International Journal of Strategic Leadership, Education and Social Sciences (IJSLESS)
Volume-2/Issue-1/January-March, 2026.
Print ISSN: 3115-4417; E-ISSN: 3115-4409.

Original Research Article

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND STAFF JOB PERFORMANCE IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE

Jairus Ochege UKO
Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Nigeria
jairusuko24@gmail.com

Bartholomew IHEBOM
Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Rivers State University, Nigeria
ihebombartholomew@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: This study investigated the relationship between human resource management (HRM) practices and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria. A correlational research design was adopted to determine the extent to which HRM practices such as recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal, compensation, and employee relations influence staff performance. The population of the study comprised 5,415 respondents, including principal officers, academic staff, and non-teaching staff across four public tertiary institutions in Rivers State. A sample of 1,083 respondents, representing 20 percent of the population, was selected using a simple random sampling technique. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire divided into two sections: Human Resource Management Questionnaire (HRMQ) and Staff Job Performance Questionnaire (SJPQ), based on a four-point Likert scale. The instrument was validated by experts in Measurement and Evaluation, and a reliability coefficient of .878 was obtained using Cronbach's alpha, indicating high internal consistency. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at a .05 level of significance. The findings revealed a significant relationship between HRM practices and staff job performance. The study concluded that effective HRM practices enhance productivity, commitment, and overall institutional effectiveness.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, Practices, Recruitment, Mentoring, In-Service Training, Staff, Job Performance, Tertiary Institutions, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Reference to this paper should be made as follows:

Uko, J. O., & Ihebom, B. (2026). Human resource management practices and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. *International Journal of Strategic Leadership, Education and Social Sciences, 2*(1), 114-132. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18908717.

Copyright © 2026 IJSLESS

INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Management (HRM) practices are central to the effective functioning of tertiary institutions, particularly in developing contexts where institutional performance is closely tied to the quality of human capital. Universities, polytechnics and colleges of education rely heavily on the competence, motivation and productivity of their academic and non-academic staff to achieve their mandates of teaching, research and community service. In contemporary higher education systems, HRM practices like recruitment, mentoring and in-service training are increasingly recognized as strategic tools for enhancing staff job performance and institutional sustainability (Armstrong, 2020; Dessler, 2020). Within the Nigerian higher education context,

including institutions in Rivers State, the alignment of HRM practices with performance expectations remains a critical concern.

HRM refers to a systematic approach to acquiring, developing, motivating, and retaining employees to achieve organizational goals. According to Armstrong (2020), HRM encompasses policies and practices designed to ensure that organizations attract and retain a competent workforce capable of delivering high performance. Similarly, Dessler (2020) emphasized that effective HRM integrates recruitment, training, appraisal, and compensation systems to enhance employee productivity. In tertiary institutions, HRM practices go beyond administrative routines; they shape the intellectual climate, organizational culture, and overall institutional effectiveness.

Recruitment is a foundational HRM practice that determines the quality of personnel entering an institution. Transparent and merit-based recruitment enhances the likelihood of attracting qualified and competent staff capable of contributing meaningfully to teaching effectiveness and research productivity (Armstrong, 2020). Research indicates that effective recruitment practices are positively associated with employee performance and organizational outcomes (Noe et al., 2021). Conversely, poorly managed recruitment processes may result in skill mismatches, low morale and reduced performance. In the context of Rivers State, where tertiary institutions operate within competitive and resource-constrained environments, strengthening recruitment systems is crucial for sustaining academic standards and improving staff effectiveness.

Mentoring represents another vital HRM practice in tertiary institutions. It involves a developmental relationship in which experienced staff provides guidance, psychosocial support, and professional knowledge transfer to less experienced colleagues. According to Noe et al. (2021), mentoring enhances career development, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. In academic settings, mentoring contributes to improved teaching strategies, increased research output, and enhanced professional identity. Through structured mentoring programs, tertiary institutions can foster collaboration, promote knowledge sharing, and support early-career academics, thereby improving job performance and institutional stability.

In-service training, commonly referred to as continuous professional development, is essential for maintaining staff competence in rapidly evolving educational environments. Tertiary institutions must continuously update staff skills to align with emerging pedagogical innovations, digital technologies, and global research standards. Human Capital Theory, as advanced by Becker (1993), posited that investments in education and training enhance employees' knowledge and productivity. Empirical studies further demonstrate that training and development initiatives significantly influence employee performance and organizational effectiveness (Noe et al., 2021). In the higher education sector, structured in-service training programs enhance instructional delivery, research competence, and administrative efficiency.

Staff job performance in tertiary institutions encompasses multiple dimensions, including teaching quality, research productivity, administrative efficiency, and community engagement. Campbell and Wiernik (2015) conceptualized job performance as behaviors and outcomes that contribute to organizational goals. In academic institutions, performance indicators may include publication output, student evaluation results, grant acquisition, and effective service delivery. The effectiveness of HRM practices directly influences these performance dimensions by shaping employees' competence, motivation, and commitment.

