

Innovations

Role of Efficient Grievance Resolution on Employee Morale and Performance in Tertiary Institutions in Southeast Nigeria

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Abstract: *This study explored the role of efficient grievance resolution in enhancing employee morale and performance in tertiary educational institutions in Southeast Nigeria. The study aimed to: (1) determine the impact of speedy attention to grievance resolution on the emotional attachment of academic staff to their institutions, (2) assess how timely grievance resolution influenced academic staff's commitment to institutional goals and values, and (3) examine the effect of swift grievance handling on the sense of indebtedness among academic staff. A survey research design was employed, with data collected from 318 academic staff across selected institutions. Descriptive statistics, correlation, regression, and ANOVA were used to analyze the data. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between efficient grievance resolution and emotional attachment (Pearson correlation: 0.938), commitment to institutional goals, and feelings of indebtedness. These results underscored the importance of effective grievance management in fostering employee morale and enhancing organizational commitment. Institutions that addressed grievances promptly experienced higher levels of staff satisfaction, increased alignment with institutional objectives, and a stronger sense of loyalty. Recommendations included the establishment of efficient grievance-handling mechanisms, transparent communication, regular feedback loops, and investment in conflict resolution training. The study concluded that effective and timely grievance management plays a critical role in creating a motivated and dedicated workforce, thus contributing to institutional success and stability.*

Keywords: *Grievance Management, Emotional Attachment, Timely Resolution, Institutional Goals, Employee Commitment*

Introduction

In any human collective, conflicts and grievances are inevitable. This reality is particularly true in organizational settings, where addressing grievances swiftly is essential to maintaining effective teamwork. Unfortunately, grievances are not always managed promptly, leading to dissatisfaction and disruption within the workplace (Agabe, 2022; Aktar & Alam, 2021). Effective grievance management is crucial to sustaining a productive and harmonious work environment, as unresolved grievances can severely undermine organizational cohesion and

employee morale (Obiekwe & Eke, 2019). Organizations must prioritize prompt and appropriate grievance management to ensure that every employee feels valued and heard, which in turn fosters mutual respect and a healthy work environment (Dhanabhakym & Monish, 2021; Monish & Dhanabhakym, 2022a). When employees' grievances are taken seriously and addressed immediately, it signals to the workforce that their concerns are valued, promoting a culture of transparency and mutual respect. Grievances should be viewed as opportunities for organizational growth and improvement rather than mere nuisances. By addressing grievances promptly and professionally, employers can enhance their credibility and corporate reputation, thereby fostering a positive organizational climate (Lewin, 2014; Pauwels, Ljubic, & De Buck, 2020; Siroky, Warner, Filip-Crawford, Berlin, & Neuberger, 2020).

In Nigeria, tertiary educational institutions play a pivotal role in national development. These institutions—comprising universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education—are integral to educating future leaders and professionals (Abanyam, David, & Ibrahim, 2020). As centers of knowledge, these institutions contribute significantly to societal sustainability, influencing health, nutrition, and economic development (Ajayi & Ogunode, 2022; Ekundayo & Ajayi, 2009). The management of these institutions operates on two levels: external oversight by federal bodies such as the National Universities Commission (NUC), the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), and the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), and internal governance through committees like the Governing Council and the Senate (Ukala & Ohia, 2018; Anyanwu & Ewhe, 2020; Bello & Onyeocha, 2023). Internally, tertiary institutions utilize a committee system to manage both administrative and academic functions. Key committees, accountable to either the Governing Council or the Senate, oversee various critical areas, including finance, development, appointments, promotions, admissions, academic planning, and research (Ajayi & Ogunode, 2022; Ogunode, Ohunene, & Olatunde-Aiyedun, 2022; Mgbekem, 2004). Effective grievance management within these institutions is vital for maintaining a motivated and productive academic staff. Grievances can arise from various issues such as contract disputes, policy disagreements, mistreatment, and compensation concerns (Monish & Dhanabhakym, 2022b, 2022a; Opatha, 2019). Unresolved grievances can lead to dissatisfaction and unrest, underscoring the need for proactive grievance management to foster a supportive work environment (Elbaz, Haddoud, Onjewu, & Abdelhamied, 2019).

