NAS Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (NASJAHSS)

Homepage: https://naspublisher.com/nasjahss/

eISSN: XXXX-XXXX [Online] | ISSN: XXXX-XXXX [Print]

Volume 1 • Issue 1 • Nov-Dec, 2026

Promotion: A Motivational Tool for Lecturers Job Commitment in Nigerian Universities

Wilfred Igho Uge (PhD) & Ebi Emmanuel Kereotubo (PhD)

Educational Management, Faculty of Education, Niger Delta University, Wilberforce Island, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

*Corresponding Author: Wilfred Igho Uge (PhD) | ORCID: [0000-0000-0000-0000]

Received	Accepted	Published
10.08.2026	10.09.2026	01.11.2026

Copyright © 2026 The Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0).

Abstract

The study explored promotion as a motivational tool for lecturer's job commitment in Nigerian universities. Lecturers have a lot to gain from their promotion and this influences their professional job commitment. Universities too benefit from promotion of lecturers, in that the National University Commission considers the number of experienced lecturers as a criteria before accredition of universities programmes. There are basically seven levels of promotion in Nigerian universities. Each level has some hurdles lecturers must cross before they can ascend the next level. Based on the above, it was recommended that Academic staff union of universities should push for special allowance for research publication; lecturers should endeavor to publish at least a paper in a year to facilitate their promotion. The federal and state government should endeavor to pay promotion allowances and universities printing presses should reduce their publishing fees in that lecturers go through a lot to publish a research work.

Keywords: Promotion, Motivational tools, Lecturers, Commitment.

Introduction

Promotion is an appraisal exercise which is carried out in Nigerian universities yearly. However a lecturer or a non-teaching staff is entitled to be promoted after three years residency. All it takes for non-teaching staff to be promoted is regularity at work. Promotion to level 14 and 15 however requires a promotion interview. Promotion for lecturers is quite tedious. They are required to participate in community services, deliver lectures in classes regularly, attend at least 3 conferences in a year and they must publish papers in reputable journals both locally and internationally.

No matter what it takes, all lecturers look up to their promotion. It is a kind of recognise for their performance. Besides it adds to their monthly salary and it comes with higher responsibilities. For a lecturer to be appointed to serve as a Head of Department (HOD), he needs to be a professor. Though senior lecturers can be appointed as acting Head of Department. Only lecturers who have attained the status of a professor can vile for the position of a Dean, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Vice Chancellor of their university. These and many more are the reasons promotion to the status of a professor is so cherished by all lecturers.

Promotion as defined by Otu (2023) is the ascension of employees to a higher rank. It entails an increase in position, salary, status, and benefits. It is an aspect of a job which drives an employee to be committed to their professional job performance. Promotion engineers dedication and loyalty towards an organization. Promotion is a positive way of rewarding employees for their efforts and services. Lack of promotion on the other hand can lead to low commitment to an organization's objective and can also lower a staff's morale. This can result to frustration, resignation and premature retirement from an organization.

Job commitment on the other hand as defined by Onukwube et all (2021) is the willingness of an employee to respect the norms, value and subsequently agree to be involved in the affairs of an organization with the intention of facilitating the attainment of desired goals. It is the extent to which an employee agrees, internalizes and perceives his role based on organization goal. Job commitment is a strong belief and acceptance of an organizational value and willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization. A lecturer may stay with a university because the university values, mission and vision is in consonance with his own. Another lecturer may decide to stay with the same university, because leaving may impair his prestige or distort his social network. Job commitment therefore, is as a result of perception. The decision of a lecturer to stay or to leave a university is due to his perception. But then, perception can be influenced by promotion. A lecturer who gains his promotion as at when due periodically, will have a perception that tints towards commitment for his job. Rising up the hierarchy of one's professional career induces job commitment. This is the case with many lecturers. They willingly commit to their university objectives in as much as their promotion is steady.

Promotion criteria in Nigerian university

The condition of service of Nigerian universities as regards promotion is literally the same. Though there are slight differences. Some universities will allow lecturers to climb to the rank of a senior lecturer without a doctorate degree. Some universities like the Niger Delta University Wilberforce Island made it compulsory for all lecturers to obtain a doctorate degree before they can be promoted to the rank of a

senior lecturer. All the Nigerian universities made it mandatory for all lecturers to obtain a doctor of philosophy before they can be promoted a professor.

