

JOB FULFILLMENT AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AS CORRELATES OF JOB PERFORMANCE OF BUSINESS EDUCATION GRADUATES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the job fulfillment and professional growth as correlates of job performance of business education graduates in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Correlation approach was used for the study. Rivers State was the site of the research. A total of 1,587 Business Education graduates from various Rivers State institutions made up the population. Simple balloting was used in selecting a sample size of 319 which was obtained from a population of 1587. In order to gather primary data, a structured questionnaire was utilized titled "Job Performance of Business Education Graduates Questionnaire (JPBEGQ) and "Career Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) were the names of the tool. Face and content validity was used. The reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The study questions and hypotheses were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Relationship Coefficient. The study revealed that that graduates of business education programs at Rivers State's postsecondary institutions will benefit from enhanced opportunities for professional development in order to enhance their performance on the job. The study concluded that job fulfillment plays a vital role in the professional growth and job performance of Business Education graduates in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. A fulfilling job enhances motivation, commitment, and productivity, leading to continuous skill development. Professional growth opportunities, such as training and career advancement, contribute to higher job satisfaction. When graduates feel valued and challenged, they are more likely to excel in their roles. One of the recommendations made was that in order to boost job satisfaction, encourage graduates to fully apply their skills, and improve job performance, tertiary institutions in Rivers State should regularly assess and create job roles that align with the skills, values, and career goals of Business Education graduates.

KEYWORD: Job Fulfillment, Professional Growth, Job Performance, Business Education Graduates, Tertiary Institutions and Rivers State

INTRODUCTION

Job success is an important metric for assessing the efficacy of business education graduates in higher education, just as it is for other graduates. Graduates of business education programmes are required to demonstrate strong theoretical and practical competency in an ever-changing educational environment (Osibanjo et al., 2022). It is crucial for their professional success that they be able to satisfy academic and administrative goals, help their institutions

expand, and constantly improve themselves. Collaboration, creativity, and mentoring are all aspects of job performance that contribute to organizational goals (Adeniji et al., 2019). On the other hand, there are a lot of variables, one of which is professional happiness, that could affect how well one does their work. According to research, graduates are more likely to perform well in their jobs when they are pleased with job stability, opportunity for professional progress, and a favourable work environment (Kumara & Prasad, 2021). To improve educational results and institutional efficiency in the setting of Rivers State's tertiary institutions, it is vital to understand how job satisfaction effects the work performance of business education graduates.

The importance of a healthy work-life balance to professional fulfilment and productivity is being more acknowledged. This research views it as an example of a staff member who successfully juggles their professional responsibilities with their own needs and social obligations. Having a good work-life balance means being able to attend to both your professional and personal obligations, as well as your family and other interests outside of work (Parkes and Langford, 2018). According to Adeniji et al. (2019), graduates who are able to manage their job, personal, and family lives well report higher levels of satisfaction and lower rates of burnout. They are able to keep up their high levels of energy and concentration because to a good work-life balance that allows them to recharge. Maintaining productivity over the long term requires a healthy work-life balance, which is especially true in academic institutions like those in Rivers State, where business education graduates frequently wear many hats, including those of professor, researcher, and administrator (Osibanjo et al., 2022).

Anyone who has earned a degree in business education and is happy in their job is doing good work. The term "work satisfaction" describes how happy an employee is with their job in general, taking into account factors like their duties, pay rate, and career progression prospects (Ogunyomi & Bruning, 2021). Employees with a background in business who report high levels of job satisfaction are more inclined to go above and beyond in their roles (Ibrahim et al., 2022). Because workers are more inclined to put in extra effort when they enjoy what they do for a living, job happiness and performance go hand in hand. Work satisfaction at Rivers State's higher education institutions is impacted by elements including equitable pay, public acknowledgement of accomplishments, and access to resources needed to excel in one's position (Ogunyomi & Bruning, 2021). When recent grads from business schools are happy in their jobs, they are more inclined to assist out their coworkers, take on more responsibility, and do their best. Therefore, job happiness is essential for improving performance on the job and adding to the success of the individual and the organisation as a whole.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Concerns about the quality of education and the efficiency of institutions have been highlighted by the poor employment performance of certain business education graduates at tertiary institutions across Rivers State. Delays in projects, inefficient curriculum delivery, and a lack of creativity in teaching techniques are common signs of underperformance, which has a negative impact on student results and the reputation of the institution (Osibanjo et al., 2022). Many recent grads feel demotivated and exhausted due to issues including employment instability, a lack of opportunity for professional advancement, and an unhealthy work-life balance (Ibrahim et al., 2022). It is already difficult for recent graduates to perform to their potential due to low job satisfaction and stressful work settings with few resources and no assistance (Adeniji et al., 2019). But maybe the solution to these challenges lies in making people happier in their jobs.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- Determine the relationship between job fulfillment and job performance of Business Education Graduates in Tertiary institutions in Rivers State;
- Ascertain the relationship between professional growth and job performance of Business Education Graduates in Tertiary institutions in Rivers State;