In Rivers State, tertiary institutions play a strategic role in regional development by producing skilled graduates and generating knowledge to support socio-economic growth. However, challenges such as limited funding, infrastructural deficits, and policy inconsistencies

may constrain staff productivity. Strengthening HRM practices particularly recruitment, mentoring and in-service training offers a viable pathway for enhancing staff job performance and institutional sustainability (Ololube & Wome, 2025). Therefore, examining the relationship between HRM practices and staff job performance is essential for evidence-based decision-making and policy reforms in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

Every organization, school, and institutions are established for the purpose of accomplishing a predetermine specific goals and objectives, however, the rapid technological change and advancement in tertiary institutions all over the world call for concern among administrators in tertiary institutions hence the need to have a well-equipped human resource department, this means the absence of functional human resource management in tertiary institutions to some extent may affect the job performance of staff in tertiary institution in Rivers State. It is obvious and clear in our society all over the world that many tertiary institutions are still struggling to achieve their predetermined goal and objectives not because they do not have a human resource department but because the majority of the school administrators and the school leaders applied wrong human resource practices or are bereft of the right human resources management skills to adopt to change from human resources operation to human resource practices and the needs to have concrete human resource management practices, needs to recruit talented staff, needs to motivate and train staff for better performance needs to give staff feedback on their performance and to ensure health and safety of staff while working. Many researchers carried out research on a similar topic, but they declined in the achievement of institutional and educational objectives are alarming, this is due to the failure in staff job performance in tertiary institutions hence the need to embark on this study. The question, therefore, is what human resources management strategies to adopt to ensure effective staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State? This study, therefore, focuses its investigation on three major variables human resource management and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the influence of human resource management strategies and staff job performance in Tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The study sought to:

- Explore the extent of relationship between recruitment and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
- Examine the extent of relationship between mentoring and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
- Ascertain the extent of relationship between in-service training and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The study attempts to find satisfactory answers to the three research questions as formulated to guild the direction of the study:

- What is the extent of relationship between recruitment and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?
- What is the extent of relationship between mentoring and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?
- What is the extent of relationship between in-service training and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

Three hypotheses further guided the study:

- There is no significant relationship between recruitment and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
- There is no significant relationship between mentoring and staff Job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.
- There is no significant relationship between in-service training and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Human Relation Theory Elton Mayo (1930)

One of the proponents of human relation theory is Elton Mayo (1930). According Mayo (1930) in Ololube (2019), human relation theory state that employee performance depends on effective management which involved leading employee but not manipulating robots, therefore, employees' performance was not necessarily achieved by positive financial incentives or improved physical working conditions but social and psychological factors like opportunity for training and re-training, employees' recognition in the organization, through effective planning and leadership style resulted in employees' job performance. The theory came into existence as a reaction to classical organizational analysis and a reaction to the dehumanizing aspects of scientific management. Human resource theory posits that all workers are reservoirs of untapped resources which they come into an organization with, and that the management of an organization or institution can tap into those varieties of resources if the best strategies are applied by the human resources manager.

Mayo (1930) in Ololube (2019) argued that proper management of people or the staff in an organization could enhance productivity. He emphasized that the basic management problem was to exterminate conflict and keep every employee on high moral and productivity through effective human resources strategy. Mayo believed that good human relations would create a healthy institutional climate, better job performance and greater operational efficiency. The theory emphasized that managers should not be focused on controlling employees or force them to accept whatever decisions made which are the hallmarks of scientific management instead, the primary task of management should be the creation of a working environment through effective strategies that fosters employee creativity and risk taking to maximize and tap into the resources employees bring to the job. As such, communication in this perspective must be constant and bi-directional and participation in decision making must include both management and workers. Human relation theory recognized the untapped potential of most organizational members and

advocated participation as a means of achieving direct improvement in individual and organizational performance.

Human Relation Theory is of significance importance to this study because it emphasized on the ways of influencing staff or employee for increase in productivity, staff satisfaction in workplace as well as the encouragement of informal organization in the workplace but not necessarily seeing or treated staff as an economic animal who only react to financial incentives but emphasized on natural solidarity to follow workers as a way of increasing job performance as against the scientific principle. The study seeks to explore the strategies adopted by human resources to influence the employee for job performance and the relationship that exist between this human resource strategies and employees' job performance for the attainment of institutional goals and objectives.

Human resources strategies models examine the link between organization strategy and human resources strategy. Human resource strategies as earlier discussed refers to the methods adopted by human resources in making decisions regarding policies and practice used by management to design work and select, train, develop, appraise, motivate, and control workers (Armstrong, 2006; Braton, 2011). The human Resources model in every organization shows how human resources strategy is formulated and what impact is of human resources on internal processes and financial outcomes of the organization.

To value the significance of the 'typologies', it is dear to recall the work of Max Weber. Max Weber the sociologist constructed his theory using abstractions he called 'ideal exists in the real types' such as 'bureaucracy'. Weber cautioned, however, that these ideal types never actually exist in the real world; they are simply useful narratives to aid us to understand the more complex and chaotic realities found in work organizations. The same is true of human resources typologies they are ideas that do not necessarily exist in places of work, but they help in understanding the nature of human resources strategies.

This first model which is the control-based model emphasized the way in which management attempts to influence, monitor, and control employees in their roles to ensure high job performance (Armstrong, 2006). This is approach is used in modeling diverse types of human resources strategy that is based on the nature of workplace control and more specifically on managerial behaviour to influence, direct, and monitor employee role performance. This model of human resources strategies is methods, instruments, and techniques that are used to control all aspects of work to achieve a high level of labour productivity and a corresponding level of profitability (Armstrong, 2006).