Jewell et all (2021) states that in all universities in Nigeria, promotion is effected upon confirmation of a lecturer's appointment with a university. This is usually done 2 years after continuous satisfactory performance by the lecturer, especially if the lecturer's appointment is a tenure-based appointment. Confirmation of an appointment grants a lecturer a pensionable appointment status in the university and a privilege to be periodically promoted as at when due. A year after confirmation, a lecture can be appraised for a promotion, as it is the practice in Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University in Anambra state, and in most Nigerian universities. In Nigerian universities, before an academic staff can be promoted, as earlier stated , he must have published academic papers in a reputable journal and he must attend conferences. Some universities want lecturers to attend at least conferences in a promotional year, while some accept 3 conferences before a lecturer can be promoted.

The number of published papers a lecturer has and the nature of the journals where his papers are published (local or international journal), influence his promotion. However, senior lecturers and above, most have a number of papers published in international journals. It will be wise to state at this juncture the various ranks of lecturers. They are as follows: i. Graduate assistant ii. Assistant lecturer iii Lecturer II iv.Lecturer I v. Senior lecturer vi. Reader or Associate Professor vii. Professor.

Graduate assistants are fresh graduates who graduated with good grades such as First class or Second class upper honour degrees. University authorities decide to retain their best performing who prove to be proved to be good academic material. Graduate assistants are usually not assigned courses to lecture. With just a published paper, they can be promoted after 3 years. However, they can be promoted after one and half years if they did a master's degree.

Assistant lecturer: They can be apportioned courses to lecture. With just two published papers, they can be promoted to the next rank after 3 years. However, a doctor of philosophy degree can earn them a promotion immediately to the next level.

Lecturer II: This is the starting point for lecturers with a doctor of philosophy. They can be assigned courses; but any book they wrote will not be honoured. They required just two papers to climb up the next level after three years residency.

Lecture I: There is no much differences between Lecturer II and Lecturer I. Six papers including 3 years residency, can earn themb a promotion to the next level. Two of the papers must be published in international journals.

Senior lecturer: So much prestige, so much privilege and so much responsibilities. A senior lecturer can be appointed an Acting Head of Department. A privilege which allows him to attend senate meetings and to earn sitting allowance. A senior lecturer is required to have 18 papers, 6 of which must be published in international journals.

Readers: They are also known as associate professors. They can act as Heads of Departments and they can go on sabbatical leaves to any university of their choice. They require 24-28 published papers to be promoted a professor. Eight of the papers, depending on the university must be published in internal journals.

Professor: Prestigious and laced with a whole lot of benefits; but a difficult hierarchy to attain. So many papers need to be published and the papers must be subject to plagiarism. It is the highest rank of promotion which demands a great deal of commitment from lecturers.

Reasons Promotion Induces Lecturers Job Commitment

In the university, commitment is the sharp line between a frustrated lecturer and a satisfied lecturer who ascends steadily up the ladder of leadership. Every promotion gained attracts additional allowance. The allowance can be channeled by a committed lecturer to publish more papers with which to prosecute his next promotion. Basically promotion induces commitment on the following grounds:

Self Actualisation: The status of a professor is prestigious no doubt but it's only a stepping stone to self-actualization. Many professors may not be vice-chancellor or even a deputy vice chancellor. But these are offices that command self-actualization. It is a state of being fully satisfied to have attained all it takes in one's chosen career. This is in consonant with Kebueze (2024) which states that man's needs are in strata, that self-actualization is the ultimate goal of every worker in an organization. The office of the Vice chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellor can only be attained by a professor. So lecturers needs to pursue promotion vigorously if self-actualization is a goal.