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the relationship between job fulfillment and job performance of Business Education Graduates in Tertiary institutions in Rivers State?
- What is the relationship between professional growth and job performance of Business Education Graduates in Tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

NULL HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between job fulfillment and job performance of Business Education Graduates in Tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between professional growth and job performance of Business Education Graduates in Tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

CONCEPT OF CAREER SATISFACTION

Research on career development and other fields that deal with vocations, work dynamics, and human adaptability all use career satisfaction as a key variable. Career satisfaction is a significant criteria variable in connection to many different personal and organizational issues, however it is seldom the main object of research investigations. The word "career" encompasses not only a person's employment but also all of their work-related activities and experiences throughout their lifetime (Judge et al., 2004). By this definition, a career encompasses all workers, not only those in specialized professions or at the executive level. In contrast, the majority of the empirical research in this field has been on professional professions, where a career is defined as a series of interconnected tasks that one performs throughout the course of one's working life, with a focus on developing one's skills and gaining experience.

Satisfaction with one's work life, like many other psychological concepts, may be understood as the product of a person's compatibility with their work setting (Iresearchnet, 2014). If one's work is a good fit for who they are, they should like what they do for a living. To test this hypothesis, one may look at the correlation between one's interests in one's work and their level of job happiness, specifically at the question of whether or not people report higher levels of job satisfaction when their professional choices and affiliations are more in line with their interests in the workplace. According to the research in this field, job satisfaction is correlated with one's declared interests in one's work and the degree to which one's skills and interests are a good match for the occupation one chooses to work in. Professionals in the fields of career development, counselling, and vocational planning should take note of these findings because their work centres on guiding clients into fulfilling professional and educational paths.

Incorporating personal fulfilment, growth possibilities, and alignment with career goals, job satisfaction is a multi-dimensional term that greatly impacts an individual's entire experience in the workplace. Career satisfaction is defined as the degree to which workers are happy with their professional paths over the long run, as opposed to only being happy with their jobs in the short term (Greenhauset al., 1990). Opportunities for growth, public acclaim, employment stability, and a healthy work-life balance are all part of it. The degree to which college grads in business education are satisfied with their careers is a strong predictor of their dedication, enthusiasm, and productivity in the classroom. Recent research has shown that employees who are happy in their jobs are less likely to leave their jobs and more likely to stay loyal to their companies, which improves their performance and decreases employee turnover (Kraimeret al., 2011). Understanding the dynamics of job satisfaction is crucial for individuals and organizations who want to promote long-term success in today's complicated educational contexts.

There are many elements, both internal and external, that contribute to an individual's level of job satisfaction. Motivations that are intrinsic to the job itself include opportunities for professional development and advancement as well as the satisfaction of knowing that one's efforts are making a positive impact on the world. Mentoring students, helping to build curricula, or coming up with new ways to educate are all areas where graduates of business education programmes may find great fulfilment (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Salary, perks, job stability, and organizational support are examples of extrinsic variables that can have a substantial influence on career happiness. Professionals need extrinsic elements to make sure they are well-compensated and supported in their jobs, even though intrinsic factors are more likely to give long-term satisfaction. An individual's sense of job satisfaction is affected by how well these aspects are balanced. A recent study by Nget al. (2005) highlights the importance of both meaningful work and fair remuneration in determining career happiness. This finding is especially relevant in the education sector, where both personal fulfilment and financial security are valued. Beyond the obvious effects on personal happiness, job satisfaction has far-reaching consequences for business results. Workers who are content in their jobs are more likely to put their hearts into their work and go above and beyond for their employers. Career happiness has a direct impact on the quality of education delivered in educational environments, as graduates of Business Education programmes shape future professionals (Judge et al., 2001).