Effective grievance handling is crucial for fostering positive employee relations and maintaining a fair, productive workplace. In Nigerian tertiary educational institutions, inadequate grievance management often leaves issues unaddressed, causing widespread dissatisfaction among students and faculty. This neglect can lead to decreased productivity, lower morale, and overall employee dissatisfaction. Professional organizations understand the importance of formal grievance mechanisms, viewing complaints as valuable feedback for service

improvement. However, the lack of proper grievance handling in Nigerian higher education results in a sense of injustice and disengagement, with potential consequences such as decreased motivation, dropout rates among students, and demoralization among faculty members. These issues ultimately undermine institutional reputation, deterring potential students and faculty. Thus, this study aims to explore the role of efficient grievance procedures in enhancing employee morale and performance in tertiary educational institutions in Southeast Nigeria, addressing the critical need for effective grievance management to ensure a supportive and productive academic environment. The study posits that the development of academic staff is crucial to the progress of tertiary educational institutions in South-East Nigeria. It isolates the principle of efficient grievance response to explore its impact on employee commitment. By addressing the geographical and sectoral gaps in existing literature, this study aims to provide insights into the dynamics of grievance management and employee morale in this specific context. The specific objectives are to:

1. Determine the impact of speedy attention to grievance resolution and the emotional attachment of academic staff to tertiary educational institutions.
2. Assess how timely resolution of grievances affects the love of academic staff for set goals and values in the institution's management.
3. Examine the influence of swift grievance handling on the feeling of indebtedness of academic staff to the institution.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Review

A grievance is a formal expression of dissatisfaction following a specific procedure and can encompass any perceived unfairness in the workplace, whether communicated or not (Agabe, 2022; Igbinoba et al., 2022). The International Labour Organization defines a grievance as a complaint regarding wages, working conditions, or employment terms. Grievances can be either unvoiced or explicitly stated, written or oral, valid or false, and can impact employee performance and morale (Dhanabhakya & Monish, 2021; Wijesooriya et al., 2021). Causes of grievances include poor working conditions, management policies, and personal maladjustments, with economic, environmental, supervision, organizational change, and employee relations issues contributing significantly (Eakin et al., 2020; Ogadinma & Zwingina, 2019). Unaddressed grievances can lead to low productivity, absenteeism, reduced commitment, and strained superior-subordinate relations (Gulzar et al., 2022; Siroky et al., 2020). Grievances can be categorized based on their source, such as management policies, working conditions, or individual factors, and further classified into factual, imaginary, disguised, individual, group, or policy grievances (Njiraini & Gachunga, 2015). Addressing grievances effectively is essential to maintaining a productive and fair work environment, as unresolved issues can result in

significant negative consequences for both employees and managers (Melchades, 2013; Njiraini & Gachunga, 2015).

Promptness in grievance procedures refers to the speed at which employee grievances are addressed and resolved by the organization. When employees feel that their grievances are promptly attended to, it creates a sense of trust and confidence in the organization, leading to increased employee commitment towards their work and the organization as a whole. Employees are more likely to be engaged and dedicated to their roles when they know that their concerns will be addressed promptly and effectively. Prompt handling of grievances is essential for both the employee and management, as delayed actions can negatively impact the morale of other employees (Godbless et al., 2020). Identifying and resolving the causes of dissatisfaction as soon as they are noticed is crucial. Managers, as experts in grievance handling, must be trained to effectively and efficiently manage employee grievances to avoid adverse impacts on employees, their performance, and the organization (Dhanabhakyaam & Monish, 2019; Godbless et al., 2020). The advantages of grievance procedures include conflict management and disagreement resolution, providing a passive means to diminish workplace pressures and doubts, and enhancing worker morale and performance (Ngetich, 2016; Saundry et al., 2013).

Grievance procedures improve perceptions of impartiality and justice by providing employees with opportunities to address their issues through decision-making specialists and possibly independent, third-party mediators. This process acts as a counterbalance to subjective or biased actions and ensures the fair interpretation and implementation of agreements. For example, a study at the Jomo Kenyatta Foundation found that prompt and effective grievance handling mechanisms improved employees' perceptions of fairness and equity (Ngetich, 2016). When employees feel aggrieved due to neglect or unjust actions by supervisors, having a grievance procedure allows them to express their concerns to top management. Unaddressed grievances can lead to low morale, frustration, dissatisfaction, and decreased productivity (Obiekwe & Eke, 2019). Conversely, prompt handling of grievances can significantly boost employee morale by making them feel heard and valued (Geetika et al., 2014; Opatha & Ismail, 2001; Wijesooriya et al., 2021). Therefore, grievance procedures are vital for maintaining a positive work environment and ensuring employees feel fairly treated, which enhances their overall efficiency and satisfaction.