Sabbatical Leave: This is another benefit lecturers enjoy as a result of promotion that can lash them to be committed to their job. Lecturers who have attained the level of a senior lecturer and above, are entitled to a year or two years long sabbatical leave. Sabbatical leave is a privilege given to lecturers to work in another university while their original employer pays them salary. Sabbatical leave makes it possible for lecturers to earn double salaries. Moreso, it gives lecturers leeway to write books and to embark on researches. This is in line with Wariebi (2023) when he states that lecturers who are qualified as a result of promotion can use sabbatical leave duration, in which they are fully paid, to carry out intensive research work collect field data or write books.

Special allowances: Lecturers who are promoted to high rank in their career are usually appointed to head units, departments or study centres in the university. These appointments endear them to special fund such as inducement, imprest, sitting allowance and so on. The provost of a college, for example, who must be a professor, is a senate member, where he is paid sitting allowance. The university also gives him an imprest to run his office. He will also be paid an inducement to cater for the extra hours he spends on duty. He is expected to attend conferences and seminars both within and outside the country, which the university must bankroll. These privileges are available to all lecturers of senior ranks who are given an administrative portfolio. These offices illicit commitment from lecturers as they report often on duty. This is in conformity with Anina (2024) when he said promotion is a necessary tool that can help lecturers to be committed to their professional job. Promotion does the function of recognition, since universities hardly organise award ceremony for the recognition of lecturer's performance.

Government Appointment and Consultancy: Lecturers openly rant on campus that after a doctor of philosophy study programme, the next step is to align with a political party. As earlier stated, a doctorate degree is a prerequisite for promotion. However, politicians count on lecturers to provide technocrat services for their government. The same reason politicians are prosecuting their study up to doctorate degree. Multinational organisations also count on professors to provide them with consultancy services.

Promotion therefore opens doors of opportunities in the general public for lecturers. This also makes lecturers to be committed to their job. This aligns with Uge and Major (2025) who said that the lecturing job is a pertinent profession that is not only imperative to the university but to the society in general. The political class counts on them for technocrat services, just as multinational organisations also rely on them for consultancy services.

Benefit of Promotion to the University

Ironically, promotion is not only of a great benefit to individual lecturers but it is also of an immense benefit to the university. Here are some of the benefits universities enjoy from the promotion of lecturers:

Accreditation of programmes: It is a well-known fact that the National University Commission (NUC) visit universities from time to time, to assess their performance and to accredit their programmes. Universities, who suffer from lack of accreditation by the National University Commission, are usually those universities who lack experienced lecturers to handle their programmes. The reason Federal University of Abuja had most of its programmes discredited when it was at its nacit stage. That year, the University of Ibadan had almost all its programmes approved as a result of its large number of experienced lecturers, occasioned by promotion. So, the more lecturers are promoted, the more universities' programme are accredited. Though insufficient manpower and facilities can lead to non-approval of a university programme.

Retainance of manpower: Federal University Otuoke, Bayelsa state lacked experienced lecturers shortly after it was established. They threw their door open for lecturers in the Niger Delta University. Though a federal university with better allowances and salary. Many of the lecturers in the Niger Delta University turned down their offer. This is most likely due to the prospects of promotion opportunities they enjoy in the Niger Delta University. Therefore, promotion helps universities to retain their best hands.

Cost and time saving: According to an African proverb, new broom sweeps clean. True new employees love to report regularly and promptly to duty but with little skills to accomplish tasks. To pep up efficiency of new employees requires training, which is cost consuming. Apart from cost of training, it is cost-intensive recruiting new employees. It cost some amount of money to place adverts for recruitment of staff and it also cost chunks of money to set a panel for interview and selection. Unlike when a university decides to nurture and promote her lecturers. Appraisals exercise literally cost universities little or no charges.

Organizational efficiency: With all hands on deck grappling over promotion, organisational efficiency is easily achieved. Achieving organizational goals is not difficult in that on the course of employees striving to be promoted, they carry out their tasks dutifully. Unlike when they feel that no matter what they do, their employer will not consider it relevant for a promotion. Lecturer's promotion benefits universities a lot. This is because it makes them to be regular in classes. Therefore the issues of half-baked graduates is averted. Promotion of lecturers benefits the university in that several research materials are readily made available.