DIMENSIONS OF CAREER SATISFACTION

- **Job Fulfilment**

A person's degree of contentment, dedication, and investment in their work is defined by their degree of job fulfilment. Finding meaning, contribution, and success in one's work is just as important as getting the job done. Organizations may boost morale, retention rates, and performance results by learning about and encouraging work fulfilment. Due to its strong correlation with employee happiness and organizational output, work satisfaction has recently emerged as a hot issue in organizational psychology. Feeling fulfilled at work may be a powerful defence against burnout and disengagement, especially for people in fast-paced or stressful sectors. In light of these far-reaching consequences, a fulfilling work life is a benefit to both individuals and businesses that want to succeed in the long run (Pandey & Chauhan, 2021).

Factors such as possibilities for personal growth, a supportive work environment, and overall organizational support all play a part in an employee's degree of job fulfilment. Job satisfaction, according to Pandey and Chauhan (2021), is the effect on performance that occurs

when an individual feels that their work is in line with their professional and personal beliefs. Because of this congruence, workers are more likely to have a positive outlook on their jobs and to give their all to their responsibilities. The capacity to develop professionally in a nurturing setting that recognizes and appreciates one's efforts is important to many people when it comes to finding happiness on the job. When workers feel their work matters, it fosters a dedication that goes beyond contentment in the workplace and motivates them to perform at their highest level. Another way of looking at job satisfaction is through the lens of how it affects loyalty and retention rates. When workers are happy and fulfilled in their work, they are more likely to stay with the same company or look for employment opportunities elsewhere (Koon and Paggy, 2018). Particularly for members of Generation Y, who place a premium on work that is in line with their beliefs and provides meaningful involvement, this perspective emphasizes the link between job satisfaction and employment retention. There is less employee turnover when job satisfaction is a top priority in the workplace because workers are more likely to become deeply committed to their jobs and the company. Workers who feel their work makes a difference are more likely to remain loyal to their employer over the long haul because they care about the company's success.

When workers are happy in their jobs, it shows in their work and how much they accomplish. In research involving a manufacturing organization, Rodrigo et al. (2022) discovered a clear association between work happiness and performance. This suggests that individuals who feel happy in their positions are more devoted and productive. Staff members who are happy in their jobs are more likely to go above and beyond the call of duty because they are working for both the exterior benefits and the internal satisfaction that comes from a job well done. Employees are more inclined to take charge, persevere through setbacks, and produce high-quality work when they are happy in their jobs. Employees that are happy in their work are more likely to go above and above, think outside the box, and work tirelessly to help the company reach its goals. This correlation shows that a pleased workforce is good for business.

Leaders have a key role in fostering workplace satisfaction because they may establish an atmosphere where workers feel appreciated, acknowledged, and inspired. Effective leadership has a good effect on employee desire to work, which affects job satisfaction (Joseph-Armstrong, 2023) as stated by Armstrong. Teams thrive when their leaders are approachable, offer helpful criticism, and promote career advancement opportunities. When workers see their efforts recognized and valued, they are more likely to take pleasure in their work and like coming to work each day. Employees are more likely to feel fulfilled in their work and more invested in the company when leadership cultivates a supportive culture. So, leadership isn't only about giving orders; it's also about making sure your workers enjoy what they do. Both internal and external variables contribute to an employee's level of job satisfaction, which in turn is strongly related to their level of motivation. According to Nduka (2016), one of the most important factors in employee performance is motivation. When employees are happy in their jobs, they are more likely to put in extra effort and devotion. Employees' intrinsic drive, which stems from a desire for personal fulfilment, success, and advancement, is triggered when they experience fulfilment in their job. This, in turn, leads to sustained levels of performance. In addition to intrinsic rewards like a good salary and benefits, extrinsic rewards like public acclaim and promotions go a long way towards making workers happy in their jobs. A well-rounded work environment that relies on both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators makes employees feel valued on a personal and professional level, which in turn encourages them to be loyal to the organization.

