

## QUALITY OF WORK LIFE (QWL) FACTORS AND ACADEMIC STAFF'S AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

*Nigeria's university education received a low rating in the 2025 Times Higher Education World University Rankings. This coupled with a seemingly diminishing morale in Nigerian universities necessitated the need to understand the factors that might improve the affective commitment of academic staff. This study investigated how Quality of Work Life (QWL) factors affect affective commitment among academic staff in public universities in Lagos State with specific focus on how work environment, non-wage benefits and work-life balance affects academic staff affective commitment. The study is anchored on Job Demands-Resources (JDR) model and Herzberg's Two-Factor. A structured questionnaire was given to 328 academic staff from University of Lagos (UNILAG) and Lagos State University (LASU), and the data were analysed using multiple linear regression and descriptive statistics. The results showed that among the three QWL factors examined, only work environment ( $\beta = 0.528, p = .000$ ) and work-life balance ( $\beta = -.129, p = .009$ ) significantly predicted affective commitment while non-wage benefits ( $\beta = -.068, p = .229$ ) did not have a statistically significant effect on academic staff affective commitment. These findings support the claims of the Job Demands-Resources (JDR) Theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory. Both theories argue that good job conditions and well-structured motivators can improve employee commitment. Therefore, policy makers and administrators of public universities in Nigeria should focus on enhancing the academic work environment and reassessing work-life policies to prevent unintended negative effects on staff engagement.*

**Keywords:** Quality of Work Life (QWL), Affective Commitment, Non-wage Benefits, Work Environment, Work-Life Balance Arrangements, Academic Staff

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Nigeria's higher education sector seems to be mired in persistent challenges that threaten the quality, relevance, and sustainability of its graduates. Particularly, the country's public universities, many of which were once regarded and celebrated as intellectual ivory towers in Africa, have been plagued by dwindling global rankings. For instance, out of 274 licensed universities in Nigeria, only 21 received recognition in the 2025 Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings. None of the federal or state universities was ranked in the top 1,000. Covenant University, the highest-ranked was positioned between 801-1000 globally (THE, 2025). The rankings evaluated factors such as teaching quality, research environment, research output, industry engagement, and international outlook.

Beyond the growing gap between graduate competencies and what the labour market expects (an issue highlighted by the 2025 THE World University Rankings), there are systemic issues within Nigeria's university system. These issues include but not limited to widespread decay in infrastructure and frequent strikes by staff unions, which often result from unmet demands for better working conditions (Arowosegbe, 2025). At the heart of this crisis seems to be the declining morale and commitment of academic staff whose sense of purpose and emotional investment in their institutions seem weakened by poor working conditions, lack of support, and long-term neglect by the system (Fasanmi & Seyama-Mokhaneli, 2025).

Consequently, affective commitment, which refers to an employee's emotional connection to, identification with, and involvement in their organisation (Oladipo, Owoyele & Olaniyan, 2025), has seemingly become more fragile among university lecturers. This is especially true in Lagos, where the high cost of living and continual work pressures make the situation even worse (Esharefasa & Adeyeye, 2025).

Nonetheless, the recurring industrial actions championed by academic unions such as the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) are not merely wage-related (Oni & Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2025). The recurring industrial actions seem symptomatic of deeper discontent within the system as exemplified by the quality of work life (QWL) offered to academic staff. Therefore, QWL, operationally defined in this study as the extent to which employees' work environments, non-wage benefits, and work-life balance support their professional and personal well-being, is

proposed to play a critical role in shaping academic staff attitudes, behaviours, and university outcomes.

In the context of academia, Genty, Olanipekun, Zungbey, Ogunade and Ogbaji's (2025) study shows that QWL determines not only how lecturers perform but also how committed they remain to the mission of their institutions. Another contemporary evidence further shows that a conducive work environment enhances motivation and reduces burnout (Dewangan & Goswami, 2025; Goumrhare, Elmouhib, Bouchra, Amina & Abdelkarim, 2025). Whilst evidence also suggest that non-wage benefits such as health insurance, pension schemes, and housing support offer stability beyond monetary compensation (Sahaya, 2021); and a healthy work-life balance protects staff from the chronic fatigue that often accompanies excessive teaching, administrative, and research duties (Dube & Ndofirepi, 2024). To extend the argument, this study formulates that when these QWL dimensions are suboptimal in Nigeria's public university system, they might erode lecturers' affective commitment, leading to disillusionment, presenteeism, and in extreme cases, attrition.

In a related development, the pressures of Lagos' urban life can greatly affect how university lecturers experience their work life. Heavy traffic, high living costs, and crowded conditions can make the work environment more stressful and less supportive. When non-wage benefits like housing, healthcare, or transport allowances are limited, lecturers may feel an even greater strain. Additionally, the fight to maintain a healthy work-life balance in such a demanding city may leave them exhausted. These factors may impact their affective commitment, as lecturers may feel less attached to their institutions if their daily challenges of living and working in Lagos are not well addressed.

Therefore, this study is situated within this broader crisis of commitment among academic staff in Nigerian universities. As it is, contemporary evidence shows despite the centrality of lecturers to the intellectual and professional development of students, insufficient attention has been paid to the non-pecuniary factors that shape their emotional engagement with their institutions (Genty *et al.*, 2025). While salary-related concerns often dominate discourse (Okoro, 2023), emerging evidence suggests that lecturers' affective commitment is equally, if not more strongly, influenced by intangible workplace experiences and support structures (Genty *et al.*, 2025; Onukwu, 2022).