Theoretical Review

This study is grounded in the Theory of Organizational Justice, developed by Greenberg in 1987. It focuses on employees' perceptions of fairness within organizations and how these perceptions affect their behavior (Greenberg, 1987, 2009). The theory consists of three key components: distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice (Colquitt, 2012; Judge & Colquitt,

2004). In the context of grievance procedures, procedural justice is particularly relevant as it emphasizes fair, transparent, and consistent processes in resolving disputes. Grievances perceived as fairly handled enhance employee satisfaction, trust, and morale (Dhanabhakya& Monish, 2021).

Tertiary institutions in Southeast Nigeria, often facing challenges such as workload, job insecurity, and limited advancement, can benefit from applying procedural justice. By ensuring grievance procedures are prompt, fair, and clear, these institutions create an environment where employees feel valued, improving job satisfaction and performance (DeConinck & Stilwell, 2004). Efficient grievance handling demonstrates management's commitment to addressing concerns, fostering trust and reducing feelings of injustice. Streamlined procedures also empower employees to engage fully in conflict resolution, contributing to enhanced morale, productivity, and organizational success.

Empirical Review

Agabe (2022) examined “The relationship between grievance management strategy and minimization of industrial actions in plastic manufacturing firms in Port Harcourt.” The explanatory survey research design was used, engaging 47 managers from 10 paint manufacturing firms. A questionnaire was used, and hypotheses were tested using the Spearman Rank order correlation, with 39 valid responses. Findings revealed a significant relationship between grievance management strategy and the minimization of industrial actions (picketing and work-to-rule). It recommended that firms in Port Harcourt should adopt an open-door policy and ensure regular interaction between management and employees to foster a harmonious work environment. Usendok (2022) investigated “Organizational conflict and employee job performance in Akwa Ibom State University” using a survey research design with 226 randomly selected employees. Data were generated through validated structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics. The results showed a significantly positive relationship between causes of organizational conflict (goal differences, common resources, task interdependence, and specialization) and employee job performance. Specialization displayed the highest positive correlation with organizational harmony. The study concluded that conflict is inevitable in organizational life and can impact performance positively or negatively depending on the conflict management methods.

Igbinoba, Osibanjo, and Salau (2022) examined “The influence of grievance management on corporate performance of selected manufacturing firms in Nigeria.” A survey design was employed with 300 respondents from top three quoted manufacturing firms on the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE). Data were collected via questionnaires and analyzed using regression analysis. The findings revealed a significant influence of avoidance, dominating, compromise, obliging, and integrating grievance management on organizational performance. The

study recommended that organizations encourage mutual relationships among employees and provide conducive working conditions to enhance productivity and performance. Wijesooriya, Tennakoon, and Lasanthika (2021) aimed at investigating “The effect of the grievance handling mechanism (GHM) on the extra-work performance (EWP) of shop floor employees in the Sri Lankan biscuit manufacturing industry.” Using a quantitative approach and multiple regression analysis, the study surveyed 156 shop floor employees with self-administered questionnaires. Findings revealed that top management commitment and perceived justice were the leading predictors of shop floor employees’ EWP. The study highlighted the necessity of maintaining an effective GHM to ensure sustainable business performance and tailored grievance handling for shop floor workers.

Godbless, Goddey, and Solomon (2020) examined “The impact of organizational grievance handling procedures on employees’ contextual performance in money deposit banks.” A cross-sectional survey method was adopted, and data were collected using the Likert scale and analyzed with descriptive statistics, multiple regressions, and inferential statistics. The study found that grievance handling procedures significantly and positively impacted employee contextual performance. It recommended that banks establish effective grievance handling mechanisms based on organizational justice and implement policies to reduce grievance resolution time, fostering a harmonious working environment. Ochieng and Juma (2019) assessed “The influence of formal grievance handling practices on employee retention in devolved units in Kenya.” Using a correlation research design, the study focused on Kisumu County Government, targeting 2,087 employees and sampling 125 respondents through purposive sampling. Data were collected using closed-ended questionnaires and analyzed with SPSS, regression analysis, and ANOVA. The study found significant evidence that formal grievance handling practices positively influence employee retention. It concluded that efficient grievance handling enhances employee retention and recommended regular meetings to settle disputes directly.