This model is centered on monitoring and controlling employee behaviour towards achieving organizational set goals and objectives by ensuring high-level employees' Job performance. The starting point for this framework is Marx's analysis of the capitalist labour process and what he referred to as the 'transformation of labour power into labour. Richard (1979) identified successive dominant modes of control that reflect changing competitive conditions and worker resistance. However, the control strategy had the following characteristics:

- Narrowly defined jobs
- Low employee participation
- Low skill requirements
- Intense supervision and control
- Limited training

- Low wages and
- Low benefits.

The second model which is the resource-based model emphasized on the nature of the relationship that exist between the employer and employee within and outside the institution. This comprises how the quality of the attitudes and the behaviour that exist between the superior and the subordinate in the organization to achieve high performance.

This second approach to developing clear typologies of human resources strategy is based on the nature of the reward effort and exchange, and more specifically, the degree to which managers view their human resources as an asset as opposed to a variable cost (Bratton, 2011). It is important to recognize that an institution may not need a distinctively endowed workforce to establish a distinctive competency if it has managerial capabilities through a unique effective human resources strategy that no competitor possesses. This observation may explain why an organization adopts one of the control-based human resources strategies.

A third approach called an integrative model combines resource-based and control-based typologies. This is the third possible human relation model which was called the Value Matrix Approach (also known as the integrative model), the model states that an organization can implement four possible human resource strategies such as commitment, performance, compliance, and partnership at the same time, tied to form distinct job groups in the same organization representing different types of workers (strategic, core, support, or collaborative) as cited in Wright (2005)

In addition, workplaces determine employee consent through cultural strategies which include the popular notion of the 'learning organization' through interaction (Bratton, 2011). This theory is very relevant to this study because it emphasized the need for and importance of regular employees training and development for effective job performance, employee recognition, and participation in decision-making in an institution, rewards of employees with outstanding contributions, and the creation of enabling working environment through an effective leadership style that can boost the morale of the employees for job performance and because employees are seen as individuals with differing psychological motivations, distinct and dynamic behaviour affecting performances, therefore, the primary task of management should be the creation of a working environment through effective strategies that foster employee creativity and risk-taking to maximize and tap into the resources employees bring to the job to achieve institutional goals and objectives.

The significance of this theory to this study cannot be overstated because the theory is of the view that employee productivity and motivation can be increased through positive social bonds in the workplace and acknowledgment, appreciation, and recognition of the worker as a unique individual and understanding of needs and expectations of employees, providing comfortable work conditions, resolving conflicts between management as well as co-workers creates satisfied and motivated employees that result in an improvement in their overall productivity and performance.

CONCEPTUALIZATION

Human Resource Recruitment and staff Job Performance in Tertiary Institutions

The success of every tertiary institution and any other organization depends on the effort of the staff within the institution, therefore, paying attention to the method of recruitment is important,

whether from outside or within the institution. This is to combat the challenges associated with enhancing institutional performance, productivity, and service delivery in tertiary institutions requires a strong emphasis on employee performance. Sustainable improvement can only be achieved by recruiting and retaining the right individuals for appropriate positions. The overall quality of institutional performance is largely dependent on the competence and effectiveness of its workforce, which in turn is shaped by sound recruitment policies and practices.

According to Casio (2002), recruitment and selection begin with a clearly defined statement of institutional objectives. These objectives guide the identification of required qualifications and attributes. Such requirements typically include educational qualifications and intellectual capacity, specialized skills that distinguish candidates, communication competence and other professional abilities, as well as relevant experience demonstrated through prior achievements in former institutions. Additional considerations may include personal characteristics and other abilities relevant to the role. Factors such as age, physical and mental fitness, and compliance with recommended age limits may also be taken into account during the hiring process.

To Ololube and Wome (2025), recruitment and selection represent two distinct but interconnected phases of the employment process. Recruitment involves identifying vacant positions, searching for potential candidates, and encouraging them to apply. Its primary objective is to generate a broad pool of qualified applicants from which the best candidates can be selected. Selection, on the other hand, entails a systematic screening process designed to identify and appoint the most suitable individuals for specific roles. While recruitment focuses on attracting talent, selection concentrates on choosing the right candidate to fill each vacancy.

Typically, the recruitment process is immediately followed by the selection phase, during which interviews are conducted, decisions are made by authorized personnel, and formal appointments are issued (Ololube, 2019). Before advertising positions, institutions must clearly establish their objectives and define the roles to be filled through comprehensive job descriptions and job specifications, which serve as benchmarks throughout the selection process.

This process consists of series of decision of varying capacities and complexities and the quality of this decisions depend on the quality of how strategic human resources manager is and the quality of information available to the human resources manager to take decision. While recruitment is selection of the required number of people to be screen for a job based on their knowledge, skills, and experience as a way of attempting to predict their future performance in the organization or institution, selection is the process of assessing the candidate by various means making a choice and finally and offer of employment.

