.D and the rest 3.4% had other qualifications. 11.3% had been in service between 0-5 years, 31.4% had been in service between 6-11 years, 40.2% between 12-17years, 13.7% between 18-23 years and the rest 3.4% had been in service between 24 years and above. This means that respondents whose years in between 12-17 years participated more in the study.

Research questions

Research question 1: What is the level of productivity of employees in Polytechnics in Edo State?

Table 2: Level of productivity of employee

s/n	Employee productivity	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}
1	My quality of work improves overtime	79 (38.7%)	111 (54.4%)	14 (6.9%)	-	3.4
2	I am able to deliver within the set deadlines	62 (30.4%)	93 (45.6%)	40 (19.6%)	9 (4.4%)	3.5
3	I have steadily increased my personal output	53 (25.9%)	87 (42.6%)	47 (23.0%)	17 (8.3%)	2.9
4	I am able to deliver under less than perfect conditions	71 (34.8%)	96 (47.1%)	29 (14.2%)	8 (3.9%)	3.0
5	Overtime I have been able to reduce service cycle time	58 (28.4%)	106 (51.9%)	31 (15.25)	9 (4.4%)	3.2
6	I provide suggestions to enhance other coworkers' service delivery	55 (27.0%)	83 (40.7%)	39 (19.1%)	27 (13.2%)	2.2
7	I am eager to learn on ways of making myself more productive	49 (24.0%)	112 (54.9%)	26 (12.7%)	17 (8.3%)	2.5
8	I am able to generate more than an hour worth of productivity of each hour	62 (30.4%)	89 (43.6%)	42 (20.6%)	11 (5.4%)	2.4

Average mean score: 2.9

0.0-1.4=low, 1.6-2.4 =moderate, 2.5-3.0, 3.1-3.4 = high; 3.5-4.0=very high

Table 2 revealed the level of productivity of employees in Polytechnics in Edo State. The response format used was: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. But for the purpose of reporting, strongly agree and agree were merged to become agree (A) while, disagree and strongly disagree were to become disagree (D). It showed that 190 (93.1%) claimed that their quality of work improves overtime while 14 (6.9%) disagreed. 115 (76.0%) claimed that they were able to deliver within the set deadlines while 49 (24.0%) disagreed. Also, 140 (68.5%) claimed that they have steadily increased their personal output while 64 (31.3%) disagreed. 167 (81.9%) claimed that they were able to deliver under less than perfect conditions while 37 (18.1%) disagreed. 164 (80.3%) claimed that overtime they have been able to reduce service cycle time while (40.9%) disagreed. 138 (67.7%) claimed that they provide suggestions to enhance other coworkers' service delivery while 66 (32.3%) disagreed. Also, 161 (78.9%) claimed that they were eager to learn on ways of making themselves more productive while 43 (21.0%) disagreed. 115(74%) claimed that they were able to generate more than an hour worth of productivity of each hour while 53 (26.0%) disagreed.

With an average mean of 3.1, it could be inferred that the level of employees' productivity in Polytechnics in Edo State is moderate. This means that employees are not well motivated as this is inhibiting the productivity of employees. The finding supports that of Hermina and Yosepha (2019) who did a study on employee performance among employees in Trakindo Utama in Indonesia and found that the level of employee performance was average. The finding is consistent with that of Olasanmi, Olajide and Ojubanire (2021) who did a study on employee productivity in manufacturing firms in southwestern Nigeria using the descriptive survey design and simple random sampling technique and found that the level of productivity of employees was average. The author concluded that seminars, action-learning programs, on-the-job training, and other methods, according to the author, can be used to help employees gain critical skills for greater productivity as well as to boost employee morale while taking performance evaluation extremely seriously.

Research question 2: What is the nature of work environment in Polytechnics in Edo State?