In Lagos metropolis, a hub of Nigeria's academic and economic activity, universities must compete for talent and productivity amid intense pressures to deliver high standards (Esharefasa & Adeyeye, 2025). Yet, the existing scholarship has not adequately unpacked how specific QWL factors influence the affective commitment of academic staff in this unique urban context (Genty *et al.*, 2025). Thus, the overarching aim of this study is to examine how QWL factors predict affective commitment among public academic staff in public universities across Lagos metropolis with the specific objectives of ascertaining the effects of work environment, non-wage benefits, and work-life balance on the affective commitment of academic staff in public tertiary institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section reviews relevant literature by first examining the conceptual definitions of the study's main variables: QWL factors (work environment, non-wage benefits, work-life balance), and affective commitment, as established in extant literature. It further reviews relevant theoretical and empirical literature on the role of these QWL factors in shaping the affective (emotional) commitment (attachment and involvement) of academic staff in the universities.

### **2.1. Conceptual Review**

#### **2.1.1 Affective Commitment**

Affective commitment refers to the emotional attachment that academic staff develop toward their institutions (Dube & Ndofirepi, 2024). This attachment significantly influences their motivation, loyalty, and overall performance (Xie, Zhang, Li, & Fan, 2024). In universities, this commitment shows when lecturers feel truly connected to their institutions and take pride in helping them grow (Ajmal, Rahat, & Islam, 2024). Even when other job opportunities come up, affectively committed academics choose to stay because they believe in their university's mission (Torlak, Budur, & Khan, 2024). In other words, affectively committed lecturers find a sense of purpose in being part of the academic community.

According to Gollagari, Birega, and Mishra (2024) affective commitment also shows as a strong sense of belonging and identification with the institution. Academics who feel this connection often view the university as an extension of themselves and naturally support its goals and values.

Even when faced with challenges like limited funding or poor infrastructure, they continue to be involved in departmental activities and mentor students. Their involvement comes from their connection with the institution's ideals (Kyambade, Mugambwa, Namuddu, Namatovu, & Kwemarira, 2024). Okeke and Elegbede (2024) assert that committed employees have greater tendency to increase their effort in task performance.

Additionally, affective commitment is seen in the willingness of academic staff to go beyond their official duties (Jan, Subramani, Ramkumar, & Chandrasekaran, 2025). Lecturers frequently put in extra time and effort to organise academic events, supervise student projects, or support institutional initiatives. They do this not out of obligation but because they care about the university's success (Oladipo, Owoyele, & Olaniyan, 2025). Okeke and These actions show that affective commitment goes beyond job satisfaction. It is a form of emotional dedication that encourages academic staff to stay engaged, contribute meaningfully, and remain loyal to their institutions (Yaseen, Idrees, Shakil, Haider, & Khalil, 2025).

### **2.1.2 Quality of Work-Life Factors**

Quality of Work Life (QWL) describes how comfortable, supported, and fulfilled employees feel in their workplace (Olatoye, Adeogun, & Adeogun, 2025). For university academic staff, it plays an important role in their satisfaction, motivation, and long-term commitment (Minocha, Lakhera, Patra, Bhatia, & Singh, 2025). At its heart, QWL reflects the overall conditions under which lecturers perform their duties (Loko, Van Zyl, & Chinomona, 2025). This includes not only salaries but also the physical environment, emotional well-being, and support systems that impact their daily work experience (Genty *et al.*, 2025).

A major part of QWL is the work environment (Genty *et al.*, 2025). This includes both the physical facilities and the social atmosphere in which academics operate (Risal, Pandey, & Bhujel, 2025). For example, lecturers with clean offices, well-equipped classrooms, stable electricity, internet access, and respectful interactions with colleagues and management are more likely to enjoy their work and remain engaged (Goumrhare *et al.*, 2025). A positive environment can reduce stress and allows lecturers to focus on teaching and research (Dewangan, & Goswami, 2025).

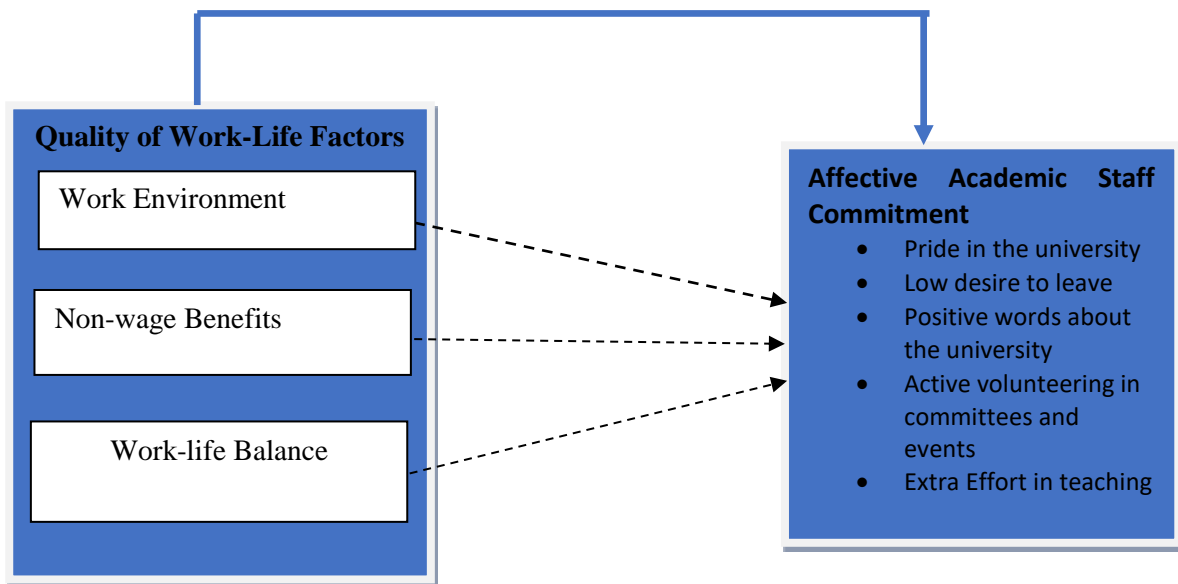
Another key element of QWL is non-wage benefits (Akinwale, Kuye & Akinwale, 2023). These are additional supports provided by the university that do not come from a lecturer's direct salary (Abebe & Assemie, 2023). They may include housing allowances, health insurance, paid leave, research grants, and access to professional development opportunities (Akinwale *et al.*, 2023). These benefits help lecturers meet essential needs and show that the institution values their