According to Ololube (2019), recruitment and selection process in tertiary institution is the responsibility of both the school administrators and the government and due to the sensitivity nature of this process as a determinate factor to the success or failure of the institution, school administrators and government needs to be strategic and careful in the activities, therefore, different factors are considered in the recruitment and selection process such as; knowledges, skills and experience as regard to educational, occupational and personal experience, the mental capabilities, career motivation and personal characteristics, whether a candidate is likely to contribute to the attainment of institutional goals and objectives after which the successful candidate is given employment

Human Resource Staff Mentoring and job Performance in Tertiary Institution

Mentoring is a key element of staff development in educational institutions, especially in the tertiary institutions system. New and younger staff are encouraged to establish collaborative relationships with older and more experienced staff who are seen as mentors with the aim of gaining the right orientation in the profession. Staff mentoring in tertiary institutions is basically aimed at the development to increase the quality of human capital for maximum utilization of capacity within and outside the school.

The school is committed to a work environment where professional improvement is viewed as a continuous process that enables all staff members to develop their professional skills and effectiveness to support the goals and priorities of the school and Nation, mentoring is a powerful tool for staff empowerment and personal development. It is an effective way to help people progress in their careers and gain in popularity as its benefits are realized.

Training is practical and informative to encourage new staff to adapt into the learning process. Koki (1997) argued that teaching in education is of the utmost importance and enables early lecturer to receive educational training and young people receive advice and education to be useful for themselves and the society. Effective training requires those who are committed to the skills and knowledge of various teaching, and lecturing, career coaches, career planning and competent coaches. Coaches guide staff in fulfilling their personal and professional responsibilities (Koki, 1997). Mentoring is a joint venture or partnership between two people (a mentor and a mentor) who often works in a similar area or shares experiences. It is a relationship based on trust and respect. Demonstration is a great way to collaborate and make a positive contribution to the school.

Mentoring, as a model of community education, is based on practices that emphasize the importance of promoting positive behavior. According to the structure of social studies, the collective understands the activation of learning stimuli from others. Teaching is defined as the relationship between work experience. The (mentor) helps others (the mentor) develop special skills and knowledge that will enhance professional skills and unknown personal growth. Discipline is the process by which a member of staff knows a task assigned to an unknown person and assists in training or general support. This is a type of teaching that goes with the person you are teaching and invites him or her to discover your example. Training is a relationship where an experienced person can help teach less experienced staff. The mentor may be older or younger, but he may need some special skills. It is a combination of learning and development between someone who has experience and someone who wants to learn.

Teaching is a process of delivering knowledge, relationships, and mental support, through which the client is fully informed about work, career or professional development, or training. is an unusual communication, face-to-face and in time, between a person who demonstrates a higher level of knowledge, skill, or experience (counselor) and a person who is known (protected). Training allows for many aspects of staff development. As Ololube (2019) pointed out, establishing a positive relationship between the mentor and the mentee can be an incentive for change and learning. It is a process of sharing your knowledge and experience with a colleague.

According to Schooley (2010), mentoring involves social interaction and non-collaboration, in which staff receives information, insights, and instruction from professionals, mentally, often in the organization, with intelligence and energy who want to help others grow in their careers. Moorhead and Griffins (2004) defined mentoring as a means by which more

experienced workers help less experienced workers grow and develop by providing advice, support, and encouragement. Mentoring is also about a person's relationship between a more experienced member of a school and a less experienced individual.

The training includes teaching, sharing insights and transferring knowledge and wisdom to the student (s). To succeed in teaching or lecturing capacity building, it is necessary to identify people who are resourceful to engage and educate the academic and non-teaching staff in a wide range of teaching methods that is goal oriented. Resources are people who have expertise in knowledge, skills, and capabilities and who can provide training and guidance in areas that need to be improved. According to Lofthouse, the guide and coach is a staff development strategy that aims to help the staff in tertiary institutions and any other organizations acquire knowledge, skills and learning opportunities that improve their development. During the training, staff can exchange ideas, understand the connections between their values and knowledge.

Mentoring is considered one of the best tools to reduce stress and misconceptions for new working staff and curricula and promote the creation of best practices for collaboration (David, 2008). Mentoring helps solve the challenges and importance that give an individual more opportunity to achieve his or her goals and career growth. The benefits of mining are based on a social development perspective that determines that one learns behavior through interaction with others, especially if they serve as role models (David, 2008).

New staff face challenges in their work, as such, quality mentoring plays key role in keeping the newly recruited staff to be professional, growing and developing. Mentoring is the process of helping inexperienced staff at various department drive in their professions. It is an interaction in which a more experienced or, skilled person helps guide a less experienced or less educated person. Mentoring is a form of informal transfer of knowledge that the recipient realizes regarding work, career or professional development and includes informal communication that is a common face. Mining is therefore also needed to improve teaching skills based on knowledge and skills.

There are benefits of mentoring programs. The staff mentoring program helps the staff who are new to a school system, new to work, or who have academic or legal changes associated with unexpected aspects of their work with the help of other professionals in their field.
Training is best given in schools that allow both mentors and mentors in a collaborative and supportive professional environment, these are some of the following schools:

Human Resource In-Service Training and Staff Job Performance in Tertiary Institutions

The academic and non-teaching staff working in tertiary institutions becomes an important part of the institutions and education and they are significant asset in a system that provides a basis for the development of education through in-service training. Staff training and development are seen as building and improving human resources through formal education. In fact, the teaching profession will not succeed at all without professional training and guidance. Environmental education gives teachers in society understanding, prior knowledge, intellectual skills, and efficiency. Seyyed and Abdolabbas (1997) are a huge advantage in continuing and improving staff education performance effectively through in-service training.