Table 3: Nature of work environment in Polytechnics in Edo State

s/n		SA	A	D	SD	\bar{x}
Physical work environment						
1	Offices and workplace well designed	47 (23.0%)	84 (41.2%)	64 (31.4%)	9 (4.4%)	2.6
2	I feel safe working at my workplace	37 (18.1%)	77 (37.7%)	63 (30.9%)	27 (13.2%)	2.5
3	My workplace is located in an area where I feel comfortable	22 (10.8%)	105 (51.5%)	66 (32.4%)	11 (5.4%)	3.2
4	I am proud to work for this institution because of the pleasant working conditions	35 (17.2%)	88 (43.1%)	36 (17.6%)	35 (17.2%)	2.5
5	Safety guarantee against external threats is assured in this institution	40 (19.6%)	61 (29.9%)	57 (27.9%)	46 (22.5%)	2.4
Relationship between Employee						
6	There is good communication with fellow coworkers	62 (30.4%)	109 (53.4%)	20 (9.8%)	13 (6.4%)	3.0
7	There is proximity / familiarity with fellow coworkers	39 (19.1%)	84 (41.2%)	51 (25.0%)	30 (14.7%)	2.7
8	There is good coordination in each activity with fellow coworkers	42 (20.6%)	70 (34.3%)	49 (24.0%)	43 (21.1%)	2.5
Work load						
9	The work load in this institution is too much	63 (30.9%)	65 (31.9%)	57 (27.9%)	19 (9.3%)	2.6
10	I find it difficult to finish my work in the office each day	40 (19.6%)	70 (34.3%)	48 (23.5%)	40 (19.6%)	2.6
11	I find it difficult to manage work with other social activities	40 (19.6%)	57 (27.9%)	68 (33.3%)	39 (19.1%)	2.5

Average mean score: 2.6

0.0-1.5=fairly uncondusive, 1.6-2.4 =moderately condusive, 2.5-3.0, 3.1-3.4 = condusive; 3.5-4.0=very condusive

Table 3 revealed the nature of work environment in Polytechnics in Edo State. The response format used was: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. But for the purpose of reporting, strongly agree and agree were merged to become agree (A) while, disagree and strongly disagree were to become disagree (D). It is revealed that 131 (64.2%) claimed that offices and workplace were well designed while 73 (35.8%) disagreed. 114 (55.8%) claimed that their offices and workplace were well designed while 90 (44.1%) disagreed. Also, 127 (62.3%) claimed that their workplace is located in an area where they feel comfortable while 77 (37.8%) disagreed. 123 (60.3%) claimed that they were proud to work for the institutions because of the pleasant working conditions while 35 (34.8%) disagreed. 101 (49.5%) claimed that safety guarantee against external threats is assured in their institution while 103 (50.4%) disagreed. Furthermore, 171 (83.8%) claimed that there was good communication with fellow coworkers while 33 (16.2%) disagreed. 123 (60.3%) claimed that there is proximity / familiarity with fellow coworkers while 81 (39.7%) disagreed. 112 (54.9%) claimed that there was good coordination in each activity with fellow co-workers while 92 (45.1%) disagreed. Also, 128 (62.8%) claimed the work load in the institutions is too much while 76 (37.2%) disagreed. 110 (53.9%) claimed that they find it difficult to finish their work in the office each day while 88 (43.1%) disagreed. Lastly, 97 (47.5%) claimed that they find it difficult to manage work with other social activities while 107 (52.4%) disagreed.

With an average mean of 2.6, it could be inferred that the nature of work environment of employees in Polytechnics in Edo State is moderately condusive. This means that the location of the institution and offices are not condusive enough as well as excessive work load on both the academic and non-academic staff inhibited their productivity. The finding lends credence with that of Ali (2013) who conducted a study on the impact of work environment on employee productivity and found that the productivity of employees will increase by keeping working conditions and working environment up to certain threshold level and subsequently will decrease if work load will increase from above certain threshold level. The finding also corroborates that of Awan (2015) who did a study on the impact of work environment on employee productivity among bankers using the descriptive survey and purposive sampling and revealed that components of work environment (incentives and recognition plans, adequate work load at work place) had positive impact on employee productivity.

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between work environment and employee productivity in Polytechnics in Edo State.