contributions (Mabaso, & Dlamini, 2021). For instance, when a university offers consistent research funding and family health coverage, it boosts lecturers’ sense of security and belonging (Ojo, Ajakaye & Mistura, 2021). Okeke (2024) asserts that employees that are offered fair and equitable rewards would not only be committed to enhancing the organisational growth but also remain with the organisation.

Related to this is work-life balance (Abebe, & Assemie, 2023). This refers to how well academic staff can handle their professional duties alongside personal and family life (Mohamed, 2023). Universities that provide flexible lecture schedules, study leave, or on-campus childcare make it easier for lecturers to balance both aspects (Dube & Ndofirebi, 2024). In this regard, a lecturer who can adjust lecture times to accommodate school runs or medical appointments is likely to experience less burnout and show greater emotional commitment to the university (Babatunde, Olanipekun, Lateef, & Babalola, 2020).

In essence, QWL includes all the factors that make the workplace supportive and responsive to the needs of academic staff (Genty *et al.*, 2025; Risal *et al.*, 2025). When universities invest in healthy work environments, strong non-wage benefits, and flexible work-life arrangements, they might not only enhance job satisfaction but also strengthen their staff’s commitment (Abebe, & Assemie, 2023; Goumrhare *et al.*, 2025; Ojo *et al.*, 2021).

**2.1.3 Conceptual Model**



**Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Study**

**Source:** Modelled by the researcher (2025)

The conceptual model (Figure 1) illustrates how three elements of work-life quality (QWL), work environment, non-wage benefits, and work-life balance, can affect lecturers' emotional connection to their universities. Our study proposes through the conceptual model that, in Lagos, a supportive work environment, with improved classrooms and fair treatment, can enhance lecturers' sense of belonging and commitment. Conversely, if benefits like health coverage or allowances seem unfair or unhelpful, they may damage that connection. Likewise, work-life balance can influence commitment in both ways: flexible schedules might encourage lecturers to remain dedicated, but heavy workloads that intrude on their personal lives can diminish their sense of commitment.

## **2.2. Theoretical Framework**

This study proposes that QWL factors for academic staff in public universities in Lagos can be understood through the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory.

### **2.2.1 Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory**

The JD-R Theory, developed by Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli (2001), states that every job has unique demands, such as academia with workload and time pressure, and resources, like work-life balance arrangements, autonomy, non-wage benefits and infrastructure. These demands and resources interact to influence employee well-being and motivation. The main idea behind the JDR Theory is that job resources help employees manage their job demands and promote work engagement and organisational commitment, especially when resources are seen as greater than (or in tandem with) demands.

The JD-R Theory is widely used in management and human resource research to predict burnout, engagement, and commitment in various business settings, particularly in higher education (Dres *et al.*, 2023; Naidoo-Chetty, & Du Plessis, 2021). Although some criticise it as too broad and lacking precision in identifying which resources are most important in different roles, its adaptable nature allows for customisation in specific sectors (Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2023; Demerouti, & Bakker, 2023).

In this study, the JD-R theory highlights QWL factors, such as a supportive work environment, access to non-wage benefits, and policies promoting work-life balance, as important resources that can lessen job strain and improve emotional attachment among lecturers in demanding academic settings like public universities in Lagos.

### 2.2.2 Herzberg Two Factor Theory

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, introduced in 1959 by Frederick Herzberg, posit that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction stem from two different sets of factors: motivators and hygiene factors. Motivators, like recognition, achievement, and growth opportunities, create intrinsic satisfaction, while hygiene factors, such as salary, working conditions, and institutional policies, prevent dissatisfaction but do not necessarily motivate (Isyaka, Musa, & Muhammad, 2025). Herzberg's theory suggests that improving motivators leads to better job attitudes such as affective commitment, while ignoring hygiene factors results in discontent such as disengagement (Miah, & Hasan, 2022).

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory has been applied in management studies to create reward systems, improve job design, and promote commitment (Anggraeni, Abdurahman, Marseva, & Wijaya, 2025; Isyaka *et al.*, 2025). On the other hand, critics claim the theory oversimplifies complex human needs and may not apply the same way across different cultures or jobs (Evans, & Olumide-Aluko, 2010; Ghazi, Shahzada, & Khan, 2013). Despite these concerns, the Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory's dual-factor perspective provides useful insight into how public universities in Nigeria can address both hygiene issues, like poor infrastructure and limited non-wage benefits, and motivational factors, such as work-life balance arrangements, that affect affective commitment (Isyaka *et al.*, 2025).