A training program is a process in which people are taught the skills and provided with the necessary knowledge or attitudes to fulfill their professional responsibilities to an accepted standard. In a global world, there are innovations in the education system. Today, the degree program plays a crucial role in the new technological competencies of current tertiary institutions

staff, continuing education is the king of education aims at helping the staff to acquire the skills to adapt to changes in the education system, acquire new knowledge, and achieve professional goals.

Thompson (1992) showed that after completing in-service training, there are positive changes in staff attitudes, which increases self-confidence and monitors their ability to perform in all situations of resistance.

In-service training in tertiary institutions is seen as an educational opportunity to help the staff improve their careers throughout the field of vocational education. In-service training aims to improve staff qualifications through continuous training courses and study groups, visits, lectures and staff reforms).

Nakpodia (2008) defined an in-service training program as a process in which staff are given the opportunity to continue to improve their knowledge, skills, and interest in their discipline. It is a tool for continuous professional development that encourages the expansion of technical assistance to staff. Nakpodia (2008) described the following benefits of in-service staff training:

- Enabling staff with high academic and professional qualifications to improve in their position and performance in the school system.
- To support the acquisition of technical knowledge, skills, and professional qualifications of staff in their related discipline.
- It improve staff to be effective and efficient in their job functions.
- It equipped staff to be creative and the ability to innovate the education system, especially in this 21st century.
- It will increase the number of trained and qualified staff at all levels of education.

Investment in in-service training of staff in education played a key role in job performance and development. The results of the survey showed that staff who had little commitment to their profession before training were highly committed after having access to in-house training. Therefore, temporary training helped to accelerate moral teaching and thus led to positive work.

The main purpose of in-service training is to train staff through additional activities such as courses, workshops, and in-service training. This training helps the staff to gain professional knowledge, skills, and new ideas, considering improvements in their field and training methods.

In- service training is essential for the growth, improvement and achievement of the goals set in the national education policy. Frequently used and interchangeable terms such, human resource development, continuing education, professional development, continuing professional development and organizational development instead of service training show in particular that in-service training is a mandatory action in modern organizations. Inservice training is an engine in a dynamic teaching and learning process. Staff need to know current concepts, thinking, and research in their field. It also supports lifelong learning as educators, professionals and individuals who are the future builders of the next generation of education.

In-service training provides comprehensive opportunities for staff to gain new ideas, methods, and approaches through professional development. In-service training is a conscious and ongoing process that involves identifying the current and anticipated needs of a particular staff, discussing their contentions and career opportunities, and implementing staff engagement programs designed to meet those needs.

The impact of in-service training on staff and the learning outcomes of student services is an motivating factor for teachers, exposing them to new skills, methods, and knowledge that lead to effective delivery of results-oriented lessons.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a correlational research design to answer the research questions and to examine the relationship between human resource management (HRM) practices and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

The population comprised 5,415 respondents, including two Vice-Chancellors, one Rector, one Provost, and academic and non-teaching staff from four public tertiary institutions in Rivers State: Ignatius Ajuru University of Education (986 staff), Rivers State University (2,555 staff), Federal College of Education (1,264 staff), and Elechi Amadi Polytechnic (607 staff). Overall, the population consisted of 2 Vice-Chancellors, 1 Rector, 1 Provost, and 5,411 academic and non-teaching staff.

A sample of 1,083 respondents (20% of the population) was selected using simple random sampling. The sample included 2 Vice-Chancellors, 1 Rector, 1 Provost, 682 academic staff, and 401 non-teaching staff, stratified according to institutional location.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire divided into two sections: the Human Resource Management Questionnaire (HRMQ) and the Staff Job Performance Questionnaire (SJPQ). Responses were measured on a four-point Likert scale: Very High Extent (4), High Extent (3), Low Extent (2), and Very Low Extent (1).

Content and face validity were established by three experts in Measurement and Evaluation from Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. Reliability was determined through a pilot test using a test–retest method. Cronbach's alpha yielded a reliability coefficient of .878, indicating high internal consistency.

The researcher, assisted by three research assistants, administered the instrument personally to heads of departments, administrative heads, and other selected staff. Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to answer research questions and test hypotheses at .05 level of significance. Analysis was conducted using SPSS version 28.

RESULTS

Research Question One: What is the extent of relationship between recruitment and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 1: Relationship between recruitment and staff job performance

		Staff job performance	Recruitment
Staff job performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.522**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1083	1083
Recruitment	Pearson Correlation	.522**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1083	1083

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

The SPSS output on Table 1 revealed a correlation coefficient of .522** between recruitment and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, indicating a moderate significant relationship between recruitment and staff job performance. More so, the probability value (.000) is less than the critical value (.05), this shows that there is a moderate significant relationship between recruitment and staff job performance. This further implies that recruitment can be used to influence staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Based on this, we reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between recruitment and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State and accept the alternate hypothesis that there is a moderate, significant relationship between recruitment and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

Research Question Two: What is the extent of relationship between mentoring and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 2: Relationship between mentoring and staff job performance

		Staff job performance	Mentoring
Staff job performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.650**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1083	1083
Mentoring	Pearson Correlation	.650**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1083	1083