Methodology

The methodology employed in this study involved a survey research design, where a questionnaire was used as the primary data collection tool. A total of 330 responses were received, out of which 318 were correctly filled, yielding a response rate of 96%. The study targeted academic staff in tertiary educational institutions in Southeast Nigeria, focusing on various factors such as grievance resolution, emotional attachment, and alignment with institutional goals. The demographic breakdown of the respondents included variables such as gender, age, marital status, educational qualifications, and years of experience. The data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, correlation, and ANOVA, with the aid of SPSS software. Descriptive statistics provided insights into the central tendencies and spread of the data, while correlation and regression analyses

were used to test the relationships between key variables. The statistical significance of the findings was tested at a 5% level of significance, and the results were presented in tables showing frequencies, percentages, and mean values. Hypotheses were tested using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to determine the relationships among the variables, revealing significant effects of grievance resolution on emotional attachment, alignment with institutional goals, and staff indebtedness.

Analysis and Presentation of Data

The questionnaire administration yielded 330 responses, with 318 correctly filled (96%), 6 incorrectly filled (2%), 4 lost (1%), and 2 blank (1%). Respondents were 55.03% male and 44.97% female, with age distribution: 0.629% (18-25), 11.95% (26-35), 45.28% (36-45), and 42.14% (46+). Marital status: 27.04% single, 54.72% married, 14.47% divorced, and 0.629% widowed. Educational qualifications: 27.04% B.Sc./HND, 44.03% Master's, and 28.93% PhD or higher. Experience: 38.36% had <5 years, 25.47% had 6-10 years, 18.55% had 11-15 years, and 17.69% had >16 years. All 318 respondents (100%) experienced work-related grievances; 38.68% found grievance resolution satisfactory, 19.50% found it unsatisfactory, and 41.82% were unsure, highlighting the prevalence of grievances and varied satisfaction levels.

Table 1: Responses to the questions on prompt response to grievance complaints

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Speedy attention is given to grievance resolution	89	132	44	26	27	318
There is timeliness in the grievance handling procedure as most grievances are settled at the lowest possible level.	88	122	49	31	28	318
Grievances are referred to the appropriate authorities for swift handling.	99	103	57	33	26	318
Total	276	357	150	90	81	954
Average	92	119	50	30	27	318
Percentage	29	37	16	9	8	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 1 presents the responses to questions regarding prompt responses to grievance complaints in tertiary educational institutions. Across all statements, the majority of respondents indicated favourable perceptions. Specifically, for statement (a), 89 respondents strongly agreed and 132 agreed that speedy attention is given to grievance resolution, while only 26 disagreed and 27 strongly disagreed. Similarly, for statement (b), 88 respondents strongly agreed and 122 agreed that there is timeliness in the grievance handling procedure, with relatively fewer respondents

disagreeing. Regarding statement (c), 99 respondents strongly agreed and 103 agreed that grievances are referred to the appropriate authorities for swift handling.

Table 2: Responses to the questions on effect of Speedy Attention to Grievance Resolution on emotional attachment

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Grievances are addressed quickly by my institution.	91	126	46	27	28	318
I feel emotionally connected to my institution.	113	118	38	27	22	318
Prompt resolution of grievances enhances my emotional attachment to the institution.	112	134	30	22	20	318
The speed at which grievances are resolved affects my overall emotional attachment to the institution.	132	146	18	12	10	318
Total	448	524	132	88	80	1272
Average	112	131	33	22	20	318
Percentage	35	41	10	7	6	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 2 displays the responses to questions assessing the effect of speedy attention to grievance resolution on emotional attachment in tertiary educational institutions. The majority of respondents expressed positive sentiments towards efficient grievance resolution and emotional attachment to their institution. For statement (a), 91 respondents strongly agreed and 126 agreed that grievances are addressed quickly by their institution. Similarly, for statement (b), 113 respondents strongly agreed and 118 agreed that they feel emotionally connected to their institution. Moreover, a significant number of respondents indicated agreement with statements (c) and (d), with 112 and 132 respondents strongly agreeing, respectively, that prompt resolution of grievances enhances their emotional attachment to the institution and that the speed at which grievances are resolved affects their overall emotional attachment positively.

