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Impact of Compensation and Benefits on Non-Teaching Staff Retention in Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: This study critically examines the impact of compensation and benefits on the retention of non-teaching staff at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria, within the broader framework of human resource management in public tertiary institutions. Using a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 180 stratified randomly selected respondents out of a total population of 328 non-teaching staff. Quantitative analysis, including descriptive statistics and multiple regression, was employed to evaluate the adequacy, fairness, and influence of compensation on retention decisions. Findings revealed that compensation packages were perceived as moderately adequate (grand mean = 3.19, SD = 1.29), with 57.5% of respondents agreeing that salaries and bonuses met job role expectations. However, competitive parity with similar institutions was lower, with only 48.5% in agreement. Perceptions of fairness were relatively high (grand mean = 3.57, SD = 1.30), with 69.7% affirming pay fairness and 69.7% reporting motivational benefits from compensation. Regression analysis indicated that compensation and benefits accounted for 64.5% of the variance in retention decisions ($R^2 = 0.645$, Adj. $R^2 = 0.630$, $p < 0.0001$). Significant predictors included Compensation Attractiveness ($\beta = 0.356$, $p < 0.001$), Benefits Motivation ($\beta = 0.276$, $p = 0.002$), and Perceived Reduction in Turnover ($\beta = 0.210$, $p = 0.016$). Fairness in Compensation ($\beta = 0.195$, $p = 0.035$) also significantly influenced retention, while the perceived overall importance of compensation showed a marginal effect ($\beta = 0.168$, $p = 0.068$). The study concludes that competitive, fair, and transparent compensation structures are pivotal in retaining non-teaching staff. It recommends comprehensive package reviews, enhanced non-monetary benefits, and participatory policy development to foster institutional stability and reduce attrition.

KEYWORDS: Compensation, Employee Retention, Non-Teaching Staff, Benefits Packages,Human Resource Management

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The efficient functioning and sustainability of tertiary education institutions hinge not only on the performance of academic staff but also on the critical role played by non-teaching personnel. These individuals, encompassing administrative, technical, clerical, and maintenance staff, ensure the day-to-day operational continuity of higher education institutions. In Nigeria, polytechnics such as Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, are no exception. They depend heavily on the commitment, skills, and institutional loyalty of non-teaching staff to achieve their strategic and academic objectives. One of the most pressing challenges confronting public tertiary institutions in Nigeria is the difficulty in retaining experienced and competent non-teaching staff. Staff turnover especially among non-academic personnel has grown into a significant human resource management concern, with adverse consequences for institutional performance, service delivery, and institutional memory. Among the myriad of factors responsible for this challenge, compensation and benefits have been consistently identified as major determinants of employee retention, satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Akinyele & Fapohunda, 2023; Ojo & Adegbite, 2021).

Compensation and benefits in the context of organizational management encompass all forms of financial returns and tangible services and benefits that employees receive as part of an employment relationship. These include not only direct monetary rewards such as salaries and bonuses but also indirect forms such as pension plans, health insurance, housing allowances, paid leave, professional development opportunities, and job security (Milkovich, Newman & Gerhart, 2021). In a rapidly changing labor market where skilled personnel are in high demand, institutions must ensure that their compensation structures are competitive, equitable, and motivating enough to retain talent and foster institutional stability.

In many Nigerian public tertiary institutions, however, the compensation system remains largely outdated, inconsistent, and often non-competitive. Issues such as salary delays, poor implementation of approved pay structures, limited access to non-wage benefits, absence of performance-based incentives, and unclear career advancement opportunities have contributed to high turnover intentions among non-teaching staff (Nwachukwu & Olorunfemi, 2020). These systemic weaknesses not only affect staff morale but also reduce institutional capacity for innovation and administrative efficiency.

The situation at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, reflects these national trends. Anecdotal evidence and preliminary observations suggest that the institution struggles with retaining its non-teaching workforce due to dissatisfaction with compensation and benefit schemes. Despite being a state-owned institution established to provide quality polytechnic education in Ondo State and its environs, its non-teaching staff have often been at the forefront of agitations and industrial disputes rooted in demands for better remuneration, fairer working conditions, and improved welfare provisions. These recurrent tensions have, over the years, disrupted institutional harmony and reduced the effectiveness of service delivery.

Moreover, retention challenges among non-teaching staff not only imply direct financial losses through recruitment and training of new staff but also threaten the strategic goals of the polytechnic. A high turnover rate leads to a loss of institutional knowledge, reduced operational consistency, and increased workloads for remaining staff all of which contribute to a decline in overall institutional performance. In this regard, compensation and benefits can be seen not just as human resource variables, but as strategic tools for institutional resilience and competitiveness.

Additionally, modern human resource management theories underscore the relevance of motivation-enhancing compensation strategies. The Equity Theory of Adams (1965) emphasizes the importance of perceived fairness in reward distribution, while Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943) and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) both stress the motivational role of extrinsic factors such as remuneration, job security, and benefits. These theories provide a useful conceptual lens through which the dynamics of employee retention at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic can be examined. This study is timely and significant in the face of growing concerns about the capacity of Nigeria's public tertiary education institutions to attract, motivate, and retain the necessary support staff for institutional sustainability. By focusing on Rufus Giwa Polytechnic as a case study, the research will contribute to the broader discourse on employee retention in the Nigerian higher education sector, with specific reference to compensation and benefit practices.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the contemporary landscape of tertiary education in Nigeria, non-teaching staff are increasingly becoming disenchanted due to perceived inadequacies in compensation and welfare provisions. While these staff members are essential to the smooth administration and operation of educational institutions, they are often neglected in policy discussions and management decisions. This neglect manifests in irregular salary payments, absence of structured promotion systems, insufficient medical and housing benefits, and limited opportunities for career progression. As a result, many non-teaching employees experience low morale, poor job satisfaction, and a high tendency to seek employment elsewhere, particularly in better-paying private institutions or other sectors.

At Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, the phenomenon of staff attrition among non-teaching personnel has become increasingly worrisome. Informal reports and preliminary observations suggest that staff disengagement and resignations are on the rise, with institutional records reflecting increased turnover rates. These issues have negatively affected institutional productivity, continuity, and service delivery in core areas such as registry, bursary, ICT support, laboratory management, and general administration.

Although various studies have been conducted on employee motivation and retention in Nigerian higher institutions, there remains a research gap in understanding how compensation and benefits specifically influence the retention of non-teaching staff in polytechnic settings especially within the context of Ondo State. Furthermore, most existing literature has predominantly focused on academic staff, thereby sidelining the critical roles played by their non-teaching counterparts.

The central problem this study addresses is the lack of empirical understanding of whether and how compensation and benefit structures at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic meet the needs and expectations of non-teaching staff and how this affects their retention decisions. Without such evidence-based understanding, institutional managers and policymakers may continue to implement ineffective or unsustainable HR policies that fail to enhance staff commitment and institutional stability.

1.3 Research Questions

To achieve the stated objectives, the study will be guided by the following research questions:

i. What types of compensation and benefit packages are available to non-teaching staff in Rufus Giwa Polytechnic?
ii. How do non-teaching staff perceive the fairness and adequacy of their compensation and benefits?
iii. To what extent do compensation and benefits influence non-teaching staff's decision to remain with the institution?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to assess the impact of compensation and benefits on the retention of non-teaching staff in Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

i. examine the types and adequacy of compensation and benefit packages available to non-teaching staff in Rufus Giwa Polytechnic;
ii. investigate the perception of non-teaching staff regarding the fairness and effectiveness of these compensation structures; and
iii. determine the extent to which compensation and benefits influence the retention decisions of non-teaching staff.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

2.1.1 Non-Teaching Staff Retention

Non-teaching staff retention refers to an institution's ability to keep its administrative and support staff over a sustained period, reducing turnover and maintaining organizational continuity. In the context of polytechnics like Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, non-teaching staff include professionals in administration, finance, security, library, ICT, maintenance, and other support services that are critical to institutional functioning. Their stability within the system is integral to organizational performance, institutional memory, and service delivery (Akomolafe & Ayeni, 2021).

Retention of non-teaching staff is influenced by a variety of factors, among which compensation and benefits play a central role. Compensation encompasses both monetary and non-monetary rewards provided to employees in exchange for their services. Benefits, on the other hand, may include health insurance, housing allowances, pension schemes, promotions, paid leave, recognition, and training opportunities. The theory of employee motivation and the psychological contract between employer and employee suggest that when compensation and benefits are perceived as fair and competitive, they significantly improve employee morale and reduce turnover intentions (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Armstrong, 2020).

Retention is a multidimensional construct that also involves the psychological attachment of staff to the institution. According to the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), employees who receive satisfactory compensation and benefits tend to reciprocate through loyalty and long-term commitment. This reciprocity is critical in retaining non-teaching staff, particularly in environments where job security, career growth, and institutional support are not always guaranteed (Okafor & Adeleye, 2023).

In public institutions like Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, challenges such as irregular payment of salaries, inadequate welfare packages, lack of professional development, and poor recognition systems often contribute to staff attrition. A recent study by Adepoju and Ogunleye (2024) observed that about 38% of non-teaching staff in public tertiary institutions in Southwest Nigeria had considered exiting their current jobs due to inadequate compensation and lack of career progression.

Furthermore, studies have found that strategic investment in compensation can also yield positive secondary effects such as increased job performance, improved staff engagement, and enhanced institutional image (Nwachukwu & Ogundele, 2022). In institutions where retention rates are high, compensation structures are typically transparent, merit-based, and aligned with staff needs. Notably, Ojo et al. (2024) emphasize that in polytechnics and universities, alignment between job expectations and rewards must be maintained through periodic salary reviews, incentives for long-serving staff, and participation in decision-making processes. Therefore, improving non-teaching staff retention in Rufus Giwa Polytechnic requires a holistic compensation model that includes not only competitive salaries but also supportive benefits that cater to the long-term well-being of staff. This should be underpinned by a sustainable HR strategy and policies that foster trust, equity, and institutional commitment.

2.1.2 Compensation and Benefits

Compensation and benefits represent central pillars of human resource management and are instrumental in shaping employee attitudes, motivation, organizational commitment, and retention. In a tertiary institution such as Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, the non-teaching staff serve as the administrative, technical, and logistical engine of the polytechnic ensuring that academic operations are supported efficiently. Therefore, an institution's ability to attract, retain, and develop such personnel is largely dependent on the structure, fairness, and adequacy of its compensation and benefits systems.

Compensation is broadly defined as the total financial remuneration offered to employees in exchange for their service, encompassing basic salaries, wages, overtime payments, bonuses, hazard allowances, and performance incentives. Benefits, on the other hand, refer to non-cash and indirect financial rewards, such as health insurance, pension plans, housing allowances, leave entitlements, professional development opportunities, staff recognition programs, and job security mechanisms (Armstrong, 2020). Together, compensation and benefits shape the employee value proposition (EVP) of an organization, influencing the perception of fairness, organizational support, and long-term commitment.

In the context of public polytechnics in Nigeria, non-teaching staff frequently contend with inadequate remuneration, irregular salary payments, limited benefits, and a lack of career advancement opportunities. These issues contribute to dissatisfaction, disengagement, absenteeism, and high turnover rates. Research by Adewale and Obafemi (2022) indicated that over 60% of non-academic staff in public tertiary institutions cited low compensation and lack of benefits as their primary reason for seeking alternative employment.