In this study, Herzberg's theory helps explain how the presence or absence of key QWL factors (work environment, non-wage benefits and work-life balance arrangements) impact lecturers' sense of belonging and their willingness to stay with their institutions.

## 2.3. Empirical Review

### 2.3.1 Work Environment and Affective Commitment

Several studies seem to have explored how Quality of Work Life (QWL) affects organisational commitment among academics in various regions. For instance, Inarda (2022) conducted a mixed-methods study in Nigeria to examine the impact of QWL on employee commitment and performance. Through surveys and interviews with staff in both public and private sectors, the study found that a supportive work environment, clear career paths, and fair reward systems



strongly drive commitment. The author suggested that continuous investment in employee welfare is important, but mentioned that more long-term studies are needed to track these effects over time.

Raj, Subramani, and Jan (2024) explored how spiritual leadership and faculty engagement connect with QWL and commitment in Indian higher institutions. They surveyed 275 faculty using a validated questionnaire. Their SEM analysis showed that leadership style and personal meaning at work enhance QWL's impact on commitment. Despite being insightful, the study was limited to private universities, which reduces its generalisation.

In Nigeria, Genty *et al.* (2025) studied how physical work environments affect commitment among academic staff in Ogun State's public tertiary institutions. They used a sample of 300 with stratified random sampling and discovered that poor infrastructure and overcrowded offices negatively impacted morale. The authors urged for improvements in infrastructure while suggesting the need for tracking commitment trends over time.

### **2.3.2 Non-wage Benefits and Affective Commitment**

In Ethiopia, Abebe and Assemie (2023) conducted a quantitative study involving academic staff from selected public universities. They used structured questionnaires analysed through regression models and found that job security, workload, and benefits significantly affected organisational commitment. Abebe and Assemie (2023) suggested that improved university governance is needed but called for comparative studies across more institutions for wider insight.

Rahman, Rahman and Sadique (2023) looked at QWL among faculty in Bangladeshi public universities. They sampled 213 lecturers using purposive sampling and used SPSS for analysis. Their results showed a connection between non-wage benefits and supportive leadership and stronger emotional attachment. Rahman *et al.* (2023) recommended increased faculty involvement in decision-making but pointed out that only public universities were included in their assessment.

Ehido, Awang, Ibeabuchi, and Abdul-Halim (2024) studied academics in Malaysian universities to see how commitment mediates the link between QWL and job performance. Their sample included 330 respondents, analysed using structural equation modelling (SEM). Their results indicated that QWL significantly boosts commitment, which in turn improves performance. They

suggested integrated staff development policies but called for future studies across different educational levels for deeper understanding.

In India, Singh and Pathak (2024) examined the direct link between QWL and institutional performance among academics. They drew from 180 participants, and their regression results confirmed that commitment serves as a link between QWL and productivity. They recommended institutional policies focused on intrinsic motivation, but noted that causal links could not be firmly established because of the cross-sectional design.

Goumrhare *et al.* (2025) looked into working conditions and commitment in Moroccan public universities. A survey of 400 teaching staff analysed through correlation methods revealed that administrative fairness, job clarity, and balanced workload were vital. They recommended labour-friendly policies and increased staff recognition, although they admitted that the study did not consider regional differences within Morocco.

### **2.3.3 Work-life Balance and Affective Commitment**

Olaleye and Abdurrashid (2022) focused on academic staff in Ekiti State, Nigeria. They assessed the link between QWL and organisational commitment using a dimensional approach. The study surveyed 150 academic staff through stratified sampling and analysed the data quantitatively. Their findings showed that work-life balance and institutional policies were key factors in commitment. The authors recommended regular reviews of HR practices to improve staff retention but acknowledged that the limited scope of the study could affect broader conclusions.

In Ghana, Author-Fynn, Lartey and John-Kojo (2024) examined senior staff at the University of Cape Coast. Using a descriptive survey method with 200 respondents, they found that fair compensation, good working conditions, and supportive work-life policies greatly influenced commitment levels. The study suggested institutional reforms to support staff well-being, while noting the lack of qualitative insights.

Back home in Nigeria, Okorie, Mukoro and Otite (2024) investigated the relationship between organisational commitment and quality of work life, with particular emphasis on work-life balance, among employees of the Tin Can Island Port terminals in Lagos State. Using purposive sampling and a cross-sectional design, data were gathered from 389 respondents and analysed

using descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression. Findings revealed that work-life balance significantly affects affective, continuance, and normative commitment, with inadequate balance reducing both organisational and personal commitment. The study recommends flexible work schedules to mitigate conflicts and strengthen employee commitment.

Finally, Minocha *et al.* (2025) studied Indian academicians across different states, investigating how job satisfaction and QWL influence organisational commitment. Using a sample of 250 with regression analysis, they found that job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between QWL and commitment. The authors suggested integrated staff satisfaction policies but recognised that future research should take into account gender and generational differences.