As they move from academic to professional settings, job satisfaction is especially crucial for college graduates with business degrees. It is important for new graduates to choose jobs that match their academic background and professional goals, according to Inuwa (2016), because this is how they will hone their abilities and advance in their chosen fields. Whether or whether recent grads with business degrees see their professions as permanent residences depends on how fulfilled they are with their work. Workers report higher levels of satisfaction with their work and life when they are able to put their education to good use, which is particularly true when companies offer formal training and distinct opportunities for advancement. In this light, chances for professional development, meaningful work, and a sense of belonging to a supportive and growth-oriented workplace are important factors in determining employment satisfaction for graduates of business school programs.

To sum up, variables like personal growth, supportive leadership, and alignment with organizational goals generate work fulfilment, which in turn drives employee engagement. Normative commitment, in which workers feel a moral need to make a positive contribution to the company, affective commitment, in which workers form emotional ties to their work, and continuance commitment, in which workers choose to stay with the organization because of the tangible and intangible benefits of their roles, are all indicators of job fulfilment. Job satisfaction is both an individual experience and a strategic component that may boost organizational performance, foster loyalty among employees, and aid in the company's long-term success.

- **Professional Growth**

According to Noe et al. (2014), professionals are always learning and improving their craft so they can do a better job and move up the corporate ladder. Personal and professional growth go hand in hand, preparing people to thrive in dynamic workplaces, take on new challenges, and maintain a competitive edge. For those who want to be happy and successful in their careers in the long run, professional development, which includes learning new skills, is crucial. Education, apprenticeships, on-the-job training, mentorship, networking, and membership in professional groups are all part of it. People may keep up with the latest developments in their field, hone their skills, and open doors to new job chances by engaging in these activities (Greenhaus & Callanan, 2006). Companies are realising they need to invest in their workers' professional growth if they want to stay competitive in the modern, globalised job market, therefore the idea of professional growth has been getting a lot of attention recently (Tannenbaum, 2002).

Individuals and businesses alike may reap the rewards of investing in their employees' professional development. Employees are more inclined to be involved, enthusiastic, and dedicated to their job when they are provided with chances for professional growth. Workplace happiness, productivity, and performance all take a nosedive as a result. Employees are more inclined to stay with a company that supports their professional development and provides clear avenues for advancement if they see that the company cares about their growth and development (Eisenberger et al., 2001). In addition, fostering professional development opportunities encourages individuals to constantly learn and improve in their roles, which in turn helps businesses foster a culture of continuous learning. To succeed in today's dynamic economic climate, companies need cultures that encourage creativity, flexibility, and perseverance. When seen in this light, career advancement is more than a personal goal; it's a top business strategy that benefits workers and the company as a whole (Noe et al., 2014).

Given the complexity of today's work market, it is especially crucial for graduates of business education programs to focus on professional growth. Teaching, curriculum creation, administration, and entrepreneurialism are just a few of the many talents needed in the ever-changing world of business education. Graduates should be prepared to succeed in a variety of business environments by possessing both the technical knowledge and soft skills needed for their jobs. Pursuing further degrees or certifications, going to conferences, joining professional groups, or finding a mentor are all ways that graduates of Business Education programs might progress their careers (Kraimer, Seibert, & Liden, 1999). To keep up with the ever-changing corporate world, these graduates really need chances to advance professionally in areas like leadership, communication, and digital literacy. Graduates of Business Education programs who participate in ongoing professional development are more likely to be able to adapt their teaching styles to the needs of their students, make effective use of technology in the classroom, and impart knowledge that is both current and relevant (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Graduates' professional development is mutually beneficial to their institutions and the students they teach. Though many acknowledge its significance, professional development is not always easy to accomplish, particularly in areas like business education where funding and assistance for training and education are sometimes scarce. Graduates may encounter challenges such as inadequate institutional support for professional growth, restricted access to professional networks, and inadequate money for additional education. Furthermore, individuals in the field of education may already have significant workloads, making it much more difficult to juggle the obligations of a full-time employment with the desire of professional progress. Proactively searching out chances for improvement, whether through self-directed learning, online courses, or networking with industry professionals, is crucial for Business Education graduates to overcome these hurdles (Lent & Brown, 2013). Organisations and educational institutions may also play a part in helping people improve professionally by offering tools, mentoring programs, and flexible work arrangements. To thrive in today's complicated and rapidly changing business environment, it is essential for individuals and companies to invest in their professional development. To expand on this, we talk about how to advance in your career by earning credentials like the Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP) and the Project Management Professional (PMP).