Healthy competition: With several lecturers justly over a position, the university did be better in productivity. The issue of lack of research materials in many universities is no longer an issue. This is due to the fact that lecturers have no choice than to publish papers if they must get to the top. The crave

for the office of the vice chancellor creates a healthy competitions among lecturers which makes lecturers to be up and doing in all university activities such as unionism, attendance of senate or faculty board meetings, book writing and so forth that can get them recognitions. This way, the university benefits from promotion of lecturers.

Book publishing: Writing is an inane gift. But in the university system not all categories of lecturers can publish their books and it will be accepted. A lecturer must be promoted to at least the rank of a senior lecturer before his book can be accepted. Though book writing counts at appraisal for promotion exercises .Any book written by a lecturer below the rank of a senior lecturers will have to remain on the shelve pending when the lecturer attained the rank of a senior lecturer before he can enjoy patronage. This is exactly what happens in business organisations. Development or expansion has a lot of advantages. Large companies dominate the market because of the advantages they enjoy. So does individuals who keep pushing for the top.

Commitment: Lecturing can be a profession or an occupation. A profession because one is trained to carry out his duty. An occupation because it is something one does to earn a living. Not all persons who are involved in lecturing are professional. Some merely do it as an occupation and they make means of lively hood from it. As a process, lecturing involves a series of planned activities, which takes place over time. Lecturers who take it as an occupation are usually not committed. But those who take it as a profession are usually committed. They have high level of performance which provides a clear focus for university appraiser and promotion committee to consider as a due commitment to the university goals for the purpose of promotion. According to Iloh (2020) lecturing is regarded as one of the oldest activities or occupation which many see as an occupation, an activity or a profession.

Recommendation

Due to the reviewed literatures, the findings and its implications, it is recommended that Academic staff union of universities should demand from the federal government a special allowance for publication of research papers to be added to the salary of lectures. This will enable lecturers to carry out research without financial incidences.

The federal government and state governments should endeavor to effect promotion allowance as soon as lecturers are promoted. It was observed in some states that professors go home with salary grade they were earning when they were associate professor due to delay in the implementation of promotion allowance

Lecturers should try as much as they could to publish at least a paper in year so that they can meet up with their promotion requirement. Stagnancy leads to frustration in ones chosen career.

Finally, universities own printing presses should reduce their publishing fees for lecturers. Their cost is outrageous. In some countries like South Africa and Uzbekistan, lecturers publish their papers with little or no changes. Science based research paper are usually published for free. But in Nigeria, lecturers must pay through their noises. Universities printing presses should know that publishing fee is not the only cost lecturers incur to publish their research work. They had to go to the field, do plagiarism test, buy books and will have to type their work before submitting it for publication.

Conclusion

From a distance the lecturer job appears cozy and easy. However, it is actually beclouded with bottle necks. It is strenuous going through several books to deliver lectures in classes. It is an Hercules task moving from one city to another in order to attend conferences and seminars. It is in-arguable hellish to write, conduct field work and to publish a paper in the name of promotion. Based on the findings therefore, it is concluded that promotion has a relationship with lecturers job commitment in Nigerian universities.

Reference

Iloh G.O (2020). Principles and methods of teaching.

West and Solomon publishing co. Ltd

Kebueze B. (2024). Personal identity.

Psychological development. Wisdom press Nig. Ltd

Iewell, L.R, beavers, C.K, Malpied, B.J & Flower, J.I. (2021).

Relationships between levels of job satisfaction expressed by North Carolina agriculture

teachers and their perceptions towards the agricultural education, 4(3), 52-54

Onukwebe, H.N, Iyagba, R & Fajana 5. (2021).The influence of motivation on job performance

of construction companies in Nigeria construction, building and real estate. Royal institute of chattered, surveyors, Dauphine University, Paris.

Out, D.O. (2023). Human resources management in education.

Course development National open university of Nigeria.

Uge, W.I. & Major, B.N (2025). Human resource management practices and lecturers job

commitment in Bayelsa State universities. International journal of entrepreneurship and Forensic management research 8(7), 01-09

Wariebi, C.C. (2023). Foundation of school administration.

Oxford university press.

Paulson R. (2019). What is promotion? Industrial and lab our relationship reviews. 5(3), 581-598