Following the empirical review, the study hypothesise as follows:

- H<sub>0</sub>1:** Work environment has no statistically significant effect on affective commitment among academic staff in public universities in Lagos State.
- H<sub>0</sub>2:** Non-wage benefits have no statistically significant effect on affective commitment among academic staff in public universities in Lagos State.
- H<sub>0</sub>3:** Work-life balance arrangements have no statistically significant effect on affective commitment among academic staff in public universities in Lagos State.
- H<sub>0</sub>4:** There is no statistically significant joint effect of work environment, non-wage benefits, and work-life balance arrangements on affective commitment among academic staff in public universities in Lagos State.

## 2.4 Gap in Literature

Despite the seemingly growing interest in how Quality of Work Life (QWL) affects commitment in academics, the reviewed studies show significant gaps. Many focus on single institutions or limited study areas, which reduces the applicability of their findings. Besides, some emphasise financial benefits but ignore important non-wage factors like institutional support, work-life balance, and supportive work environments. Additionally, most studies reviewed took a generalised view of commitment, missing the specific role of affective commitment in academic settings. Also, the focus on workload challenges further downplays other important QWL factors. Furthermore, the lack of multi-site research limits the depth of the findings. These issues

combined, underline the importance of this study, which takes a broader view and looks at how the work environment, non-wage benefits, and work-life balance influence affective commitment among academic staff at public universities in Lagos.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This study was conducted within the realms of positivist research philosophy. This perspective guided the choice of a quantitative approach, employing structured tools to test hypotheses about how Quality of Work Life (QWL) factors influence academic staff's affective commitment (Maksimovic, & Evtimov, 2023). Further to the positivist approach, a cross-sectional survey design was chosen to gather data at a single point in time. This design was chosen to enable the understanding of current views on QWL factors, such as work environment, non-wage benefits and work-life balance arrangements, in relation to affective commitment among academic staff in public universities in Lagos State.

The target population included 2,137 academic staff members from two selected public universities in Lagos State including the University of Lagos, with 1,382 academic staff, and Lagos State University, with 755 academic staff based on information obtained from the office of Deputy Registrars Human Resource Department at UNILAG and office of the Registrar, LASU respectively. These institutions were selected because of their location in Nigeria's commercial hub, as well as their size, diversity of academic programmes, and the ethical access to relevant data. The study aimed to understand the role of QWL factors in academic staff affective commitment, particularly amid the challenges of working in the public sector.

To obtain an appropriate sample size, Yamane's (1967) formula for finite populations was used based on a 5% margin of error. The application of the formula resulted in obtaining a sample size of 339 and to ensure fair representation, the sample was divided between the two universities using Bowley's (1926) proportional allocation method. Thus, 219 respondents were chosen from the University of Lagos and 120 from Lagos State University.

Stratified sampling first divided the population by university. Then, with the help of assigned representatives of the affected university authorities, simple random sampling was used within each group through a balloting technique. This ensured all eligible academic staff had an equal chance of being selected. To achieve randomness, we compiled a complete list of all eligible staff

members within each university stratum. Each name was written on identical slips of paper, ensuring they were the same size, shape, and color to avoid any bias. These slips were folded in the same way and placed into a container. They were thoroughly shuffled and drawn one at a time until we reached the required number of participants from each stratum. Staff members who had already been selected were not returned to the pool. This ensured that every academic staff member had only one chance to be picked. We carried out this process separately within each university stratum, ensuring that the final sample was both representative and randomly chosen.

Data were gathered using a structured 39-item questionnaire, divided into three sections. Section A included 6 items on demographic information such as age, gender, marital status, academic rank, years of service, highest degree and institution. Section B evaluated QWL across three factors, work environment, non-wage benefits and work-life balance. Specifically, our study used a 24-item data collection instrument scored on a five-point Likert scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. These items were adapted from established scales, including the QWL instrument by Swamy, Nanjundeswaraswamy, and Rashmi (2015), and Fisher's (2001) Work Interference with Personal Life (WIPL) subscale as cited by Smeltzer *et al.* (2016).

For example, based on our adaptation of Swamy, Nanjundeswaraswamy, and Rashmi (2015), items measuring QWL included: "*The physical working conditions at my university allow me to do my job well*" and "*I am fairly rewarded in comparison to my work responsibilities.*" From our adaptation of Smeltzer *et al.*'s (2016) WIPL subscale, sample items included: "*My job makes it difficult to maintain the kind of personal life I would like*" and "*The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life.*"

Section C comprised 9 items that examined academic staff affective commitment. Three of the items were adapted from the affective commitment subscale of Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979). Example of the items as adapted include: "*I feel a strong sense of belonging to my university*" and "*I am proud to tell others that I am part of this institution.*"

The research instrument's validity was confirmed through exploratory factor analysis (EFA). For the scale assessing work environment and non-wage benefits, all items had factor loadings above 0.60, and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.832, showing good suitability for factor analysis. Similarly, the work-life balance scale had factor loadings

between 0.63 and 0.88, with a KMO value of 0.857. The affective commitment scale recorded factor loadings above 0.75 with a KMO of 0.769. The total variance explained across the three constructs was over 62%, confirming the instrument's construct validity.

Reliability was established using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. A pilot test involving 20 academic staff at Lagos University of Science and Technology was conducted and Cronbach alpha test was applied to ascertain the reliability coefficient for each construct. The result is presented in Table 3.1: which showed that all the value exceeded the common threshold of 0.70, confirming the internal reliability of the scales used in the study (Sujati & Akhyar, 2020).