- **Job Performance of Business Education Graduates**

How well an employee does their work in a professional setting is known as their job performance (Sonnentag & Frese, 2002). It includes a lot of different things, such how much and how well you work, how well you meet deadlines, how well you solve problems, and how well you accomplish your organization's goals. Sonnentag and Frese (2002) state that performance on the job encompasses not just how well an individual does their tasks but also how well they do them in their specific situation. Contextual performance includes actions that impact the larger organizational setting, such collaboration and corporate citizenship, in contrast to task performance, which is concerned with the fundamental responsibilities of a specific work position. Employees that perform well on the job are more likely to make substantial contributions to their organizations' objectives, creativity, and competitiveness, which is important for their own professional development and the success of the company as a whole. Those who have earned a degree in business education have demonstrated mastery of managerial and entrepreneurial concepts as well as the fundamentals of teaching (Okoro, 2013). In order to educate students for a variety of jobs in the business world, such as corporate training, teaching

business courses, administrative work, and management, these programs usually mix theoretical knowledge with practical applications (Okoro, 2013). Students majoring in business education should be prepared to speak well and handle difficult problems; they should also have a solid grasp of marketing, human resource management, financial matters, and company operations. Whether they are working for a large corporation, a school, or a startup, their education has prepared them to thrive in fast-paced settings. Graduates of Business Education programs frequently find themselves in roles that need them to combine their understanding of business concepts with the art of teaching or training others. This interdisciplinary approach opens up several employment prospects for them and allows them to have a greater difference in the world. Focusing on the employment performance of Business Education graduates is crucial since it shows how well they can apply what they learnt in school to real-world business problems. Effectiveness in managing company operations, executing training programs, and contributing to organizational growth are some performance measures that these graduates may be measured against. Graduates of business education programs who excel in their careers typically do so by actively seeking out new challenges and chances for professional development and by keeping abreast of developments in their field. Ekpenyong (2011) argues that successful business school grads are those who take an interest in learning new things throughout their careers and who also manage to become leaders in their companies. Their capacity to steer innovation, effectively manage projects, and make well-informed business choices that support organisational objectives also affects their work success. In addition, whether they are working in corporate settings, educational institutions, or entrepreneurial initiatives, graduates of Business Education are able to adapt to varied business situations and sustain excellent performance.

CAREER SATISFACTION AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF BUSINESS EDUCATION GRADUATES

- **Job Fulfilment and Job Performance of Business Education Graduates**

For graduates of business programs, work satisfaction is a critical component that influences their motivation, efficiency, and productivity on the job. Graduates of business programs who report high levels of job satisfaction are more likely to put their hearts and souls into their work, which in turn boosts productivity. According to Pandey and Chauhan (2021), when workers are satisfied with their jobs—which includes things like having opportunity to advance in their careers, having their work line with their beliefs, and receiving positive feedback—they feel more committed in what they do for a living. To be happy and successful in their careers, graduates of business programs need chances to put their degree to use. Graduates are more likely to surpass expectations, perform high-quality work, and positively contribute to organizational goals when their employment roles fit with these characteristics. Graduates of business programs may be more equipped to face the difficulties of the workplace if they are able to find jobs that they enjoy, which in turn increases their resilience and flexibility. Employees are better able to deal with challenging aspects of their jobs, such as short deadlines, high expectations, and complicated tasks, according to Koon and Paggy (2018). Ability to adapt to workplace demands is critical for graduates of business education programs, particularly when they start their careers and try to make a name for themselves. These recent grads are able to keep performing at a high level even when faced with difficult circumstances because they have found work that they enjoy. On the flip side, if they aren't happy with their work, it may weaken their resolve, which in turn would cause them to disconnect, produce less, and do worse overall. Recent grads may struggle to maintain motivation in unfulfilling workplaces, increasing the