Moreover, in an age where employee satisfaction is increasingly linked to holistic well-being, the narrow focus on monetary pay is no longer sufficient. Non-financial benefits such as flexible work schedules, recognition programs, inclusive workplace cultures, health and wellness initiatives, and opportunities for lifelong learning are now regarded as equally important determinants of employee retention. According to Gomez-Mejia & Balkin (2016), effective compensation systems must therefore address both extrinsic motivators (e.g., salary, bonuses) and intrinsic motivators (e.g., personal growth, meaningful work, recognition) to foster long-term retention.

In the Nigerian setting, particularly within institutions like Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, non-teaching staff often express dissatisfaction with inconsistencies in remuneration policies, lack of clear promotion criteria, and absence of recognition for years of service. Eze and Nwankwo (2021) found that institutions with well-structured, transparent, and inclusive compensation systems experienced lower staff turnover, fewer industrial disputes, and higher administrative efficiency.

Ultimately, compensation and benefits are not merely transactional tools but strategic levers for building institutional resilience, loyalty, and performance. A well-compensated and well-supported non-teaching workforce enhances operational continuity, supports academic excellence, and contributes to institutional stability in the long term.

2.1.3 Types and Adequacy of Compensation and Benefit Packages Available to Non- Teaching Staff

Compensation and benefits are integral components of human resource management aimed at attracting, motivating, and retaining employees in any organization. The term compensation refers to all forms of financial returns and tangible benefits employees receive as part of an employment relationship, while benefits include indirect, non-cash payments such as health insurance, pensions, housing allowances, and other welfare-enhancing provisions (Milkovich & Newman, 2022).

In the context of Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, non-teaching staff comprise a vital component of the institution's administrative and support framework. These employees ensure the efficient functioning of the institution's daily operations, yet often receive less attention compared to their academic counterparts in terms of welfare, motivation, and development opportunities (Afolabi & Adewumi, 2023). Therefore, the adequacy and diversity of compensation and benefits made available to them are crucial to their job satisfaction, commitment, and ultimately their retention.

Compensation is typically divided into two major categories: direct compensation and indirect compensation. Direct compensation includes basic salary, overtime payments, performance-based incentives, and bonuses, whereas indirect compensation involves pension schemes, healthcare, housing allowances, leave entitlements, training opportunities, transport subsidies, and other non-monetary perks (Obikeze & Obi, 2021). When these compensation types are perceived as adequate and fair, they contribute significantly to employees' organizational loyalty and reduce turnover intentions (Okereke & Odetayo, 2021).

Studies have shown that inadequate compensation packages often result in demotivation, job dissatisfaction, poor morale, and high attrition rates among non-academic staff (Iwu, Kapondoro, Twum-Darko, & Tengeh, 2021). Conversely, comprehensive and competitive compensation plans tend to create a positive organizational climate, enhance employee engagement, and improve staff retention (Mensah, 2023). A study by Oginni and Faseyitan (2022) reveals that institutions with structured compensation systems backed by regular reviews and employee feedback are more likely to retain competent non-teaching staff.

In Nigeria's public tertiary institutions, including polytechnics, there are often challenges surrounding compensation administration. These include irregular salary payments, non-payment of earned allowances, poor pension management, and lack of health insurance for non-teaching staff (Onikoyi et al., 2022). Such deficiencies often push employees to seek better opportunities in private institutions or outside the education sector entirely.

In summary, the types and adequacy of compensation and benefits available to non-teaching staff are crucial determinants of job satisfaction and retention. A balanced package that includes both monetary and non-monetary rewards, tailored to meet employee needs and preferences, is necessary for sustaining a committed and motivated workforce in tertiary institutions like Rufus Giwa Polytechnic.

2.1.4 Perception of Non-Teaching Staff Regarding the Fairness and Effectiveness of These Compensation Structures

Compensation and benefits remain central to employee retention, particularly among non-teaching staff in tertiary institutions, where these employees play a critical support role in maintaining the academic environment. The perception of fairness and effectiveness in compensation structures significantly determines the satisfaction and retention of these staff members. According to Armstrong and Taylor (2023), employee perception is shaped by both tangible (salaries, allowances, pension schemes) and intangible elements (equity, recognition, career advancement opportunities) within the compensation framework.

In the context of public polytechnics like Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, the perception of non-teaching staff regarding compensation is often linked to the broader political and economic challenges of the Nigerian public sector. Perceived inequities in pay structures, delayed salaries, irregular promotions, and the absence of performance-based rewards contribute to a negative assessment of the compensation system (Okafor, 2022). Where compensation is perceived as inadequate, non-transparent, or inconsistent with workload and responsibilities, employees tend to develop dissatisfaction and disengagement, which ultimately results in high turnover intentions (Ugochukwu & Ogbonna, 2021).

Furthermore, Organizational Justice Theory categorizes fairness into three dimensions: distributive justice (fairness of outcome), procedural justice (fairness of process), and interactional justice (fairness in interpersonal interactions). Research by Olatunji and Adebayo (2022) found that in Nigerian tertiary institutions, perceptions of procedural and distributive injustice within compensation and benefits frameworks are high among non-teaching staff, as decisions about salary increases, allowances, and promotions are often perceived as biased or politically influenced. Such perceptions adversely affect trust in management and institutional loyalty.

The effectiveness of a compensation structure is also judged by how well it meets employee needs and supports career development. Non-teaching staff expect compensation that not only addresses their financial needs but also reflects the recognition of their role in institutional development. According to Salihu and Ibrahim (2024), effective compensation structures integrate elements such as housing allowances, health insurance, paid leave, training opportunities, and retirement benefits. Where these are missing or poorly implemented, staff morale suffers, and turnover rates increase. Interestingly, the gender and age of employees may also influence their perception of compensation fairness. Studies reveal that older employees may value pension contributions and health benefits more, while younger staff prioritize salary progression and training (Ogunyomi & Bruning, 2023). Therefore, a one-size-fits-all approach to compensation may not be effective in a diverse workforce.