**Table 3.1: Summary of Reliability Tests (Pilot Study)**

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Work Environment	9	0.825	Very Good
Non-Wage Benefits	8	0.829	Very Good
Work-Life Balance	7	0.861	Excellent
Academic Staff Commitment	9	0.878	Excellent

*Source: Source: Survey 2025*

Primary data based on physical administration of the questionnaires to the respondents at the two institutions with aid of 5 research assistants trained by the investigator was utilised for the study. Before collecting data, the researcher sent formal letters to the participating universities request consent and required data, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents. An information sheet attached to the questionnaire explained the study's purpose, assured confidentiality, and clarified that participation was voluntary, allowing withdrawal at any time without penalty.

After data collection, quantitative data were entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 for analysis. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages, means, and standard deviations were calculated to describe demographic characteristics and overall views on QWL factors and affective commitment. Inferential analysis was performed using

multiple regression to examine how the three QWL factors affects academic staff's affective commitment. The use multiple regression analysis enables the study to identify significant predictors and estimate the strength and direction of their effects on staff's affective commitment. This approach clarified the key QWL factors that influenced affect commitment among academic staff in public universities in Lagos State.

#### 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This section provides the demographic details of the 328 academic staff from UNILAG and LASU who took part in the study. The analysis helps understand the sample's composition regarding gender, age, marital status, education level, professional rank, and institutional affiliation. These characteristics are important for interpreting how quality of work life (QWL) factors may influence affective commitment within this setting. The section also lays the groundwork for analysing research questions and testing hypotheses.

##### 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

**Table 4.1: Participants' Demographic Profile (N = 328)**

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean (SD)
University	LASU	120	36.6	
	UNILAG	208	63.4	1.37 (0.484)
Gender	Male	221	67.4	
	Female	107	32.6	1.33 (0.471)
Age	21–30	21	6.4	
	31–40	101	30.8	
	41+	206	62.8	2.60 (0.593)
Marital Status	Married	269	82.0	
	Single	52	15.9	
	Others	7	2.1	1.20 (0.446)
Highest Education	Master's	99	30.2	
	Doctorate	229	69.8	1.70 (0.459)
Professional Rank	Professor	38	11.6	

Associate Professor	34	10.4	
Senior Lecturer	77	23.5	
Lecturer I	53	16.2	
Lecturer II	47	14.3	
Assistant Lecturer	68	20.7	
Graduate Assistant	11	3.4	3.84 (1.731)

**Source:** Field Survey, 2025.

As shown in Table 4.1, male respondents made up 67.4% ( $n = 221$ ) of the sample, while females accounted for 32.6% ( $n = 107$ ). The gender distribution resulted in a mean of 1.33 ( $SD = 0.471$ ), indicating a male-dominant academic workforce. Regarding age, 62.8% of respondents were 41 years or older, 30.8% were between 31 and 40 years, and only 6.4% were in the 21 to 30 age range. The age mean was 2.60 ( $SD = 0.593$ ), showing a mature academic population.

Marital status data indicated that a majority (82.0%) were married, while 15.9% were single and 2.1% were either divorced or widowed. This is reflected in the marital status mean of 1.20 ( $SD = 0.446$ ). In terms of academic qualifications, 69.8% had doctoral degrees, and 30.2% held master's degrees. The education level mean of 1.70 ( $SD = 0.459$ ) highlights the high qualification status of the respondents.

The professional rank distribution showed that 23.5% were Senior Lecturers, followed by Assistant Lecturers (20.7%), Lecturer I (16.2%), Lecturer II (14.3%), Professors (11.6%), Associate Professors (10.4%), and Graduate Assistants (3.4%). The average rank score was 3.84 ( $SD = 1.731$ ), indicating a focus on mid-level academic positions. Institutional affiliation was split between two major universities: 63.4% of the respondents were from the University of Lagos (UNILAG), and 36.6% from Lagos State University (LASU). The mean institutional affiliation score was 1.37 ( $SD = 0.484$ ), showing greater representation from UNILAG.

Overall, this demographic data reflects a predominantly male, married, and highly educated academic workforce concentrated in senior and mid-level academic roles. These characteristics



provide an essential context for understanding how quality of work life factors shape academic staff's affective commitment within Lagos metropolis.

## 4.2 Test of Hypotheses

The hypotheses were tested using multiple linear regression analysis to determine the individual and joint effects of work environment, non-wage benefits, and work-life balance arrangements on affective commitment among academic staff at public universities in Lagos State. The results are summarised in Table 4.2 below.

Predictor	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	P	95% CI for B
(Constant)	3.075	0.770	-	3.995	.000	[1.560, 4.589]
<b>Work Environment</b>						
<b>Work-Life Balance</b>	0.224	0.024	0.528	9.409	.000	[0.177, 0.271]
<b>Non-Wage Benefits</b>	-0.054	0.020	-0.129	-2.636	.009	[-0.094, -0.014]
<b>Work-Life Balance</b>	-0.030	0.025	-0.068	-1.206	.229	[-0.080, 0.019]

### Model Summary:

$R = .539$ ,  $R^2 = .290$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .284$ ,  $F(3, 324) = 44.20$ ,  $p < .001$

**Key: Dependent variable:** Affective Commitment. **B** = Unstandardised Coefficient; **SE B** = standard error of B;  **$\beta$**  = Standardised Coefficient; **CI** = confidence interval.

