

## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL AND WORKFORCE STABILITY OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANIES IN RIVERS STATE

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### Abstract

This study examined the relationship between performance appraisal and workforce stability of telecommunication companies in Rivers State. The main aim was to determine goal setting, and feedback as they relate to job satisfaction and commitment of employees. The research utilised the cross-section approach of study, which allowed collecting data at one point and provide empirical data. The population used was 1,100 employees and managerial staff of the four major telecommunication operators, namely, Mtn, GLO, Airtel, and 9mobile Nigeria, which are located in Port Harcourt. The determination of sample size was based on either formula of Taro Yamane which led to the determination of 293 respondents; proportional allocation was done according to the method established by Bowley and structured questionsnaires were distributed among the firms. The instrument was also tested in terms of face and content validity with reliability of 0.8 quantified using Cronbach alpha. The testing of the hypothesis was done using Spearman Rank-Order Correlation. The analysis was done using SPSS version 23. The findings also revealed that performance appraisal systems had a significant impact on the stability of the workforce, whereas goal setting, unceasing feedback, and reward systems had a positive impact on job satisfaction and commitment. To conclude, the research proved that strong appraisal systems are capable of increasing staff motivation and retention in the telecommunication firms. The authors, therefore, suggest that the management should adopt open appraisal procedures, maintain transparent feedback mechanisms, and construction of performance-based incentive plans that are based on the organisational performance indicators to promote stability among the workforce.

***Keywords: Performance Appraisal, Workforce Stability, goal setting, feedback, job satisfaction, commitment of employees***

### Introduction

Workforce stability is a critical factor in the success of telecommunications companies in Rivers State, Nigeria. The sector is highly competitive and technologically driven, requiring a skilled and stable workforce to maintain service quality and operational efficiency. Workforce stability helps companies retain valuable skills and knowledge, ensuring consistent service delivery and reducing the costs associated with high employee turnover. This stability is particularly important in telecommunications, where customer satisfaction and trust are directly linked to the reliability and expertise of the workforce (Nwachukwu & Chukwuma, 2023). High turnover rates can lead to disruptions in service delivery, increased recruitment and training costs, and a loss of institutional knowledge. In contrast, a stable workforce fosters a positive organizational culture, improves employee morale, and enhances productivity. When employees feel secure in their roles, they are more likely to remain committed to the company's long-term goals, contributing to overall business success (Eze, 2023). Some measures of workforce stability include job satisfaction, work-life balance, recognition, rewards, job commitment, affective commitment, and continuance commitment. Factors such as competitive compensation, career advancement, professional development, positive organizational culture, and effective leadership significantly influence workforce stability (Eze, 2023; Nwachukwu & Chukwuma, 2023).

Among these factors, performance appraisal has received limited attention in the literature. Performance appraisal is a critical component of human resource management, aimed at evaluating and enhancing employee performance. It involves systematic assessment of employees' job performance relative to organizational objectives, helping identify strengths, address weaknesses, and reward high performers (DeNisi & Murphy, 2017). Various methods exist, including traditional techniques like ranking and paired comparison, and modern approaches such as 360-degree feedback and Management by Objectives (MBO). For instance, 360-degree feedback, which gathers input from supervisors, peers, subordinates, and clients, has been shown to improve employee satisfaction and performance (Atwater & Brett, 2019). Despite its benefits, challenges like rater bias and bureaucratic perceptions can undermine appraisal effectiveness, requiring clear performance criteria, appraiser training, and a culture of continuous feedback (Pulakos et al., 2019). For this study, three dimensions of performance appraisal—goal setting, continuous feedback, and rewards—were adopted. Goal setting aligns employee efforts with organizational objectives, enhancing motivation and productivity (Locke & Latham, 2002); continuous feedback fosters real-time performance improvement and engagement (Stone & Heen, 2014); and rewards reinforce desired behaviors, boosting morale, retention, and satisfaction (Eisenberger & Aselage, 2009). Linking performance appraisal to workforce stability, especially in telecommunications companies in Rivers State, is scarce in literature, and this study seeks to address that gap.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The problem of poor workforce stability in telecommunications companies in Rivers State is evident in low job satisfaction, poor work-life balance, inadequate recognition, and inappropriate rewards. Low job satisfaction arises when employees feel discontent due to limited career growth, poor working conditions, and inadequate support, leading to high turnover and reduced productivity (Smith, 2020). Work-life imbalance is also a major issue, as long hours and high job demands encroach on personal time, causing stress and burnout (Johnson & Lee, 2019). Recognition plays a key role in motivation, yet employees often feel undervalued, which negatively impacts engagement and morale (Brown & Green, 2021). Inappropriate rewards and compensation structures further exacerbate workforce instability, as salaries and benefits may not align with industry standards or employee contributions (Martin, 2022). These problems largely stem from deficiencies in performance management practices, including inadequate goal setting, insufficient feedback, and ineffective reward mechanisms. Clear and challenging goals are critical for motivation and performance, while lack of defined objectives can cause confusion and disengagement (Locke & Latham, 2019). Regular and constructive feedback is necessary for employee development, as its absence leads to frustration and feelings of being undervalued (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Similarly, fair and performance-based rewards are essential to maintain morale and reduce turnover (Lawler, 2018). Addressing these problem highlights the need for empirical research on the relationship between performance appraisal and workforce stability in telecommunications companies in Rivers State.

### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of the study was to investigate the relationship between performance appraisal and workforce stability of telecommunications companies in Rivers State. The objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine the relationship between goal setting and job satisfaction of telecommunications companies in Rivers State
2. Investigate the relationship between goal setting and job commitment of telecommunications companies in Rivers State
3. Evaluate the relationship between continuous feedback and job satisfaction of telecommunications companies in Rivers State

4. Determine the relationship between continuous feedback and job commitment of telecommunications companies in Rivers State

### Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated which guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between goal setting and job satisfaction of telecommunications companies in Rivers State?
2. How does goal setting relate with job commitment of telecommunications companies in Rivers State?
3. What is the relationship between continuous feedback and job satisfaction of telecommunications companies in Rivers State?
4. How does continuous feedback relate with job commitment of telecommunications companies in Rivers State?

### Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

- H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between goal setting and job satisfaction of telecommunications companies in Rivers State
- H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between goal setting and job commitment of telecommunications companies in Rivers State
- H0<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between continuous feedback and job satisfaction of telecommunications companies in Rivers State
- H0<sub>4</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between continuous feedback and job commitment of telecommunications companies in Rivers State

### Significance of the Study

The research is important because it provides empirical information that outlines the impact of performance appraisal on employee retention in the telecommunication industry in Rivers State. It develops the understanding of nexus between the appraisal practises, job satisfaction, and employee commitment. The findings obtained will offer a realistic guide to the managerial stakeholders in formulation of fair and effective appraisal systems, thus enhancing employee retention and output. In its turn, these findings can help policymakers and organisational leaders to develop human resource policies that will create a workforce stability. Moreover, the study sets a benchmark to follow by other scholars that may wish to explore performance management and employee results under similar organisational settings.

### Conceptual Review

Conceptual review is crucial in research as it provides a theoretical foundation for the study, guiding the direction and scope of the investigation. Hence, the conceptual review of this study focused on concept of performance appraisal with its dimensions and workforce stability with its measures. The study also discussed the influence of organizational culture and how it moderates the relationship between of performance appraisal and workforce stability.

### Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework helps to clarify key terms, identify gaps in the literature, and establish a framework for interpreting results. This Framework ensures that the research is grounded in established knowledge while contributing to the ongoing discourse in the field