Table 3: Responses to the questions on effect of Timely Grievance Resolution on the love of academic staff for set goals and values in the institution's management

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
I am satisfied with my institution's ability to resolve grievances in a timely manner.	132	118	33	17	18	318
I have a strong affinity for the goals and values set by my institution's management.	131	128	21	16	22	318
Timely grievance resolution aligns academic staff more closely with the institution's goals and values.	135	135	14	17	17	318
Timely grievance resolution promotes harmony and unity among academic staff in pursuit of institutional	142	143	16	10	7	318

goals.						
Total	540	524	84	60	64	1272
Average	135	131	21	15	16	318
Percentage	42	41	7	5	5	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 3 presents the responses to questions regarding the effect of timely grievance resolution on the love of academic staff for set goals and values in the institution's management. The data indicates a predominantly positive perception among respondents regarding the role of timely grievance resolution in fostering alignment with institutional goals and values. For instance, a significant number of respondents expressed satisfaction with their institution's ability to resolve grievances in a timely manner (statement a), with 132 strongly agreeing and 118 agreeing. Similarly, a considerable proportion of respondents reported having a strong affinity for the goals and values set by their institution's management (statement b), with 131 strongly agreeing and 128 agreeing. Moreover, respondents overwhelmingly agreed that timely grievance resolution aligns academic staff more closely with the institution's goals and values (statement c), with 135 strongly agreeing and 135 agreeing. Additionally, a substantial number of respondents indicated that timely grievance resolution promotes harmony and unity among academic staff in pursuit of institutional goals (statement d), with 142 strongly agreeing and 143 agreeing.

Table 4: Responses to the questions on the effect of Swift Grievance Handling on the feeling of indebtedness of academic staff to the institution

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
My institution efficiently handles grievances raised by academic staff.	121	132	23	22	20	318
I feel a sense of gratitude and indebtedness towards the institution.	127	133	22	19	17	318
Swift grievance handling increases my sense of indebtedness to the institution.	136	134	15	17	16	318
I have personally experienced a stronger sense of indebtedness due to swift grievance handling?"	136	133	16	18	15	318
Total	520	532	76	76	68	1272
Average	130	133	19	19	17	318
Percentage	41	42	6	6	5	100

Source: Field survey, 2024

Table 4 illustrates the responses to questions concerning the effect of swift grievance handling on the feeling of indebtedness of academic staff to the institution. The data portrays a predominantly positive perception among respondents regarding the institution's handling of grievances and its impact on

their sense of gratitude and indebtedness. A significant number of respondents indicated that their institution efficiently handles grievances raised by academic staff (statement a), with 121 strongly agreeing and 132 agreeing. Similarly, a substantial proportion of respondents reported feeling a sense of gratitude and indebtedness towards the institution (statement b), with 127 strongly agreeing and 133 agreeing. Furthermore, the majority of respondents agreed that swift grievance handling increases their sense of indebtedness to the institution (statement c), with 136 strongly agreeing and 134 agreeing. Additionally, a considerable number of respondents stated that they have personally experienced a stronger sense of indebtedness due to swift grievance handling (statement d), with 136 strongly agreeing and 133 agreeing.

Test of Hypotheses

Table 5: Consolidated Responses to Questions Regarding Stated Hypotheses

Responses	Prompt Response to Grievance Complaints	Speedy attention to grievance resolution and emotional attachment	Timely grievance resolution and love staff for set goals and values	Swift grievance handling and feeling of indebtedness
Strongly Agree	92	112	135	130
Agree	119	131	131	133
Undecided	50	33	21	19
Disagree	30	22	15	19
Strongly Disagree	27	20	16	17

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics			
	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Prompt response to grievance complaints	3.6887	1.22304	318
Speedy Attention and emotional attachment	3.9214	1.13870	318
Timely Resolution and love for set goals	4.1132	1.05962	318
Swift Handling and feeling of indebtedness	4.0692	1.08978	318

Table 7: Correlations

		Prompt response to grievance complaints	Speedy Attention and emotional attachment	Timely Resolution and love for set goals	Swift Handling and feeling of indebtedness
Pearson Correlation	Prompt response to grievance complaints	1.000	.938	.904	.913
	Speedy Attention and emotional attachment	.938	1.000	.938	.950
	Timely Resolution and love for set goals	.904	.938	1.000	.982
	Swift Handling and feeling of indebtedness	.913	.950	.982	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Prompt response to grievance complaints	.	.000	.000	.000
	Speedy Attention and emotional attachment	.000	.	.000	.000
	Timely Resolution and love for set goals	.000	.000	.	.000
	Swift Handling and feeling of indebtedness	.000	.000	.000	.
N	Prompt response to grievance complaints	318	318	318	318
	Speedy Attention and emotional attachment	318	318	318	318
	Timely Resolution and love for set goals	318	318	318	318
	Swift Handling and feeling of indebtedness	318	318	318	318