### 4.2.1 Test of Hypothesis One

**H<sub>01</sub>: Work environment has no statistically significant effect on affective commitment among academic staff at public universities in Lagos State.**

The regression coefficient for work environment is  $B = 0.224$ , with a standard error of 0.024 and a t-value of 9.409, which is statistically significant at  $p = .000$ . This indicates a strong, positive, and statistically significant effect of work environment on affective commitment. The beta value ( $\beta = 0.528$ ) shows that among all predictors, work environment has the strongest influence. Since the p-value is below 0.05, we reject the null hypothesis one and conclude that work environment significantly influences affective commitment among academic staff at public universities in Lagos State.

#### 4.2.2 Test of Hypothesis Two

**H<sub>02</sub> Non-wage benefits have no statistically significant effect on affective commitment among academic staff at public universities in Lagos State.**

The coefficient for non-wage benefits is  $B = -0.030$ , with a standard error of 0.025 and a t-value of -1.206, which is not statistically significant at  $p = .229$ . This result suggests that non-wage benefits do not have a significant independent effect on affective commitment in the sampled institutions. Therefore, the null hypothesis two was accepted indicating that non-wage benefits has no significant effect on affective commitment among academic staff at public universities in Lagos State.

#### 4.2.3 Test of Hypothesis Three

**H<sub>03</sub>: Work-life balance arrangements have no statistically significant effect on affective commitment among academic staff at public universities in Lagos State.**

Work-life balance has a regression coefficient of  $B = -0.054$ , with a t-value of -2.636 and a p-value of .009, which is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. The negative coefficient indicates an inverse relationship, suggesting that poor or burdensome work-life balance arrangements might undermine affective commitment. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept that work-life balance arrangements have a statistically significant, though negative, effect on affective commitment.

#### 4.2.4 Test of Assumption IV

**H<sub>04</sub>: There is no statistically significant joint effect of work environment, non-wage benefits, and work-life balance arrangements on affective commitment among academic staff at public universities in Lagos State.**

The model summary shows an  $R = .539$ ,  $R^2 = .290$ , and an adjusted  $R^2 = .284$ , meaning that about 29% of the variation in affective commitment can be explained by the three QWL factors. The ANOVA table reports an F-value of 44.196 with a  $p$ -value of .000, confirming that the model is statistically significant. This indicates a significant joint effect of the three QWL factors on affective commitment. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that work environment, non-wage benefits, and work-life balance arrangements collectively have a significant effect on affective commitment.

### 4.3 Summary of Findings

Following the multiple the regression analysis, the findings are summarised as follows:

- i. Work environment has a positive and statistically significant effect on affective commitment among academic staff.
- ii. Non-wage benefits have no statistically significant effect on affective commitment.
- iii. Work-life balance arrangements have a statistically significant but negative effect on affective commitment.
- iv. There is a statistically significant joint effect of work environment, non-wage benefits, and work-life balance arrangements on affective commitment.

### 4.4 Discussion of Findings

The first hypothesis examined whether the work environment affects emotional commitment. The results strongly supported this idea, showing a significant and positive influence. This aligns with Inarda (2022), who found that a supportive work environment was essential for staff commitment across sectors in Nigeria. It also agrees with Genty *et al.* (2025), who noted that poor physical

infrastructure in Ogun State's public universities lowered staff morale. Similarly, the Moroccan study by Goumrhare *et al.* (2025) emphasised the importance of job clarity and fair administrative practices, which are all part of the work environment. These findings suggest that environmental conditions, from office layout to institutional governance, are crucial for emotional attachment and staff loyalty in academic settings across different geographical areas.

The second hypothesis tested the effect of non-wage benefits on emotional commitment.

The data did not support this, indicating an insignificant relationship. This differs from Rahman *et al.* (2023), whose research in Bangladeshi universities found that non-wage benefits, like health insurance and professional development, positively correlated with emotional commitment. The lack of significance in this study may reflect local differences in how non-wage benefits are perceived or delivered in Nigerian public universities, perhaps due to inconsistencies in access or perceived inadequacy. It also contrasts with findings from Ethiopia by Abebe and Assemie (2023), who reported that benefits were vital for enhancing organisational commitment. This difference highlights the need to understand better what meaningful non-wage benefits are in various institutional settings.

The third hypothesis looked at the role of work-life balance arrangements, finding a significant but negative relationship with emotional commitment. Our study found an unexpected outcome: work-life balance had a negative effect on affective commitment. This result runs against what many earlier studies such as Olaleye and Abdurrashid (2022), Author-Fynn *et al.* (2024) and Minocha *et al.* (2025) have shown, where better balance usually means stronger attachment to the workplace. In the Lagos setting, however, the story is different. From our personal experiences and observations, lecturers in Lagos metropolis face daily realities such as long hours in heavy traffic, rising living costs, and very demanding workloads that include teaching, research, administration, and mentoring. Even when "work-life balance" is mentioned in policy, the experience for many staff is far from balanced. Instead, they feel overstretched, with little time left for their families, personal lives, or even proper rest.

This may explain why our study found a negative link that, when lecturers struggle to meet both personal and professional demands, frustration sets in. Rather than building emotional connection to the university, this struggle seems to reduce it. In other words, the more they try to juggle both

sides of life under Lagos pressures, the less loyal they feel to their institutions. Our finding shows that in a city like Lagos, work-life balance is not just about flexible schedules. Without reliable transport, fair workloads, and practical support systems, attempts to balance work and life may leave academic staff less affectively committed instead of more engaged.