Conclusively, the perception of fairness and effectiveness in compensation structures is a powerful determinant of employee retention. For Rufus Giwa Polytechnic to improve retention among its non-teaching staff, it must ensure that compensation structures are transparent, equitable, and reflective of both market realities and individual contributions. Failure to do so may continue to result in high attrition, low morale, and reduced institutional productivity.

2.1.5 The Extent to Which Compensation and Benefits Influence the Retention Decisions of Non-Teaching Staff

Compensation and benefits are fundamental drivers of employee retention in any organization, particularly in academic institutions where job mobility is increasingly influenced by the perceived fairness and adequacy of reward systems. Compensation refers to the total monetary and non-monetary rewards offered to employees in exchange for their labor, including salaries, allowances, incentives, bonuses, and pensions. Benefits encompass other supplementary offerings such as health insurance, housing subsidies, paid leave, job security, and professional development opportunities (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023; Milkovich & Newman, 2020).

The retention of non-teaching staff in tertiary institutions, including Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, is significantly affected by how these employees perceive their compensation packages. When compensation is perceived as fair, timely, and competitive, employees are more likely to feel valued, satisfied, and committed to the organization. On the contrary, perceived inequity, delays in payment, or lack of benefits often lead to dissatisfaction, disengagement, and a high intention to leave (Okafor & Udu, 2022; Olayemi & Bakare, 2024).

The Psychological Contract Theory explains this phenomenon by suggesting that employees develop unwritten expectations regarding fair treatment and adequate compensation from their employers. A breach of this psychological contract such as when promised benefits are not delivered or salaries are delayed results in reduced trust, emotional withdrawal, and increased turnover intentions (Agwu & Eze, 2021). Similarly, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory emphasizes that while compensation may not always serve as a motivator, its inadequacy is a primary cause of dissatisfaction, which in turn influences retention decisions.

In public polytechnics like Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, where resources are often limited and government funding inconsistent, the challenge of providing competitive compensation has contributed to high turnover rates among non-teaching staff. Many employees express concerns over stagnated salary structures, unpaid allowances, lack of promotion-related incentives, and insufficient welfare support (Ajayi & Ojo, 2022). These inadequacies not only affect morale but also diminish institutional productivity due to frequent exits and the cost of recruitment and training.

The economic context of Nigeria further complicates the issue. With rising inflation, fuel costs, and housing challenges, many non-teaching staff struggle to meet basic needs, making compensation a survival imperative rather than a mere job incentive. Therefore, institutions that fail to adjust compensation policies to align with economic realities risk losing their skilled administrative personnel (Olayemi & Bakare, 2024).

In conclusion, compensation and benefits play a central role in shaping retention decisions among non-teaching staff in Nigerian polytechnics. A strategically designed, equitable, and regularly updated reward system is essential not only for reducing turnover but also for enhancing staff morale, institutional loyalty, and overall performance. As such, educational administrators and policymakers must prioritize the development of sustainable compensation models to retain valuable administrative talent and ensure continuity in public tertiary institutions.

2.2 Theoretical Review

2.2.1 Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory, conceptualized by Schultz (1961) and further developed by Becker (1964), posits that individuals' knowledge, skills, health, and abilities represent valuable assets that contribute to economic productivity. This theory underscores the economic returns of investing in people, asserting that such investments especially through education, training, and appropriate compensation lead to increased organizational output and national development.

In the context of non-teaching staff at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, this theory suggests that competitive compensation and benefits are not merely remuneration mechanisms but strategic tools that reinforce staff development, loyalty, and retention. Non-teaching staff often perform critical support functions in higher education institutions, including finance, administration, security, ICT, and facility management. When these staff members are adequately compensated in alignment with their professional competencies and contributions, they are more likely to demonstrate enhanced performance, reduced absenteeism, and greater organizational citizenship behaviors.

Moreover, inadequate compensation may lead to the underutilization or migration of human capital, as staff seek better opportunities elsewhere. Empirical studies (Adewale & Oyeniyi, 2021; Ekechukwu & Modebelu, 2023) show a positive correlation between human capital investment through salaries, professional development, and health benefits and employee retention in Nigerian tertiary institutions. For Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, this theory advocates strategic compensation policies that reflect both the market value of staff skills and the internal value placed on long-term institutional development.

2.2.2 Equity Theory

Equity Theory, developed by Adams (1965), provides a psychological perspective on employee motivation and retention. The theory posits that employees assess fairness by comparing their input-output ratio (i.e., the effort they put into their job versus the rewards they receive) with those of referent others. If employees perceive that they are unfairly treated either under-rewarded or over-rewarded they are likely to experience emotional distress, which can manifest in reduced motivation, workplace withdrawal, or resignation.

In the environment of public tertiary institutions in Nigeria, where salary disparities and inconsistent welfare benefits are often prevalent, the implications of equity theory become particularly salient. Non-teaching staff may feel disenfranchised when they perceive wage imbalances between them and academic staff or when they compare their benefits to those in better-funded polytechnics or private institutions. This perceived inequity may result in low morale, poor job engagement, and a higher likelihood of staff turnover.

Equity Theory also highlights the importance of transparency in compensation administration. Institutions that openly communicate pay policies, provide equitable benefits, and ensure consistency in reward systems are more likely to foster a sense of justice among employees (Okonkwo & Ifeoma, 2022). For Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, implementing equitable compensation structures is essential to curbing the negative psychological and behavioral consequences associated with perceived pay injustice.

2.2.3 Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory (1959), also known as the Motivation-Hygiene Theory, distinguishes between two categories of workplace factors that influence employee behavior: motivators (intrinsic factors) and hygiene factors (extrinsic factors). While motivators such as achievement, recognition, and career growth are responsible for job satisfaction, hygiene factors such as salary, job security, organizational policies, and working conditions prevent job dissatisfaction.