**Conceptual Framework**

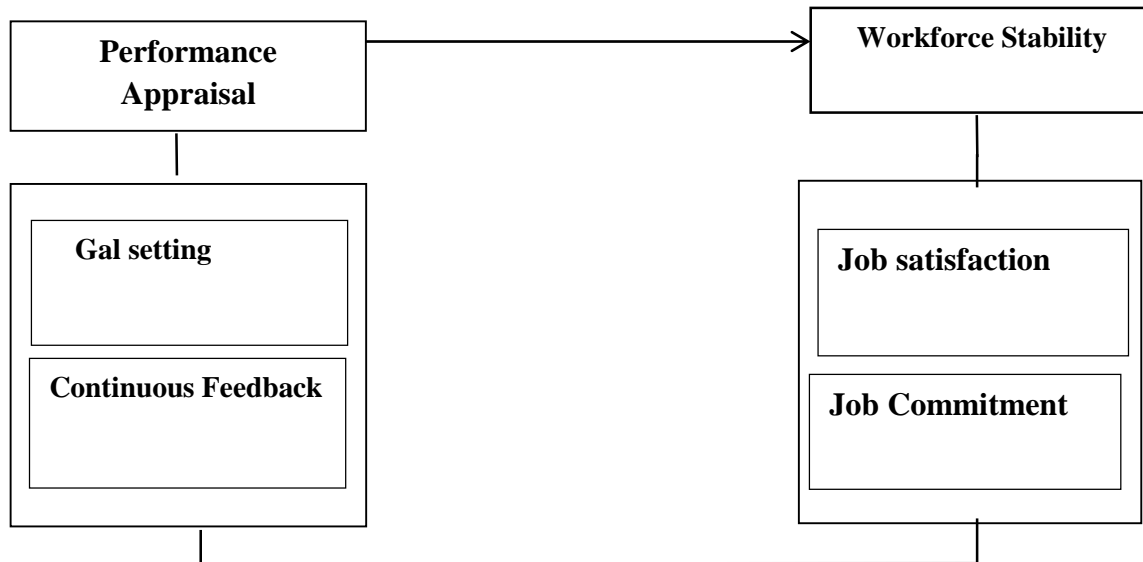


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of performance appraisal and workforce stability of telecommunications companies in Rivers State

Source: Adapted from Drucker (2013), Balduck and Buelens (2008), Armstrong (2009), and Morgan and Sturdy (2000), and Nwadukwe and Timinepere (2012).

**Concept of Performance Appraisal**

Performance appraisal is a systematic process used to evaluate and improve employee performance and productivity. It involves assessing employees' work performance, providing feedback, and making decisions about promotions, pay raises, and other employment-related matters (Aguinis, 2019). The primary objective of performance appraisal is to enhance employee performance by identifying strengths and areas for improvement, thereby contributing to individual and organizational goals. Effective performance appraisal systems are characterized by their ability to provide objective and fair evaluations. This involves setting clear performance criteria, using reliable assessment methods, and ensuring that the appraisal process is transparent and consistent (Murphy & Cleveland, 1995). The process also includes regular feedback and discussions between employees and supervisors to align performance with organizational expectations and goals. Furthermore, performance appraisals play a crucial role in employee development and career planning. They provide valuable insights into employees' skills and competencies, which can be used to design targeted training and development programs (Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006). By identifying development needs and career aspirations, performance appraisals help in creating personalized development plans that support employees' growth and advancement within the organization.

**Goal Setting**

Goal setting is a fundamental dimension of performance appraisal that involves establishing measurable, achievable, relevant objectives for employees (Locke & Latham, 2019). Clear and well-defined goals help employees understand what is expected of them and provide a basis for evaluating their performance. Effective goal setting aligns individual objectives with organizational goals, ensuring that employees' efforts contribute to the overall success of the organization. Research indicates that goal setting enhances employee motivation and performance by providing a clear direction and purpose (Locke & Latham, 2002). Goals that are challenging yet attainable encourage employees to exert greater effort and persistence. Additionally, goal-setting processes should involve employee participation to increase commitment and ownership of the objectives

(Latham & Locke, 2007). This participative approach fosters a sense of responsibility and engagement among employees. Effective goal setting also requires regular review and adjustment of goals based on changing organizational needs and employee performance (Schmidt & Rader, 1999). This flexibility ensures that goals remain relevant and achievable, thereby maintaining employee motivation and performance. Furthermore, goal-setting processes should include clear criteria for measuring progress and success, providing employees with a sense of accomplishment and recognition.

### **Continuous Feedback**

Continuous feedback is a key component of performance appraisal that provides employees with regular, constructive, and timely information regarding their performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Unlike traditional annual reviews, it focuses on real-time communication and immediate improvement opportunities, helping employees align their performance with organizational expectations (London & Smither, 1999). Effective feedback is specific, actionable, and behavior-focused, rather than personal, and should involve a two-way dialogue to allow employees to discuss their perspectives and development needs (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). The timeliness of feedback ensures that employees can quickly address issues and reinforce positive behaviors (Stone, 2005; DeNisi & Kluger, 2000). Specificity provides clarity on which behaviors or outcomes need improvement, often illustrated with concrete examples (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Follow-up ensures that feedback is implemented effectively, allowing managers to monitor progress and provide additional guidance (Baker, 2011; Ilgen et al., 1979). Continuous feedback fosters a culture of openness and trust, enhancing employee motivation, engagement, and productivity (Fletcher, 2001). Organizations that implement regular, timely, and specific feedback can reduce performance gaps and improve workforce stability. Proper feedback mechanisms contribute to employee development, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Addressing timeliness, specificity, and follow-up is critical for effective performance management and long-term employee growth.