likelihood of burnout and less-than-ideal output. There is a strong correlation between leadership and both work satisfaction and performance among recent business school grads. Leadership that is both effective and supportive may have a multiplicative effect on job satisfaction by raising the bar for both job performance and the chances for professional development. Job satisfaction and performance are both enhanced when leaders connect with their staff, acknowledge their efforts, and cultivate a good work environment (Joseph-Armstrong, 2023). The difference between a successful and a disappointing professional launch for recent grads of business programs is having executives who are willing to lend a helping hand. Graduates are more likely to put their abilities to good use when leaders show them the way forward in their careers, offer them helpful criticism, and publicly recognize their successes. In contrast, graduates who may have a solid grounding in business education may have their performance suffer as a result of an atmosphere of discontent and frustration fostered by unsupportive leadership. Lastly, graduates of business programs are more likely to be committed to their careers and have long-term job satisfaction when they are satisfied with their work. According to Inuwa (2016), there is a strong relationship between job happiness and employee performance. When people are happy in their work, they are more likely to put in extra effort, produce better results, and stay put. Graduates who experience regular job satisfaction are more likely to feel valued and invested in their work, which in turn motivates them to put in more effort and advance their careers within the company. On the other hand, when they don't feel fulfilled, these graduates could get disengaged, which might lower their performance and make them look for other job opportunities. Motivated workers who enjoy what they do for a living are more likely to remain with their current employers, according to Nduka (2016), and they also put forth more effort, which benefits the company as a whole. To sum up, job satisfaction serves a twin purpose: first, it boosts performance on the job right away, and second, it builds the groundwork for graduates of business programs to be dedicated to their careers for the long haul.

- **Professional Growth and Job Performance of Business Education Graduates**

For recent grads of business programs, who must adapt quickly to a dynamic employment market, professional development opportunities are crucial to success on the job. Professional development possibilities allow graduates to strengthen their competencies to operate effectively in their professions. These opportunities include further education, training programs, and certifications. Their job performance is influenced by their ability to adapt to new problems and keep current with industry trends, which may be achieved through professional growth (Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). Graduates of business programs who go on to work in academia, entrepreneurship, or corporate management would do well to expand their skill sets to include knowledge of technology, financial management, and effective leadership. Especially in fast-paced environments like the Nigerian corporate world, this continuous training makes sure they can handle the responsibilities of their jobs and help the company succeed (Ogunyomi & Bruning, 2016). A high level of performance on the work is dependent on self-assurance and competence, both of which may be enhanced via professional development. Improved performance outcomes are possible when graduates of business education programs keep learning and growing in their abilities to manage complicated activities and make sound decisions. Earning a master's degree or other credential, for example, might empower its holders to assume more responsibility, lead teams, and implement new ideas at work (Eraut, 2004). Business school grads in Nigeria may find it difficult to succeed in their careers due to the country's unstable economy, but they may gain an advantage by focussing on their professional

development. When employees experience personal and professional progress, it boosts their confidence, which in turn increases their job happiness and performance (Obisi, 2011). Developing one's skills in a professional setting also helps one become more resilient and adaptive, traits that are essential for keeping up one's performance on the job. The capacity to adjust to new circumstances is crucial for success in today's fast-paced corporate world. Graduates who commit to lifelong learning are more equipped to adapt to changing work environments and meet new problems head-on (Cascio, 2014). In Nigeria, where business conditions are sometimes uncertain and professional tasks typically need flexibility, this adaptability is very crucial. Graduates of business programs may thrive in a variety of work environments and maintain a competitive edge by continuously expanding their skill sets via professional development. As a whole, professional development improves work performance by equipping graduates with the information, abilities, and flexibility to thrive in their careers.

METHODOLOGY

Correlation approach was used for the study. Rivers State was the site of the research. A total of 1,587 Business Education graduates from various Rivers State institutions made up the population. Simple balloting was used in selecting a sample size of 319 which was obtained from a population of 1587. In order to gather primary data, a structured questionnaire was utilized titled "Job Performance of Business Education Graduates Questionnaire (JPBEGQ) and "Career Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSQ) were the names of the tool. Face and content validity was used. The reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The study questions and hypotheses were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Relationship Coefficient.