In relation to non-teaching staff in polytechnics, compensation and benefits constitute core hygiene factors. Although they may not directly motivate employees to perform beyond expectations, the absence or inadequacy of these factors often leads to dissatisfaction, low commitment, and voluntary turnover. Given the economic realities of Nigeria including inflation, high cost of living, and limited job opportunities non-teaching staff are particularly sensitive to wage sufficiency and timely remuneration.

The application of Herzberg’s theory suggests that institutions like Rufus Giwa Polytechnic must focus not only on competitive compensation but also on other hygiene elements such as pension schemes, medical benefits, housing allowances, and clear job roles. Research by Yusuf and Salami (2023) corroborates this theory, finding that inadequate compensation and poor benefits remain the top drivers of attrition among support staff in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Therefore, addressing these hygiene deficiencies is imperative to enhancing job satisfaction and reducing staff turnover.

2.2.4 Resource-Based View (RBV)

The Resource-Based View (RBV), articulated by Barney (1991), posits that an organization’s competitive advantage lies in its ability to harness unique, valuable, and inimitable internal resources among which human capital is paramount. According to this view, employees are not interchangeable commodities but strategic assets whose competencies, loyalty, and performance shape institutional effectiveness. For polytechnics, particularly Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, non-teaching staff are integral to operational continuity. From maintaining student records to managing institutional infrastructure and providing technological support, these employees form the backbone of administrative and service delivery systems.

When such staff are consistently undercompensated or overlooked in organizational development plans, their commitment and productivity are likely to decline, leading to higher replacement costs and systemic inefficiencies.
The RBV underscores the importance of talent retention as a means of safeguarding institutional knowledge, preserving functional stability, and enhancing the institution's long-term competitiveness. As Olabode and Ajibade (2022) argue, tertiary institutions that prioritize internal resource development through comprehensive compensation and benefit frameworks are better positioned to withstand external disruptions and policy fluctuations in the Nigerian education sector. By grounding the study in these well-established theories, the research establishes a robust analytical lens for evaluating the sufficiency, fairness, and strategic significance of compensation and benefits packages in relation to non-teaching staff retention. The theoretical foundations also justify the research hypotheses and inform the interpretation of empirical findings, thereby ensuring the academic rigor and contextual relevance of the study.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on the Equity Theory developed by Stacy Adams (1965), which explains the relationship between compensation and employee retention, particularly among non-teaching staff in tertiary institutions such as Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo. Equity Theory argues that employees are motivated not by the absolute amount of rewards they receive but by the perceived fairness of those rewards relative to their contributions and to others' compensation within or outside the organization.
Employees evaluate their input–output ratio what they contribute (time, effort, experience, loyalty) versus what they receive (salary, benefits, recognition, job security) and compare this with their peers. When they perceive equity, employees experience satisfaction, commitment, and organizational justice, which encourage retention. Conversely, inequity whether under-rewarded or over-rewarded creates dissatisfaction, demotivation, and a higher likelihood of turnover. For example, a non-teaching staff member who perceives their pay and benefits as inferior to colleagues within or outside the institution may feel undervalued, prompting them to seek alternative employment.
In Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, the relevance of Equity Theory is underscored by concerns such as delayed salaries, compensation disparities, and inconsistent access to non-wage benefits like health insurance, pensions, and training. Such issues create perceptions of unfair treatment and significantly influence retention decisions. By adopting Equity Theory, this study examines how fairness in compensation and benefits shapes the psychological and emotional responses of non-teaching staff, thereby affecting their decision to stay or leave.
While Equity Theory serves as the primary foundation, it is complemented by Human Capital Theory, which stresses the economic value of investing in employee competencies, and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which highlights the role of both hygiene factors (salary, security) and motivators (recognition, growth). Nevertheless, Equity Theory is most suitable for this study due to its direct focus on fairness perceptions and their impact on retention.

2.4 Empirical Review

Several empirical studies have explored the relationship between compensation, benefits, and employee retention, particularly in tertiary institutions and public organizations. These studies offer methodological insights, context-specific findings, and evidence-based recommendations that inform the present research.
Adewale and Olanrewaju (2022) conducted a study titled "The Role of Compensation and Incentives in Employee Retention in Nigerian Polytechnics." The researchers adopted a descriptive survey design to examine how financial and non-financial incentives influenced staff retention. The study focused on three public polytechnics in South-West Nigeria, including one in Ondo State. A sample of 210 non-teaching staff was selected using stratified random sampling. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire, and the analysis was conducted using multiple regression and correlation analysis. The findings indicated that both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards (such as salary increments, bonuses, and recognition schemes) had a significant positive impact on staff retention. The researchers recommended that institutions prioritize competitive compensation structures, recognizing that employee retention is closely tied to reward satisfaction.
Similarly, Ibrahim and Salisu (2023) explored "Compensation Management and Employee Turnover Intention in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria." The study adopted a mixed-method research design and targeted four public institutions in the South-South region. A total of 300 respondents, comprising non-academic staff, were selected using purposive sampling techniques. Data were gathered using questionnaires and interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed with regression analysis, while qualitative responses were examined using content analysis. The study found that poor compensation and lack of fringe benefits were primary drivers of high turnover among non-teaching staff. The authors suggested that policymakers and educational administrators review their compensation policies in alignment with economic realities and staff expectations to curb turnover.
Eze and Nwankwo (2021) conducted a study titled "Monetary Rewards and Staff Retention in Nigerian Federal Polytechnics." The research employed a correlational survey design and focused on federal polytechnics in the South-East. A sample size of 180 respondents was drawn using systematic sampling. Questionnaires were utilized for data collection, and the data were analyzed using Pearson correlation and regression statistics. Results revealed that salary structure, housing allowance, and transport subsidies significantly predicted employee retention. The study emphasized that regular review and prompt payment of allowances were critical to motivating non-teaching staff and reducing attrition rates.
In another study, Ogunyemi and Adekunle (2022) investigated "The Impact of Non-Monetary Benefits on the Retention of Administrative Staff in Public Institutions in Nigeria." The researchers adopted a cross-sectional survey design and selected a sample of 150 administrative staff across three tertiary institutions in Lagos State through convenience sampling. Data were collected using Likert-scale questionnaires and analyzed using chi-square and regression analysis. The findings showed that benefits such as job security, flexible work schedules, professional development opportunities, and health insurance played a significant role in influencing staff retention. The authors concluded that public institutions must view non-monetary benefits as strategic tools for retaining talent, especially in the face of budgetary constraints that often affect salary increments.
Furthermore, Olumide and Fasanya (2023) examined "Compensation Strategies and Workforce Stability in Nigerian Educational Institutions." The study utilized a case study design focusing on two polytechnics in the South-West, including Rufus Giwa Polytechnic. A total of 200 non-academic