### **Rewards**

Rewards are an integral aspect of performance appraisal, recognizing and reinforcing employees' achievements and contributions (Lawler, 2018). Effective reward systems align with organizational goals and employee expectations, and they can be monetary—such as bonuses and salary increases—or non-monetary, like recognition programs and career development opportunities (Rynes et al., 2004; Milkovich & Newman, 2021). Fair and performance-based rewards enhance motivation, job satisfaction, and retention by acknowledging employees' efforts (Gerhart & Rynes, 2003). Pay, as a fundamental component, influences perceived value and motivation; competitive salaries attract and retain talent, while inadequate compensation can lead to dissatisfaction (Herzberg, 1966; Judge et al., 2010). Benefits such as health insurance, retirement plans, and paid leave contribute to well-being and organizational commitment, with perceived value varying across demographic groups (Kraimer et al., 2011; Brewster et al., 2016). Recognition programs acknowledge employees' contributions, boosting morale and engagement while reinforcing desired behaviors (Korman, 1971; Eisenberger et al., 1986). Reward systems should be transparent, aligned with performance, and regularly reviewed to maintain relevance and fairness (Rynes, Gerhart, & Minette, 2004). By integrating pay, benefits, and recognition, organizations can enhance workforce stability and performance. Well-designed reward systems support a positive organizational culture and encourage employee loyalty. Rewards thus serve as a critical motivator for sustaining workforce commitment and productivity.

### **Workforce Stability**

Workforce stability refers to the extent to which employees remain with an organization over time, reflecting a consistent and experienced workforce (Hausknecht, Rodda, & Howard, 2009). Stable

workforces improve organizational performance, reduce turnover costs, and enhance employee morale (Huselid, 1995). Achieving stability involves implementing effective human resource practices, such as competitive compensation, career development, and supportive management, which retain talent and prevent unnecessary turnover (Becker & Huselid, 1998). External factors, such as economic conditions and industry trends, also influence workforce stability by affecting job security and employee satisfaction (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003). Organizations with stable workforces benefit from accumulated knowledge and experience, promoting efficiency and team cohesion. High workforce stability correlates with positive organizational outcomes, including higher performance, better collaboration, and a more resilient work environment. Stability also strengthens institutional memory, allowing organizations to maintain service quality and operational consistency. Conversely, instability can lead to reduced productivity, lower morale, and higher recruitment and training costs. Workforce stability is thus a critical determinant of organizational effectiveness. Organizations that manage internal and external factors effectively can enhance retention and overall performance.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is the extent to which employees feel content and fulfilled with their work, influencing retention and organizational commitment (Locke, 1976). High job satisfaction is linked to increased productivity, lower turnover, and positive work attitudes (Judge & Bono, 2001). Factors influencing job satisfaction include work conditions, compensation, career development opportunities, interpersonal relationships, and the meaningfulness of work (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002). Employees with high satisfaction exhibit better performance and engage in organizational citizenship behaviors (Organ, 1988). Low job satisfaction can result in absenteeism, disengagement, and reduced productivity. Providing supportive work environments, fair compensation, career growth opportunities, and recognition enhances satisfaction. Work-life balance is another crucial determinant, as employees who can manage professional and personal responsibilities are more productive and loyal (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Hill, Hawkins, & Miller, 1996). Job satisfaction directly contributes to workforce stability by increasing retention and engagement. Ensuring opportunities for promotion and career progression further strengthens job satisfaction and commitment (Hausknecht et al., 2009). Organizations that prioritize job satisfaction can build a motivated, skilled, and stable workforce.

### **Performance Appraisals and Workforce Stability**

When effectively implemented, performance appraisals can have a substantial impact on organizational performance. They can enhance employee motivation, commitment, and productivity by recognizing and rewarding high performers and providing constructive feedback to others. Moreover, performance appraisals can inform decisions related to promotions, compensation, training, and career development. A meta-analysis by Schleicher et al. (2019) demonstrated that organizations with well-designed performance appraisal systems experience higher levels of employee performance and organizational profitability. This underscores the importance of continuous improvement and innovation in appraisal practices to meet evolving organizational needs.

### **Goal Setting and Workforce Stability**

Goal setting is a fundamental aspect of employee motivation and performance management, and it plays a crucial role in workforce stability. According to Locke and Latham's Goal-Setting Theory (1990), specific and challenging goals lead to higher performance levels as they provide employees with a clear sense of direction and purpose. When employees understand their objectives and how their roles contribute to the organization's overall goals, they are more likely to be engaged and

committed. This commitment fosters workforce stability, as employees feel more connected to the organization and are less likely to seek employment elsewhere (Locke & Latham, 2002).