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

The SPSS output on Table 2 revealed a correlation coefficient of .650** between mentoring and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, indicating a strong significant relationship between mentoring and staff job performance. More so, the probability value (0.000) is less than the critical value (.05), this shows that there is a strong significant relationship between mentoring and staff job performance. This further implies that mentoring can be used to influence staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Based on this, we reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between mentoring and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State and accept the alternate hypothesis that there is a strong significant relationship between mentoring and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Research Question Three: What is the extent of relationship between in-service training and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?
Table 3: Relationship between in-service training and staff job performance

		Staff job performance	In-service training
Staff job performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.442**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1083	1083
In-service training	Pearson Correlation	.442**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1083	1083

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

The SPSS output on Table 3 reveals a correlation coefficient of .442** between in-service training and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, indicating a moderate significant relationship between in-service training and staff job performance. More so, the probability value (.000) is less than the critical value (.05), this shows that there is a moderate significant relationship between in-service training and staff job performance. This further implies that in-service training can be used to influence staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Based on this, we reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between in-service training and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State and accept the alternate hypothesis that there is a moderate significant relationship between in-service training and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between recruitment and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient analysis for the relationship between recruitment and staff job performance

		Recruitment Strategies	Staff Job performance
Recruitment Strategies	Pearson Correlation	1	.916**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1083	1083
Staff Job performance	Pearson Correlation	.916**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1083	1083

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

Table 4 revealed the results of correlation, where correlation value r = .916, p < .000, indicates a significant relationship between recruitment and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Thus, the null hypothesis therefore, was rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between mentoring and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 5: Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient analysis for the relationship between mentoring and staff job performance

		Mentoring Strategy	Staff Job performance
Mentoring strategy	Pearson Correlation	1	.740**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1083	1083
Staff Job performance	Pearson Correlation	.740**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1083	1083

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

Table 5 revealed the results of correlation, where correlation value r = .740, p < 0.000, indicates a significant relationship between mentoring as a human resource management practice and staff job performance in tertiary institution in Rivers State. Thus, the hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between in-service training and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 6: Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient analysis relationship between in-service training and staff job performance

		In-service Training	Staff Job performance
In-service Training	Pearson Correlation	1	.915**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	1083	1083
Staff Job performance	Pearson Correlation	.915**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	1083	1083

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

Table 6 revealed the results of correlation, where correlation value r = .915, p < .000, indicates a significant relationship between In-service training as a human resource management practice and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Thus, the hypothesis was rejected.

DISCUSSION

Recruitment and Staff Job Performance in Tertiary Institutions

Hypothesis one stated that "There is no significant relationship between recruitment strategies and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State", the Pearson correlation results where correlation value r = .918, p < .000, revealed that there is a significant relationship between recruitment strategies and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Thus, the null hypothesis one was rejected. This finding is in agreement with Casio (2002) who stated that recruitment and selection starts with a clear statement of objectives of the institutions based on the types of knowledge which has to do with educational qualification and intellect, skills which has to do with exceptional qualities that make candidate standout, competences in communication and other professional skills possess by the candidate then experience which in turn has to do with candidate achievement in his or her previous institutions and other abilities, and characteristics. Age of the candidate is also considered, how old is the candidate, is the candidate physically and mentally fit, underage or above the recommended age.

This is also in line with Ololube (2019) who state that the first challenge of human resource manager in an organization in terms of goal achievement or staff performance start from selecting and recruiting wrong candidate, though recruitment and selection are the two phases of the employment process that determine the success or the failure of the organization being the first strategy, but there is a difference between them. The first is the process of searching the candidates to fill identifies vacant and stimulating them to apply for jobs in the organization while the later involves the series of steps by which the candidates are screened to choose the most suitable persons for vacant positions.

These findings are in line with Ololube and Wome (2025) who found that the process of recruitment consists of series of decision of varying capacities and complexities and the quality of this decisions depend on the quality of how strategic human resource manager is and the quality of information available to the human resource manager to take decision. While recruitment is selection of the required number of people to be screen for a job based on their knowledge, skills, and experience as a way of attempting to predict their future performance in the organization or institution, selection is the process of assessing the candidate by various means making a choice and finally and offer of employment.

The same is true of Ololube (2019) when he found that recruitment and selection process in tertiary institution is the responsibility of both the school administrators and the government and due to the sensitivity nature of this process as a determinate factor to the success or failure of the institution, school administrators and government needs to be strategic and careful in the activities, therefore, different factors are considered in the recruitment and selection process such as; knowledges, skills and experience as regard to educational, occupational and personal experience, the mental capabilities, career motivation and personal characteristics, whether a candidate is likely to contribute to the attainment of institutional goals and objectives after which the successful candidate is given employment

Mentoring and staff job performance in tertiary institutions

Hypothesis two stated that "There is no significant relationship between mentoring and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State", the Pearson correlation results where correlation value $r = 740$, $p < 0.000$, revealed that there is a significant relationship between mentoring and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Thus, the null hypothesis two was rejected. This finding is in concert with Schooley (2010), who stated that mentoring involves social interaction and non-collaboration, in which staff receive information, insights, and instruction from professionals, mentally. Ololube (2019) is also in support of the important of mentoring by stating that to succeed in teaching or lecturing capacity building, it is necessary to identify people who are resourceful to engage and educate the academic and non-teaching staff in a wide range of teaching methods that is goal oriented through mentoring. Resources are people who have expertise in knowledge, skills, and capabilities and who can provide training and guidance in areas that need to be improved.