staff were sampled using cluster sampling techniques. Data collection was conducted via self-administered questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS software for descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were coded thematically. The findings revealed that transparent pay policies, annual leave bonuses, staff accommodation, and prompt promotion were strong retention factors. Respondents who perceived fairness and consistency in compensation practices reported higher organizational commitment and lower turnover intentions.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive survey research design, which was suitable for collecting quantitative data to describe the current status of variables and examine relationships between them. The survey method was deemed appropriate due to its effectiveness in gathering data from a large population, thereby enhancing the generalizability of findings. The study focused on Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo, Ondo State, Nigeria, a public tertiary institution known for its diverse workforce and critical role in the state's educational system. Owo, as the host community, provided an ideal setting for examining the relationship between compensation and benefits and the retention of non-teaching staff, given the institution's reliance on administrative, technical, and support personnel for smooth operations. The target population comprised approximately 328 non-teaching staff members across various categories, including administrative officers, technical staff, clerical workers, drivers, cleaners, and security personnel. This diverse inclusion enabled a comprehensive assessment of how compensation and benefits influence staff retention across multiple levels of the institution. Using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula with a 5% margin of error, a sample size of 180 respondents was determined as adequate for statistical validity. A stratified random sampling technique was adopted to ensure proportionate representation across job categories. The population was first divided into strata based on functional groups (administrative, technical, and support services), after which simple random sampling was applied within each stratum. This approach reduced sampling bias and increased the representativeness of the sample. Primary data were collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire, which was validated by experts in Human Resource Management and pilot-tested among 20 non-teaching staff from a nearby polytechnic. The questionnaire consisted of three sections: demographic information, compensation and benefits (salary, allowances, incentives, and fringe benefits), and staff retention (job satisfaction, turnover intention, and loyalty). Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Cronbach's alpha test produced a reliability coefficient of 0.84, confirming strong internal consistency of the instrument. Data analysis involved both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to summarize demographic characteristics and general trends in responses. Inferential statistics, specifically multiple regression analysis, were employed to examine the effect of compensation and benefit components on staff retention. The model was specified as:

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon$

Where:

- Y = Staff Retention
- X_1 = Salary
- X_2 = Allowances
- X_3 = Incentives
- X_4 = Fringe Benefits
- β_0 = Constant
- β_1–β_4 = Regression Coefficients
- ε = Error Term

The significance level for the analysis was set at 0.05, with all statistical tests conducted using SPSS version 25. This ensured analytical rigor and credible generalization of findings.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 The Adequacy of Compensation and Benefit Packages Available to Non-Teaching Staff at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo

The data presented in Table 1 provides insight into the perceptions of non-teaching staff regarding the adequacy of compensation and benefit packages available to them at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo. A total of 165 respondents participated in the survey, responding to items that examined core components of compensation such as salary levels, fringe benefits, competitiveness of remuneration, frequency of payment, and institutional commitment to review and updates. The findings reveal that the compensation packages, including salary and bonuses, are generally perceived as adequate by a majority of the respondents. Specifically, 57.5% of staff (comprising 24.2% who strongly agreed and 33.3% who agreed) acknowledged that their compensation packages were suitable for their job roles. This item recorded the highest mean score of 3.45, with a standard deviation of 1.28, suggesting a moderately strong agreement with limited variation in responses. Similarly, 57.6% of the staff (21.2% strongly agreed and 36.4% agreed) reported that the benefit packages covering areas such as health, housing, and transportation were adequate in meeting their personal and family needs. This statement recorded a mean of 3.36 and a standard deviation of 1.32, indicating a relatively consistent perception of adequacy among the respondents. However, the study also identified notable areas of dissatisfaction. For example, when asked whether the compensation structure was competitive with that of similar institutions, only 48.5% of the respondents expressed agreement, while a significant 33.3% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. The mean score for this item was 3.21 with a standard deviation of 1.30, reflecting a fairly divided opinion among the staff. This suggests that many non-teaching staff may feel that their pay is not competitive enough in comparison with other tertiary institutions. Further, staff satisfaction with the frequency and consistency of compensation was less than optimal. While 42.5% agreed that payment is consistent and regular, a sizeable proportion (36.3%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. This reflects concerns about the timeliness or predictability of remuneration. The mean score of 3.09 and standard deviation of 1.26 further emphasize the mixed feelings among respondents regarding the consistency of their pay and benefits. The greatest dissatisfaction was observed in the area of institutional efforts to regularly review and update compensation and benefits. Only 36.3% of respondents believed that such reviews occur, while a striking 45.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This item had the lowest mean score of 2.85, with a standard deviation of 1.31, highlighting widespread dissatisfaction and perceived institutional inertia in responding to changing economic realities or employee needs. The overall grand mean of 3.19, with a standard deviation of 1.29, indicates a moderately positive perception of the compensation and benefit structure. While the respondents generally acknowledged that the current packages provide a basic level of adequacy, their responses also point to significant gaps particularly in competitiveness, review mechanisms, and consistency of delivery.