The fourth hypothesis tested the combined influence of the three QWL factors (work environment, non-wage benefits, and work-life balance arrangements) on affective commitment. The results showed that the combined effect of work environment, non-wage benefits, and work-life balance explained only about 29% of the changes in lecturers' emotional commitment. This means that while these three factors are important, a much larger part of what influences lecturers' attachment to their universities is still not captured. Our findings align with previous literature, such as Ehido *et al.* (2024) and Singh and Pathak (2024), which also identified work environment, non-wage benefits, and work-life balance as quality of work life factors that affect academic staff commitment.

One possible reason for our finding is that we did not include other important factors in our model. For example, leadership style and how management interacts with lecturers could significantly impact their sense of attachment. Fairness and transparency in promotions, recognition, and reward systems may also be important. Job security might be another factor, especially in the Nigerian university system, where strikes, policy changes, or contract issues can create uncertainty (Singh & Pathak, 2024).

There may also be personal or social factors that we did not measure. For instance, the career stage of lecturers (early, mid-career, or senior), family responsibilities, or opportunities to network and grow professionally may affect their level of commitment. Previous studies have shown that organizational commitment can be influenced by indirect factors such as job performance and other mediating attitudes (Ehido *et al.*, 2024). It is also possible that some factors act as moderators, meaning they influence how the three quality of work life factors function. For example, gender or marital status may impact how work-life balance affects commitment, while age or years of experience may determine how much lecturers value non-wage benefits.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study investigated how certain Quality of Work Life (QWL) factors, such as work environment, non-wage benefits, and work-life balance, affect the commitment of academic staff in public universities in Lagos State. The findings indicate that a good work environment is the most important factor in fostering public academic staff's affective commitment. In contrast, non-wage benefits did not significantly affect affective commitment, while work-life balance arrangements surprisingly showed a negative relationship. These results suggest that while the work environment and relationships among staff are essential for building affective ties to their institutions, additional incentives and policies might not be effective if they do not meet staff expectations.

For academic staff, the study emphasises the need to push for better work environments and to be involved in shaping QWL policies. Academics can use these findings to engage more actively in discussions about their working conditions, especially in staff unions and welfare committees. The results also indicate that improving the work environment is key to keeping committed staff. University leaders should focus on allocating resources for facility improvements, fair workload distribution, and inclusive governance to strengthen emotional ties and reduce staff turnover.

Additionally, the findings highlight the need for policy reforms that set minimum standards for academic work environments and staff welfare. Policies should promote regular QWL assessments and offer incentives to institutions that excel in staff engagement and support. On the other hand, HR professionals should reconsider how they design and implement non-wage benefits and work-life policies. Rather than offering generic options, HRM should use evidence-based approaches to tailor benefits and working hours to the realities of academic life and individual well-being.

Finally, the study indicates that improving the QWL for academic staff can have broader effects on the quality of higher education, national innovation capacity, and youth employment. When academic staff are emotionally committed to their institutions, it leads to better teaching, more

productive research, and stronger mentorship, key factors in developing human capital and promoting societal progress.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE**

Based on the findings, university administrators and policymakers should:

- i. First, universities should invest in improving physical infrastructure by fixing classrooms, offices, and research facilities while also reducing overcrowding. Creating supportive social and professional spaces can help staff feel more valued and emotionally connected to their institutions, especially in a city where everyday living is already stressful.
- ii. Second, benefit packages should be redesigned with staff input to ensure they meet real needs. In the context of Lagos, allowances such as transport support, childcare services, and accessible healthcare would be more relevant than outdated or generic packages. Even if such benefits do not strongly increase commitment, making them fair and practical can reduce dissatisfaction.
- iii. Third, institutional workload and scheduling should be aligned with realistic academic demands. Flexible timetables, options for remote work, and support for mid-career and female staff can reduce burnout and improve emotional attachment to the university.
- iv. Finally, work environment, benefits, and work-life balance should be treated as interconnected parts of a single QWL strategy. Involving lecturers in welfare-related decisions and using regular staff feedback will help universities design more effective policies, enhance engagement, and reduce staff turnover.

### **6.2 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE**

Our study offers a unique insight by showing how the realities of life in Lagos shape the relationship between work life quality and emotional commitment among university lecturers.

Unlike previous studies, the findings indicate that a supportive work environment boosts emotional commitment. However, non-wage benefits have a small negative impact, likely because they fall short against Lagos's high living costs. Even more importantly, work-life balance negatively affects emotional commitment. This highlights how the city's long commutes and fast pace can weaken lecturers' affective ties to their institutions.

Theoretically, our study builds on current knowledge of QWL and affective commitment by emphasising the importance of context. Unlike earlier studies that found positive or neutral impacts, our results indicate that in Lagos, non-wage benefits have an insignificant negative effect on affective commitment. Surprisingly, work-life balance has a significant negative effect. These findings challenge common beliefs in QWL research and suggest that urban challenges, such as high living costs, long commutes, and crowded areas, can provide underlying factors. This understanding improves theory by showing that the relationship between QWL and commitment is not the same everywhere but can differ greatly in megacities like Lagos.

## **7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

The cross-sectional design restricts the ability to draw causal conclusions; a longitudinal study could offer deeper insights into how QWL factors influence commitment over time. Additionally, focusing only on public universities in Lagos State limits the applicability of the findings to private institutions or universities in other areas. Future research should aim for broader, comparative samples, incorporating qualitative aspects to uncover detailed staff perceptions that surveys may miss. Moreover, given the unexpected negative link between work-life balance and commitment, further investigation is necessary to explore the complexities and contradictions of this relationship in academia.

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