Koki (1991) on the other hand state that mentoring is a staff development strategy that aims to help the staff in tertiary institutions and any other organizations acquire knowledge, skills and learning opportunities that improve their development. During the training, staff can exchange ideas, understand the connections between their values and knowledge. Mentoring is considered one of the best tools to reduce stress and misconceptions for new working staff and curricula and promote the creation of best practices for collaboration (David et al., 2008).

New working staff face challenges in their work. Quality mentoring plays a key role in keeping the newly recruited staff to be professional, growing and developing. Ololube (2019) also opined that mentoring is a human resources management strategy that is use to drive better result and increase engagement by setting up of objectives and goals and align those institutional goals with the staff goals, ensure effective communication and regular feedback and continuous coaching by training and skills development, getting real insight into employees performance and monitor progress and empower employees to set aspirational goals as well as engagement of

talent and identify development opportunities to unit, manage and integrate the tools the staff relies on.

In-service training and staff job performance in tertiary institutions

Hypothesis three stated that "There is no significant relationship between training and development and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State", the Pearson correlation results where correlation value $r = .915$, $p < 0.000$, revealed that there is a significant relationship between training and development and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Thus, the null hypothesis three was rejected. This finding is in line with Goldstein (1993) who defined "training as the systematic acquisition of skills, rules, concepts, or aptitudes that result in improved performance in another environment. Therefore, training programs are planned to produce a competence staff, for example, the more considerate a supervisor or subordinates, a more competent technician in the workplace, or leaders and followers of complex organizations to excel in their various role toward the achievement of institutional goals and objectives. In some cases, such as on-the-job training, the instructional environment is almost identical to the actual job environment. However, in some area in educational setting such as a classroom lecture on electronics theory for technicians, the learning environment is further removed from the job situation.

Natalie and Joo-Hyun (2014) also toe the same line and emphasis that, it is an acceptable fact that besides money, materials and machines, the success of any tertiary institution depends upon the quality of its human resource. In the wake of increased competition, development of global village concept, people have become fulcrum around which successful institution rotate. In the light of this, the training and development function in tertiary institution gained momentum and was recognized as a tool to help people to grow within the institution and retain them. Ololube (2009) also believed and saw training as an effort to educate teachers to improve their performance and commend that training provides staff with the opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills that will in the long run improve their effectiveness on the job. To be productive and achieving institutional goals and objectives, tertiary institution needs efficient and effective workforce and to manage and maintain this workforce, tertiary institutions require skilled and knowledgeable leaders or administrators (Ololube, 2019). Skilled and competent staff can direct the efforts in the right direction and reach the institutional goals and objectives.

The impact of innovations, technological advances, and consumerism has forced many institutions to opt for modernization, diversification, and institutional restructuring. The liberalization of the economy has changed the environment for managers and the workforce. The protective layer has gone, and the world is now in the age of competition not only from within but also from the technologically advanced and capital rich organization of the developed countries (Margaret et al., 2004). A tertiary institution opting for this change must prepare its team to accept the challenges posed by the change process. They must be prepared, developed, and updated, accordingly. Tertiary institution would need to gear up all their resources to well defined market orientation strategies, human resource development, research and development, and technology up gradation.

Kanter (1989) supported this opinion by stating that staff need to be trained and developed regularly to deliver even when the external environment changes lead to obsolescence of the current technology in place with the school. On the other hand, Ololube (2009) opined that training eliminates job discrepancies. For training and development to be successful in the

academic setting, tertiary institution administrators must be responsive and fast to changing environment. They must respond fast to changing staff requirements and needs for quality service delivery.

The central claim is that by matching the size, skills of the workforce to productive requirements of the institutions and by raising the quality of individual staff contribution to production, tertiary institution can make significant improvements on staff job performance and institutional performance. The main purpose of training and development is to eliminate performance discrepancies whether current or anticipated (Amadi, 2014) also believed that training and development also enhance competitive advantage of tertiary institution. This is the essence of competitive strategy. It encompasses those capabilities, resources, relationships, and decisions which permit a tertiary institution administrators or school leaders to capitalize on opportunities in the educational sector and avoid threats to its desired position. Armstrong (2006) also commented that many organizations have got to the point of recognizing that training and development is a strategic priority rather than a tactical response. A reason for training and development is to give the organization a competitive edge.

CONCLUSION

Tis study successfully investigated HRM practices and staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. HRM practices play critical role in enhancing staff job performance in tertiary institutions. The findings of this study affirmed that effective recruitment and selection, mentoring, continuous in-service training and development significantly influence both academic and non-academic staff productivity. When HRM practices are transparent, merit-based, and strategically aligned with institutional goals, they promote motivation, job satisfaction, commitment, and improved service delivery. Conversely, weak or inconsistent HRM systems can lead to low morale, inefficiency, and reduced institutional effectiveness. The study therefore concludes that strengthening HRM frameworks in tertiary institutions is essential for achieving sustainable performance outcomes. Institutional leaders and policymakers should prioritize capacity building, fair evaluation mechanisms, and supportive work environments to optimize staff potential. On the whole, sound human resource management serves as a catalyst for improved teaching, research output, administrative efficiency, and overall institutional development in Rivers State.