Table 4: Relationship between work environment and employee productivity

Variable	Mean	SD	N	Df	R	Sig	Remark
Work environment	12.06	2.42	204	202	0.417**	0.000	Sig.
Employee productivity	13.19	3.37					

*significant at 0.05

Table 4 presents the relationship between work environment and employee productivity in Polytechnics in Edo State. Pearson's product moment correlation was used and the results indicated that there is significant positive correlation between work environment and employee productivity ($r = 0.417^{**}$; $p < 0.05$). This means that when employees work in a conducive work environment, they tend to be more productive. The finding is in line with that of Fithri, Mayasari, Hasan & Wirdianto (2019) who did a study on the impact of work environment on employee productivity in Padang City, Indonesia using survey design and proportionate stratified sampling method and revealed that there was a significant relationship between work environment and employee productivity. It was recommended that management of organisation should provide enabling environment for its employees for effective performance.

H₀₂: Work environment does not significantly influence employee productivity in Polytechnics in Edo State.

Table 5: Influence of work environment on employee productivity in Polytechnics in Edo State

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.612	1.567		22.799	.175
1 Physical environment	.166	.043	.233	3.898	.005
Relationship between employees	.731	.107	.250	6.852	.000
Work load	.281	.021	.246	4.205	.014

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.518 ^a	0.299	0.293	6.72750

A N O V A

Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Regression	7394.620	3	2464.873	41.266	.000 ^b	Sig.
Residual	11946.455	200	59.732			
Total	19341.075	203				

Table 5 reveals that work environment significantly influenced employee productivity ($t(200) = 0.518$, $R = 0.299$ $p < 0.05$). Based on the findings, the null H₀₂ was rejected. The table further showed that relationship between employees ($\beta = 0.250$, $p < 0.05$), physical relationship ($\beta = -0.233$, $p < 0.05$) and work load ($\beta = 0.246$, $p < 0.05$) had a significant linear influence and contributes to employee productivity in polytechnic in Edo State. It can be inferred as well that when there is an increase in the relationship among employees, employee productivity tends to increase. Also, when there is serene environment, provision of well ventilated office, and good classroom for effective teaching etc it tends to enhance employee productivity. Also, when the work load of employee is minimal, it tends to enhance their productivity.

The finding validates that of Prathayini, Ganga, Maryselesteena (2020) who did a study on work environment on employee productivity in India using survey design and purposive sampling and found that there was significant impact of work environment on employee productivity. It was affirmed that organization should make the work environment more conducive for employees by making sure the employees are devoid from any external threat. The finding also supports that of Hafeez, Yingjun, Hafeez, Mansoor, & Rehman (2019) who conducted a study on impact of work environment on employee productivity: mediating role of employee health using survey design and purposive sampling and found that there was significant impact of work environment on employee productivity. It was affirmed that organisations must maintain a better environment in order to enhance employee productivity.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It could be concluded the nature of work environment goes a long way in determining the level of productivity of employees. A work environment that is void of tension and unfriendly could inhibit the performance level of employees most especially among academic staff who are known for training students who are the leaders of tomorrow. When the performance of the academic staff in polytechnic is low, then, the graduates they produce would be half-baked and the effect would be on the society. Based on the findings of the study, the researchers

recommend that employers of labour should provide an enabling environment that is void of noise, well-equipped office, mutual cooperation between the employees and the employers as well as other coworkers as this could enhance the level of their productivity. Also, employees should be well remunerated and paid as and when due as this could also make them to give their best in making sure that the goals and objectives of the polytechnics are met. The management of polytechnics should endeavour to implement a good motivational package that will encourage academic staff dedication and performance. The government should devote sufficient resources to education, at least up to the UNESCO-recommended level of 26%. Compensation packages for tertiary institution instructors should be reasonable, impartial, and competitive, and should be well managed by the institution management. The management of polytechnics should hold workshops or seminars with work-related facilities on a regular basis to keep their employees' skills, knowledge, abilities, and competences up to date.

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