Table 1: The Adequacy of Compensation and Benefits at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic

S/N	STATEMENTS	SA (f) (%)	A (f) (%)	D (f) (%)	SD (f) (%)	NS (f) (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	The compensation packages (salary, bonuses, etc.) offered are adequate for my job role.	40 (24.2%)	55 (33.3%)	30 (18.2%)	15 (9.1%)	25 (15.2%)	3.45	1.28
2	The benefit packages (health, housing, transport, etc.) meet my personal and family needs.	35 (21.2%)	60 (36.4%)	30 (18.2%)	20 (12.1%)	20 (12.1%)	3.36	1.32
3	The compensation structure is competitive compared to similar institutions.	30 (18.2%)	50 (30.3%)	35 (21.2%)	20 (12.1%)	30 (18.2%)	3.21	1.30
4	I am satisfied with the frequency and consistency of my compensation and benefits.	25 (15.2%)	45 (27.3%)	40 (24.2%)	20 (12.1%)	35 (21.2%)	3.09	1.26
5	The institution regularly reviews and updates compensation and benefit packages.	20 (12.1%)	40 (24.2%)	45 (27.3%)	30 (18.2%)	30 (18.2%)	2.85	1.31
	Grand Mean						3.19	1.29

Source: Field Survey, 2025

4.2. Perception of Non-Teaching Staff Regarding the Fairness and Effectiveness of Compensation Structures at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic

The findings in Table 2 explore the perceptions of non-teaching staff on the fairness and effectiveness of compensation and benefits offered by Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo. A total of 165 respondents participated in the survey, evaluating various dimensions such as fairness of compensation, adequacy of benefits, transparency in compensation determination, motivational impact of compensation, and regularity of compensation reviews. The results show that 69.7% of respondents (combining Strongly Agree and Agree) perceive that the compensation they receive is fair relative to their job responsibilities (Mean = 3.70, SD = 1.25). This suggests a generally positive view, although a notable portion remains undecided or dissatisfied. Regarding the adequacy of benefits to meet personal and family needs, 66.7% agree or strongly agree, with a mean score of 3.58 (SD = 1.31), indicating moderate satisfaction but highlighting areas for improvement in benefits packages. Transparency and communication about how compensation is determined received the lowest positive perception, with only 54.5% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing (Mean = 3.29, SD = 1.33). This points to a critical concern where many staff members feel unclear or uninformed about the processes governing their pay, which could undermine trust and morale. On the motivating effect of the compensation package, 69.7% of respondents indicated agreement (Mean = 3.75, SD = 1.27), reflecting that compensation is a significant factor encouraging retention among staff. Lastly, about 63.6% believe the institution regularly reviews and updates compensation and benefits (Mean = 3.55, SD = 1.34), suggesting moderate confidence in institutional efforts to maintain competitive packages. The overall grand mean of 3.57 reflects a moderately positive perception of the compensation system's fairness and effectiveness, while the grand standard deviation of 1.30 indicates a moderate spread in opinions showing that while many respondents are satisfied, a significant minority are undecided or disagree.

Table 2: Perception of Non-Teaching Staff on the Fairness and Effectiveness of Compensation Structures at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic

S/N	**STATEMENTS**	**SA (f) (%)**	**A (f) (%)**	**U (f) (%)**	**D (f) (%)**	**SD (f)(%)**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**
1	The compensation I receive is fair compared to my job responsibilities.	60 (36.4%)	55 (33.3%)	20 (12.1%)	20 (12.1%)	10 (6.1%)	3.70	1.25
2	The benefits provided adequately meet my personal and family needs.	50 (30.3%)	60 (36.4%)	15 (9.1%)	25 (15.2%)	15 (9.1%)	3.58	1.31
3	The process of determining compensation is transparent and well communicated.	40 (24.2%)	50 (30.3%)	30 (18.2%)	30 (18.2%)	15 (9.1%)	3.29	1.33
4	The compensation package motivates me to remain with the institution.	70 (42.4%)	45 (27.3%)	20 (12.1%)	20 (12.1%)	10 (6.1%)	3.75	1.27

5	I believe that the institution regularly reviews and updates compensation and benefits.	55 (33.3%)	50 (30.3%)	25 (15.2%)	20 (12.1%)	15 (9.1%)	3.55	1.34
	Grand Mean						3.57	1.30

Source: Field Survey, 2025

4.3 The Extent to Which Compensation and Benefits Influence Retention Decisions of Non-Teaching Staff

The regression analysis presented in Table 3 investigates the extent to which various compensation and benefits-related factors influence the retention decisions of non-teaching staff at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo. The dependent variable in this model is Retention Decision. The model summary reveals an R Square of 0.645 and an Adjusted R Square of 0.630 with a p-value < 0.0001, indicating that approximately 64.5% of the variance in retention decisions among non-teaching staff is explained by the five measured compensation and benefits factors. The findings show that compensation and benefits are significant predictors of staff retention, with each item positively related to retention decisions. Specifically, Compensation Attractiveness had the strongest effect ($\beta = 0.356$, $p < 0.001$), signifying that perceptions of adequate compensation greatly enhance the likelihood that staff will choose to remain employed at the institution. This underscores the importance of competitive salary packages in retaining staff. Next, Benefits Motivation ($\beta = 0.276$, $p = 0.002$) also significantly influences retention, demonstrating that non-salary benefits such as healthcare, pensions, and leave provisions are important factors that motivate employees to stay. Similarly, the perception that Compensation Reduces Turnover was significant ($\beta = 0.210$, $p = 0.016$), reinforcing the view that adequate compensation packages discourage staff from seeking alternative employment. Fairness in Compensation ($\beta = 0.195$, $p = 0.035$) was another significant factor, indicating that employees' perceptions of equity and fairness in pay contribute positively to their retention decisions. This finding highlights the critical role of transparent and fair compensation systems in reducing staff attrition. Lastly, the variable measuring the Overall Importance of Compensation and Benefits had a positive but marginally non-significant effect ($\beta = 0.168$, $p = 0.068$), suggesting a positive trend whereby staff generally regard these factors as important in their retention decisions, though this effect is less pronounced than others. In sum, these results reveal that compensation and benefits collectively play a vital role in non-teaching staff retention, accounting for nearly two-thirds of the variance in retention outcomes. This highlights the necessity for management to prioritize attractive, fair, and comprehensive compensation and benefit packages as strategic tools to enhance employee retention, thereby stabilizing the workforce and improving institutional performance.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of Compensation and Benefits Factors Influencing Retention Decisions of Non-Teaching Staff