The process of goal setting also contributes to workforce stability by fostering a sense of achievement and progress among employees. When employees reach their goals, they experience a sense of accomplishment, which enhances their job satisfaction and loyalty to the organization. This, in turn, reduces turnover rates, as satisfied employees are more likely to remain with the company. A study by Latham (2004) found that employees who set and achieved goals were more likely to stay with their organizations, suggesting that goal setting can be an effective strategy for retaining talent. Furthermore, involving employees in the goal-setting process can enhance their commitment and motivation, leading to greater workforce stability. When employees have a say in setting their goals, they are more likely to be invested in achieving them. This participatory approach also aligns employees' personal goals with organizational objectives, creating a sense of shared purpose. Research by Deci and Ryan (2000) supports the idea that autonomy in goal setting leads to higher intrinsic motivation, which in turn can increase job satisfaction and reduce turnover intentions.

However, it is important that the goals set are realistic and achievable. Unrealistic goals can lead to frustration and demotivation, potentially increasing turnover rates. Therefore, managers should ensure that the goals are challenging yet attainable, and they should provide the necessary resources and support for employees to achieve these goals. By setting appropriate goals and aligning them with the organization's strategic objectives, companies can enhance workforce stability and ensure long-term success (Locke et al., 1981).

### **Continuous Feedback and Workforce Stability**

Continuous feedback is essential for maintaining workforce stability, as it fosters ongoing communication and helps employees understand their performance relative to expectations. Feedback provides employees with the information they need to adjust their behaviors and improve their performance, which can enhance job satisfaction and reduce turnover intentions. According to a study by Anseel et al. (2015), regular feedback is associated with higher levels of job satisfaction and employee engagement, both of which are critical factors in workforce stability. The role of continuous feedback in workforce stability is also tied to its impact on employee development and growth. When employees receive constructive feedback, they can identify areas for improvement and develop new skills, which can lead to career advancement within the organization. This opportunity for growth is a key factor in retaining employees, as individuals who see a clear path for development are more likely to remain with the company. A study by London (2003) found that employees who received regular feedback and developmental opportunities were more likely to stay with their organizations, highlighting the importance of feedback in maintaining a stable workforce. Continuous feedback also strengthens the relationship between employees and managers, contributing to a positive work environment and workforce stability. When feedback is provided regularly, it fosters trust and open communication, making employees feel valued and supported. This supportive environment can reduce turnover by increasing employees' commitment to the organization. A study by Smither et al. (2005) suggests that feedback-rich environments are associated with lower turnover rates, as employees feel more engaged and connected to their work. However, the effectiveness of continuous feedback depends on how it is delivered. Feedback should be specific, timely, and constructive, focusing on behaviors that can be changed rather than on personal characteristics. Moreover, feedback should be a two-way process, where employees also have the opportunity to share their thoughts and concerns. By implementing continuous feedback effectively, organizations can enhance workforce stability by ensuring that employees feel supported, valued, and aligned with the organization's goals (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996).

### **Theoretical Review**

### **Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964)**

The study adopted Social Exchange Theory by Blau(1964). Social Exchange Theory posits that relationships are formed through reciprocal exchanges between parties, and individuals are more committed to relationships where they perceive a fair exchange of resources, support, and recognition. Application to Performance Appraisal and Workforce Stability: Performance appraisals can be seen as part of the social exchange between employees and the organization. When appraisals are conducted fairly, with constructive feedback and recognition of employees' contributions, they reinforce the employee's sense of being valued by the organization. This sense of reciprocity encourages employees to reciprocate with loyalty and continued commitment, thus enhancing workforce stability. If employees feel that the appraisal process is supportive and beneficial to their career growth, they are more likely to remain with the organization. In all, this theory provides a strong foundation for understanding how effective performance appraisals can enhance workforce stability. By ensuring that appraisals are goal-oriented, fair, aligned with rewards, and supportive, organizations can foster a stable and committed workforce.

### **Empirical Review**

Kampkötter (2017) studied performance appraisals and job satisfaction. Formal performance appraisals (PA) are one of the most important human resource management practices in companies. In this paper, we focus on the reaction of employees to these performance assessments. In particular, we investigate the effect between the incidence of being formally evaluated by a supervisor and job and income satisfaction. Building on a representative, longitudinal sample of more than 12,000 individuals from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP), we apply fixed effects regressions and find a significantly positive effect of PA on job satisfaction, which is driven by appraisals that are linked to monetary outcomes. Furthermore, the moderating effects of personality traits (Big Five, locus of control) on the relationship between PA and job satisfaction are explored. We find a negative interaction term between PA without any monetary consequences and both employees scoring high on openness to experience and internal locus of control. This suggests that for these employees appraisals, which induce performance monitoring without any monetary consequences, have a detrimental effect on job satisfaction rates

Kagotho (2018) explored how performance appraisal impacts employee performance at Gertrude's Children Hospital in Kenya, using a descriptive cross-sectional design with a sample of 100 out of 250 staff members. The study aimed to assess the effects of performance appraisal feedback, process, goals, and methods on employee performance. Key findings indicated that feedback is crucial for aligning staff with established standards and that performance appraisal goals enhance job satisfaction, productivity, and trust. The study underscored the importance of clear communication about appraisal purposes and training in feedback methods. Recommendations included involving all levels of staff in the appraisal planning process, ensuring transparency, and linking appraisals to identifying training needs. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented through tables, charts, and graphs. Overall, the study provides valuable insights for improving performance appraisal practices and suggests areas for future research.