Recommendations

In view of the findings and conclusions of the study, the followings recommendations were made:

- Tertiary institutions in Rivers State should adopt transparent, merit-based, and competency-driven recruitment processes to ensure that qualified and experienced personnel are employed. Clear job specifications, standardized screening procedures, and objective interview panels should be institutionalized to attract and retain high-performing academic and non-teaching staff. This will enhance staff quality and improve overall institutional performance.
- Institutions should establish structured mentoring programs that pair experienced staff with newly employed or less experienced employees. Such mentoring relationships will

facilitate knowledge transfer, professional socialization, career development, and improved job effectiveness. Formal mentoring frameworks with clear goals, timelines, and monitoring mechanisms should be implemented to strengthen staff commitment and productivity.

- Regular in-service training and professional development programs should be organized to update staff knowledge, skills, and competencies in line with evolving academic and administrative demands. Workshops, seminars, conferences, and capacity-building initiatives should be adequately funded and aligned with institutional goals to enhance staff performance and sustain organizational growth.

REFERENCES

Amadi, E. J. (2014). The Effect of Training and Development on Employees' Performance; At Safaricom Limited Call Centre. A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of The Requirements for The Award For The Degree Of Master Of Business Administration (MBA) School of Business.

Armstrong, M. (2006). *A handbook of human resource management practice*. Kogan Page Publishers.

Armstrong, M. (2020). *Armstrong's handbook of human resource management practice* (15th ed.). Kogan Page.

Becker, G. S. (1993). *Human capital: A theoretical and empirical analysis, with special reference to education* (3rd ed.). University of Chicago Press.

Bratton, J. W. (2011). Reducing crime through prevention, not incarceration. *Criminology and Public Policy*, *10*(1), 63-68

Campbell, J. P., & Wiernik, B. M. (2015). The modeling and assessment of work performance. In J. D. Wright (Ed.), *International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.) (pp. 343-350). Elsevier.

Casio, H. C. (2002). Impact of Recruitment and Selection Strategy on Employees' Performance: A Study of Three Selected Manufacturing Companies in Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovation And Economic Development 3*(3), 32-43

David, C., Thibault, P., Dierolf, M., Menzel, A., Bunk, O., & Pfeiffer, F. (2008). High-resolution scanning x-ray diffraction microscopy. *Science*, *321*(5887), 379-382.

Dessler, G. (2020). *Human resource management* (16th ed.). Pearson.

Goldstein, I. (1993) Training in Organizations: Needs Assessment, Development, Evaluation. Brooks-Cole, Monterey.

Kanter, R. M. (1989). *When Giants Learn to Dance.* Simon and Schuster.

Koki, S. (1997). *The Role of Teacher Mentoring in Educational Reform. PREL Briefing Paper*. Pacific Resources for Education and Learning.

Margaret, G. Coady, D., & Hoddinott, J. (2004), *Human Resource Development',* Pinnacle publications.

Moorhead, G., Griffin, R. (2004) *Organizational Behaviour: Managing People and Organizations.* 7th Edition, Houghton Mifflin Company.

Nakpodia, E. D. (2008). *The Potential of the Law of Torts and the Protection of Nigerian School Children 4*(1), 009-015

Natalie, N. & Joo Hyun, P. (2014). Introduction to human resource management and higher education: In Attila Pausits (ed.) *Human Resource Management in Higher Education.* Donau-Universität Krems.

Noe, R. A., Hollenbeck, J. R., Gerhart, B., & Wright, P. M. (2021). *Fundamentals of human resource management* (8th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.

Ololube, N. (2006). Teachers Job Satisfaction and Motivation for School Effectiveness and Assessment University of Helsinki, Organizational Culture and Climate. *The Journal of Creative Education 7*(14), 60-87. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ololube, N. P. (2009). Understanding teachers' professional competencies for education effectiveness. Springfield Publishers.

Ololube, N. P. (2025). *Human resources management and organizational theory*. Pearl Publshers.

Ololube, N. P., & Wome, M. O. E. (2025). *Principles of green human resource management: theory and practice*. Pearl Publishers.

Richard, C. E. (1979). Contested Terrain: The Transformation of the Workplace in the Twentieth Century. Basic Books. Heinemann. 262 pages. *Organization Studies*, *3*(3), 279-281.

Schooley, M. (2010). Challenges and strategies in applying performance measurement to federal public health programs. *Evaluation and Program Planning 33*(4), 365-372.

Seyyed and Abdolabbas (1997), International Journal of Economy, Management and Social Sciences, 2(12) https://www.ijbssnet.com/.

Thomas, M. A. (1996). What is a human resources strategy? *Health Manpower Management, 22*(2), 4-11.

Thomas, V. H. (2015). *An Assessment of the Effect of Job Satisfaction on Employees' Performance in Tanzanian Transport Sector*. Unpublished Dissertation.

Thompson, A. G. (1992). *Teachers' beliefs and conceptions*: A synthesis of the research. Requirements for the Degree of Master of Human Resource Management of The Open University of Tanzania.

Wright, P. M. (2005). *Human Resource Strategy: Adapting to the Age of globalization. SHRM Foundation's Effective Practice Guidelines Series.* Society for Human Resource Management, https://wwtndav/trends-and-forecasting/special-reports-and-expert-views/documents/HR-strategy-globalization.pdf.