Analysis of Hypotheses Based on SPSS Results

Hypothesis One

H₀: There is no significant relationship between speedy attention to grievance resolution and the emotional attachment of academic staff to the tertiary educational institutions in South-East, Nigeria.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between speedy attention to grievance resolution and the emotional attachment of academic staff to the tertiary educational institutions in South-East, Nigeria.

Decision

The Pearson correlation between "Speedy Attention to Grievance Complaints" and "Emotional Attachment" is 0.938 with a significance level of 0.000, indicating a strong positive relationship. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1). There is a significant relationship between speedy attention to grievance resolution and the emotional attachment of academic staff.

Hypothesis Two

H₀: Timely grievance resolution significantly does not impact the love of academic staff for set goals and values in the institution's management.

H₁: Timely grievance resolution significantly impacts the love of academic staff for set goals and values in the institution's management.

Decision

The correlation between "Timely Resolution" and "Love for Set Goals" is 0.904, with a significance level of 0.000, suggesting a strong and significant positive relationship. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1). Timely grievance resolution significantly impacts academic staff's love for set goals and values in the institution's management.

Hypothesis Three

H₀: Swift grievance handling does not significantly influence the feeling of indebtedness of academic staff to the institution.

H₁: Swift grievance handling significantly influences the feeling of indebtedness of academic staff to the institution.

Decision

The Pearson correlation between "Swift Handling" and "Feeling of Indebtedness" is 0.913 with a significance level of 0.000, indicating a strong positive relationship. As a result, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1). Swift grievance handling significantly influences the feeling of indebtedness of academic staff to the institution.

Summary of Findings

1. **Speedy Attention and Emotional Attachment:** There is a significant positive relationship between speedy attention to grievance resolution and the emotional attachment of academic staff. This is supported by a high Pearson correlation coefficient (0.938) and significant regression results.
2. **Timely Resolution and Love for Set Goals and Values:** Timely grievance resolution significantly impacts the love of academic staff for the institution's set goals and values, as indicated by significant regression results.

3. **Swift Handling and Feeling of Indebtedness:** Swift grievance handling significantly influences the feeling of indebtedness among academic staff, as evidenced by significant regression results.

Conclusion

The study concludes that efficient grievance resolution significantly enhances employee commitment in tertiary educational institutions in Southeast Nigeria. Specifically, speedy attention to grievance resolution fosters strong emotional attachment among academic staff, as evidenced by significant positive correlations and regression results. Additionally, timely resolution of grievances positively impacts the academic staff's affinity for institutional goals and values, promoting a cohesive and goal-aligned workforce. Swift handling of grievances also significantly increases feelings of indebtedness among academic staff, highlighting the crucial role of effective grievance management in fostering a sense of gratitude and loyalty towards the institution. These findings underscore the importance of implementing efficient and responsive grievance procedures as a strategic approach to enhancing employee commitment and overall institutional harmony. Institutions that prioritize quick and effective grievance resolutions are likely to experience higher levels of staff satisfaction, dedication, and alignment with organizational objectives, ultimately contributing to their long-term success and stability.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed to tertiary educational institutions in Southeast Nigeria:

1. Institutions should invest in effective grievance-handling mechanisms that ensure speedy and efficient resolution of issues. This could include setting up dedicated grievance redressal committees and training staff in conflict resolution skills.
2. Establish clear and transparent communication channels to ensure that academic staff are aware of the grievance procedures and trust the system. Regular updates on the status of grievances should be provided to keep staff informed and engaged.
3. Ensure that the grievance resolution process aligns with the institution's goals and values. This alignment will help in fostering a culture where staff feel valued and connected to the institution's objectives.
4. Institutions should seek regular feedback from academic staff regarding the grievance resolution process and use this feedback to make continuous improvements. This will help in maintaining the effectiveness and relevance of the grievance procedures.
5. Create a supportive work environment that encourages open dialogue and mutual respect. This can reduce the occurrence of grievances and improve overall staff morale and performance.

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