Oluwayemisi and Taiwo (2021) studied performance appraisal and performance of the nigerian civil service in five local governments of Lagos State. This paper assesses the role of performance appraisal on the performance of the Nigerian civil service. The poor performance of the civil service in rendering qualitative service to citizenry was the problem that justified the need for the study. Sample of 265 respondents participated in the survey and they were selected using a simple random sampling technique. Multiple regression technique was used for the test of the hypotheses. The study found that objective assessment does not have significant effect on performance of the civil service, while it was found that feedback mechanism has significant effect on the performance of the civil service. The study recommends that for improved performance of the service, there is need to ensure that employees are provided timely feedback on their performance appraisal in the service. The basis for

promotion or upgraded should be made clear and all should be transparent, as it affects employees' performance, which in turns affects the civil service performance.

While existing research, such as that by Kuvass (2011), has extensively examined the impact of performance appraisal on various employee outcomes, there is a notable gap in literature regarding its specific effects on workforce stability within the telecommunications sector. Most studies have focused on general employee performance and organizational commitment, often overlooking how performance appraisals influence workforce stability—an area particularly critical in dynamic industries like telecommunications. Understanding how performance appraisal practices affect employee retention, turnover rates, and overall stability in this sector could provide valuable insights for organizations striving to maintain a stable and productive workforce amidst rapid technological and market changes. Addressing this gap could help tailor performance management strategies to better support workforce stability, ultimately leading to more effective organizational practices in the telecommunications industry.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a cross-sectional research design. This design takes a snapshot of a situation or event at a particular point in time, seeks data through the examination of variables, and analyzes them to generate findings. This is consistent with the view of Baridam (2001), who emphasized that a cross-sectional research design enables a researcher to collect data from respondents as a snapshot of an event and analyze such data at that specific point in time. The target population of the study comprised all telecommunications companies in Rivers State. However, due to the dispersed geographical locations of these companies across the state, the study focused on those operating within Port Harcourt, where most telecommunications firms have their zonal branches. Consequently, the accessible population for the study consisted of four major telecommunications companies: MTN Nigeria, GLO Nigeria, 9Mobile Nigeria, and Airtel Nigeria. The total population of employees and managers across these firms who had worked for at least one year was 1,100. The determination of the number of respondents for data generation was done using a judgmental sampling method, which allowed the researcher to select participants deemed most relevant to the study. This method was considered appropriate since directors, managers, supervisors, and staff involved in performance appraisal were expected to contribute meaningfully to the development of workforce stability through effective planning, policy formulation, and implementation.

The population distribution of the study is presented in Table 3.1, showing MTN Nigeria with 350 staff, GLO Nigeria with 250 staff, 9Mobile Nigeria with 270 staff, and Airtel Nigeria with 230 staff, making a total of 1,100 respondents. Given the relatively large population, the Taro Yamane's formula was adopted to determine an appropriate sample size for the study at a 5% margin of error. The computation yielded a sample size of 293 respondents. Subsequently, the Bowley's proportional allocation formula was employed to distribute the questionnaire proportionately among the four telecommunications firms based on their staff strength. Accordingly, 93 copies were allocated to MTN Nigeria, 67 to GLO Nigeria, 72 to Airtel Nigeria, and 61 to 9Mobile Nigeria, totaling 293 questionnaires distributed for the study.