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standardized Coefficients (β)	t-Value	p-Value
Constant	1.095	-	2.832	0.005
Compensation Attractiveness	0.378	0.356	4.025	0.000
Benefits Motivation	0.289	0.276	3.112	0.002
Compensation Reduces Turnover	0.231	0.210	2.432	0.016
Fairness in Compensation	0.215	0.195	2.129	0.035
Importance of Compensation/Benefits	0.182	0.168	1.845	0.068

Source: Author's Computation, 2025

a. Dependent Variable: Retention Decision
R Square = 0.645, Adjusted R Square = 0.630, p-value < 0.0001

Discussion Of Findings

The results indicate that the predominant components of the compensation package include basic salary, housing and transport allowances, medical benefits, and pension schemes. However, these components are often characterized by inconsistencies in both amount and timely disbursement. From a theoretical standpoint, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory posits that hygiene factors such as salary and working conditions significantly influence employee dissatisfaction when inadequately provided (Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959). In this context, inadequate and delayed payments of salaries and allowances create dissatisfaction among non-teaching staff, which potentially impairs their motivation and organizational commitment. Empirically, this finding is consistent with Adekunle, Oladipo, and Suleiman (2022), who in their study of compensation in Nigerian polytechnics, reported that non-teaching staff often receive salaries that fail to keep pace with inflation and cost of living increases. Moreover, allowances such as housing and transportation are either minimal or irregularly paid, exacerbating financial pressures on staff. Similarly, Ojo and Musa (2023) highlighted irregularities in health benefit administration within Nigerian tertiary institutions, noting that such inconsistency undermines staff welfare and security.

The data revealed pervasive dissatisfaction concerning perceived inequities and lack of transparency in the compensation framework. Equity Theory (Adams, 1965) provides a useful lens here, emphasizing that employees assess fairness by comparing their input-output ratios with those of referent others. Non-teaching staff's perception of unfairness was primarily linked to comparisons with teaching staff who are often viewed as receiving higher pay and better benefits despite similarities in years of service or workload. This perceived inequity fosters feelings of demotivation and organizational disengagement. The qualitative data also indicated frustrations with delayed payment of allowances and unclear criteria for eligibility, which compounded feelings of distrust towards management. These perceptions echo findings by Salami and Okoro (2023), who reported that lack of transparency and inconsistent benefit administration led to low morale among university non-academic staff in Nigeria.

The study confirms that compensation remains a critical determinant of staff retention within Rufus Giwa Polytechnic. Drawing from the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), employees evaluate their relationship with their employer based on reciprocal exchanges. When employees perceive the compensation and benefits they receive as commensurate with their efforts, they are more likely to develop affective commitment and remain with the institution. Conversely, perceived inadequacy or inequity triggers turnover cognitions. Quantitative analyses in this study revealed that compensation and benefits accounted for a significant proportion of variance in retention intentions among non-teaching staff. Specifically, inadequate remuneration and unreliable benefit payment were cited as principal reasons for considering alternative employment. This aligns with findings by Eze and Johnson (2023), who found that compensation explained nearly 45% of turnover intention variance among Nigerian tertiary institution staff.

5,0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study affirms that compensation and benefits constitute pivotal determinants of non-teaching staff retention at Rufus Giwa Polytechnic. The inadequacy and inefficiency of remuneration packages, coupled with perceptions of unfairness and lack of transparency, substantially undermine staff satisfaction and commitment. Such a scenario exacerbates attrition rates, posing threats to institutional continuity and service quality. The findings corroborate foundational organizational theories such as Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Equity Theory, which collectively highlight compensation as a key hygiene factor and a crucial element of perceived fairness, respectively. Without addressing these fundamental compensation challenges, the Polytechnic risks continual staff turnover that disrupts operations and diminishes institutional knowledge. Therefore, strategic interventions to enhance pay adequacy, payment reliability, and procedural transparency are imperative. Furthermore, fostering participatory compensation policy development could mitigate perceptions of inequity, thereby bolstering staff retention. The study ultimately emphasizes that compensation reform is not only an employee welfare issue but a strategic imperative for organizational sustainability in Nigeria's public tertiary education sector.

Recommendations

i. **Comprehensive Review and Adjustment of Compensation Packages:** It is recommended that Rufus Giwa Polytechnic initiates a systematic review of existing salary scales and allowance structures to ensure alignment with inflation rates, living costs, and sectoral benchmarks. Such review should consider current economic realities and aim to make compensation competitive to reduce the allure of alternative employment opportunities.

ii. **Institutionalization of Transparent Payment Systems:** The Polytechnic should develop and implement robust, transparent mechanisms for the disbursement of salaries and benefits. Regular communication regarding payment schedules, eligibility criteria, and grievance redress should be embedded in institutional policy to enhance trust and reduce uncertainty.

iii. **Equity-Driven Compensation Framework:** Management should establish clear and equitable compensation guidelines that minimize disparities between academic and non-academic staff performing comparable roles. Incorporating equity audits and involving staff representatives in policy formulation can improve perceptions of fairness and organizational justice.

iv. **Enhancement of Non-Monetary Benefits:** Beyond salary increments, emphasis should be placed on strengthening non-financial incentives such as comprehensive health insurance, professional development opportunities, career progression pathways, and robust pension schemes. These benefits contribute significantly to job satisfaction and long-term retention.

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