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between job fulfilment and job performance of Business Education Graduates in Tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 1: Analysis of Responses to Research Question One

Variable	N	$\sum x$	$\sum y$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	P-v	r-cal	Remark
Job fulfillment	150	1200		10000					
						9636.96	0.97	1.794	
Job performance	131	1300			11000				

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Respondents to the study question about the connection between work satisfaction and performance among business education graduates from Rivers State's tertiary institutions are included in Table 1. Business education graduates report a highly significant association between work satisfaction and performance on the job ($r = 1.794$). This demonstrates that among business education graduates from Rivers State's tertiary schools, employment satisfaction favourably impacts performance. This is in line with the findings of Pandey and Chauhan (2021), who says that when workers are happy in their jobs, they are more invested in their work and their success.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between professional growth and job performance of Business Education Graduates in Tertiary institutions in Rivers State?

Table 2: Analysis of Responses to Research Question Two

Variable	N	$\sum x$	$\sum y$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	P-v	r-cal	Remark
Professional growth	150	34,625		4,469,813		4,402,875	0.97	1.623	
									Very Strong Relationship
Job performance	131		35,099		4,320,625				

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Business education graduates from Rivers State's tertiary schools have a 1.623 correlation value between their professional progress and employment success, according to Table 2. According to the results, there is a highly favourable association between business education graduates' professional progress and their employment success ($r = 1.623$). These results demonstrated that business education graduates from Rivers State's tertiary institutions would significantly improve their work performance if they made a change for the better in terms of their professional development. This is in line with the findings of Igwe (2023), who says that Job satisfaction and a stronger will to achieve in one's educational tasks are both enhanced by opportunities for professional progress.

PRESENTATION OF NULL HYPOTHESES

H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between job fulfilment and job performance of Business Education Graduates in Tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 3: Correlation between Job Fulfilment Relates to Job Performance of Business Education Graduates

		Job fulfilment	Job performance of Business Education Graduates
Job fulfillment	Self-Pearson Correlation	1	.847
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.070
	N	281	281
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.847	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.070	
	N	281	

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

Source: Research Data 2024 (SPSS output Version 21.0)

Business education graduates from Rivers State's tertiary schools show an association between work satisfaction and performance in Table 3. A statistically significant correlation between work satisfaction and performance is shown by the p-value for business education graduates from Rivers State's tertiary schools. So, we may say that the null hypothesis is not true. This proved that graduates of business education programs at Rivers State's tertiary institutions would see an uptick in productivity if they were happier in their work.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between professional growth and job performance of Business Education Graduates in Tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Table 4: Correlation between Professional Growth and Job Performance of Business Education Graduates

		Professional Growth	Job Performance of Business Education Graduates
Professional growth	Self-Pearson Correlation	1	.814
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.093
	N	281	50
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.814	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.093	
	N	281	

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

Source: Research Data 2024 (SPSS output Version 21.0)

Table 4 shows the relationship between career advancement and work performance for business education graduates from Rivers State's tertiary schools. Business education graduates from Rivers State's tertiary schools have a strong correlation between their career advancement opportunities and their performance on the job, according to the p-value. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This demonstrated that graduates of business education programs at Rivers State's postsecondary institutions will benefit from enhanced opportunities for professional development in order to enhance their performance on the job.

CONCLUSION

Job fulfillment plays a vital role in the professional growth and job performance of Business Education graduates in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. A fulfilling job enhances motivation, commitment, and productivity, leading to continuous skill development. Professional growth opportunities, such as training and career advancement, contribute to higher job satisfaction. When graduates feel valued and challenged, they are more likely to excel in their roles. Conversely, lack of fulfillment can result in low morale and reduced efficiency. A supportive work environment fosters innovation and long-term career success. Institutions should prioritize job enrichment strategies to enhance fulfillment. Ultimately, a strong link between job fulfillment and professional growth ensures improved job performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- In order to boost job satisfaction, encourage graduates to fully apply their skills, and improve job performance, tertiary institutions in Rivers State should regularly assess and create job roles that align with the skills, values, and career goals of Business Education graduates.

- Post-baccalaureate programs in business education should be supported by a formal framework that encourages ongoing training, mentorship, and access to industry certifications. This would help create an atmosphere where graduates are driven to succeed and grow professionally.

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