Data for the study were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data were collected directly from respondents using structured questionnaires, while the secondary data were sourced from existing literature, including textbooks, journals, newspapers, magazines, and other relevant publications that provided supplementary insights for the research. The research instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire divided into two sections. Section A focused on the respondents' demographic characteristics, while Section B contained items on the independent, dependent, and moderating variables of the study. The independent variable was performance appraisal, with dimensions such as goal setting, continuous feedback, and rewards. The dependent variable was workforce stability, measured by job satisfaction and job commitment,

while organizational culture served as the moderating variable. All items were measured using a four-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1). To ensure the validity of the instrument, both face and content validity were established. Face validity was achieved through expert review and supervisor assessment to confirm that the instrument accurately represented the constructs being measured. Content validity was ensured by including multiple items that adequately captured each domain of the study variables, in line with the recommendations of Straub et al. (2004). The reliability of the instrument was tested using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient, as recommended by Cronbach (1951), to determine internal consistency among the measurement items. A reliability coefficient of 0.70 or above, as suggested by Nunnally (1978), was considered acceptable. Based on the nature of the study, the bivariate analysis was performed using Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient to determine the level and direction of the relationship between performance appraisal and workforce stability. The data were analyzed with aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0, which facilitated with accurate and efficient computation of the results.

**Results and Analysis**

To better understand the research participants and their replies, it is important to analyze the demographic data collected from the respondents. Participants' age, gender, level of education, employment, and other pertinent factors are all included in the demographic data. Researchers may find patterns and trends within certain demographic groupings by analyzing this data. Gaining knowledge from how various groups answer the questionnaire might be very beneficial.

**Table 1: Correlation between Goal Setting and Job Satisfaction**

		Correlations		
			Goal Setting	Job Satisfaction
Spearman's rho	Goal Setting	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.661**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	288	288
	Job Satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.661**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	288	288

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Desk Research (2025)

The correlation between goal setting and job satisfaction is strong and positive, with a Spearman's rho coefficient of 0.661. This result, which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level, indicates that as goal setting practices improve, employees' job satisfaction also tends to increase. Effective goal setting likely provides clear expectations and a sense of direction, contributing to higher overall satisfaction in the workplace. This strong relationship underscores the importance of setting clear, achievable goals as a strategy to enhance employee satisfaction.

**Table 2: Correlation between Goal Setting and Job Commitment**

		Correlations		
			Goal Setting	Job Commitment
Spearman's rho	Goal Setting	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.566**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	288	288

Job Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.566**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	288	288

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Desk Research (2025)

The correlation between goal setting and job commitment is moderate to strong, with a Spearman's rho coefficient of 0.566, and is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This suggests that well-defined and effectively communicated goals are associated with higher levels of job commitment among employees. When employees perceive that their goals are aligned with their roles and skills, they are more likely to develop a stronger sense of commitment to the organization. This relationship highlights the role of goal setting in fostering a committed workforce.

**Table 3: Correlation between Continuous Feedback and Job Satisfaction**  
 Correlations

			Continuous Feed Back	Job Satisfaction
Spearman's rho	Continuous Feed Back	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.747**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	288	288
	Job Satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.747**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	288	288

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Desk Research (2025)

The correlation between continuous feedback and job satisfaction is very strong, with a Spearman's rho coefficient of 0.747, and is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This indicates that frequent and constructive feedback is closely associated with higher job satisfaction. Employees who receive regular feedback are more likely to feel valued and supported, which contributes to their overall satisfaction with their jobs. This strong correlation emphasizes the critical role of continuous feedback in maintaining high levels of job satisfaction.

**Table 4: Correlation between Continuous Feedback and Job Commitment**  
 Correlations

			Continuous Feed Back	Job Commitment
Spearman's rho	Continuous Feed Back	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.657**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	288	288
	Job Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.657**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	288	288

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Desk Research (2025)

There is a strong positive correlation between continuous feedback and job commitment, with a Spearman's rho coefficient of 0.657, significant at the 0.01 level. This result suggests that employees who receive regular and effective feedback are more likely to exhibit higher levels of commitment to their organization. Continuous feedback helps employees understand their performance and growth opportunities, which can enhance their sense of belonging and dedication to the organization.

## **Discussion of Findings**

### **Goal Setting and Job Satisfaction**

Goal setting is a powerful tool for enhancing job satisfaction. When employees have clearly defined, attainable goals, they are more likely to experience a sense of purpose and achievement. This sense of accomplishment can significantly boost job satisfaction. In the context of telecommunications companies in Rivers State, having structured goal-setting practices can help employees align their personal objectives with organizational targets, which in turn enhances their satisfaction with their jobs. According to a study by Locke and Latham (2019), goal setting is positively correlated with job satisfaction. Employees who have clear and challenging goals tend to be more satisfied with their work because they receive regular feedback and experience a greater sense of progress. This finding is supported by research in various industries, including telecommunications. For instance, a study by Abiodun et al. (2022) found that goal clarity in Nigerian telecommunications firms was linked to higher job satisfaction, suggesting that employees feel more content when they understand their goals and see their achievements. Therefore, in Rivers State, the effectiveness of goal setting on job satisfaction may be influenced by the local work culture and the specific practices of telecommunications companies. Organizations that implement SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals could see a more pronounced positive effect on job satisfaction. Employees are likely to appreciate a structured approach that provides them with clear expectations and a roadmap for achieving their objectives.

### **Goal Setting and Job Commitment**

Job commitment is closely tied to the process of goal setting. When employees are involved in setting goals and these goals align with their values and career aspirations, their commitment to the organization tends to increase. Goal setting provides employees with a clear sense of direction and purpose, which enhances their emotional attachment and loyalty to the organization. For telecommunications companies in Rivers State, involving employees in the goal-setting process can foster a stronger sense of commitment. Research by Meyer and Allen (2021) emphasizes that goal setting enhances job commitment by providing employees with a clearer understanding of how their roles contribute to organizational success. Similarly, studies such as those by Akinyele and Olutoye (2023) reveal that employees who perceive their goals as achievable and aligned with their personal values are more likely to exhibit higher levels of commitment. In the Nigerian telecommunications sector, goal-setting practices that involve employees in the decision-making process can strengthen job commitment. In Rivers State, the relationship between goal setting and job commitment may be influenced by how well the goals resonate with employees' personal values and career aspirations. Effective goal-setting practices that engage employees and reflect their contributions to organizational objectives can lead to greater commitment and lower turnover rates.

### **Continuous Feedback and Job Satisfaction**

Discussion: Continuous feedback is critical for maintaining job satisfaction. Regular feedback helps employees understand their performance and areas for improvement, which can increase their satisfaction with their roles. Feedback also provides opportunities for recognition and development, both of which contribute to a positive work experience. For telecommunications companies in Rivers State, establishing a culture of continuous feedback can enhance employees' satisfaction by

ensuring they feel valued and supported. Kluger and DeNisi (2021) found that continuous feedback positively impacts job satisfaction by making employees feel recognized and involved in their own development. Studies specific to the telecommunications sector, such as those by Adeoye and Ogunlana (2022), support this by showing that employees who receive regular and constructive feedback report higher levels of job satisfaction. Continuous feedback helps employees address performance issues promptly and fosters a supportive work environment. In Rivers State, the effectiveness of continuous feedback on job satisfaction may depend on the feedback culture within telecommunications companies. A feedback culture that emphasizes timely, constructive, and supportive communication can significantly enhance job satisfaction by making employees feel more engaged and valued.

### **Continuous Feedback and Job Commitment**

Continuous feedback can also play a crucial role in enhancing job commitment. When employees receive regular feedback, they are more likely to feel engaged with their work and committed to the organization. Feedback helps employees understand their progress and how their work aligns with organizational goals, which can strengthen their commitment. For telecommunications companies in Rivers State, fostering a culture of continuous feedback can enhance employee commitment by providing ongoing support and recognition. Ashford and Black (2020) highlight that continuous feedback positively affects job commitment by improving employees' understanding of their roles and contributions. This finding is supported by research in the Nigerian context, such as the study by Bello and Afolabi (2022), which found that employees who receive regular feedback are more likely to be committed to their organization. Continuous feedback helps build trust and a sense of belonging, which are essential for strong job commitment. In Rivers State, the impact of continuous feedback on job commitment may be influenced by how feedback is delivered and perceived. Feedback that is constructive, frequent, and supportive can lead to higher levels of commitment, as employees feel more connected to their roles and the organization.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings, study concluded that there is a significant relationship between goal setting, continuous feedback, rewards, and organizational culture significantly influences job satisfaction, job commitment, and workforce stability in telecommunications companies in Rivers State. Clear and attainable goals enhance employee motivation, satisfaction, and commitment, while regular and constructive feedback fosters engagement, loyalty, and a sense of belonging. Effective reward systems aligned with employee contributions further boost job satisfaction and commitment, reducing turnover. Additionally, a positive organizational culture that emphasizes fairness, transparency, and development strengthens the impact of performance appraisals, promoting workforce stability by fostering trust and satisfaction among employees.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, and the conclusions deduced, it was necessary to put forward the following recommendations:

1. Management in Telecommunications companies in Rivers State should implement SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals to enhance job satisfaction by providing employees with clear objectives and a sense of accomplishment.
2. Management should encourage employee involvement in the goal-setting process to strengthen their emotional commitment to the organization, thereby fostering long-term loyalty and dedication.
3. Management should establish a culture of regular, constructive feedback to boost job satisfaction by making employees feel valued, supported, and guided in their professional development.

4. Management should ensure frequent and transparent feedback to increase job commitment, helping employees feel engaged and aligned with the organization's objectives.

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