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Promotion and employees' performance at University of Abuja: The moderating role of employees' belief that fairness in decisions of promotions motivates employees' performance

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Abstract

This study examined how promotions at the University of Abuja affected workers' performance, using workers' perceptions that fairness in promotion decisions drives workers' output as a moderating factor. Both primary and secondary sources of data were utilized in the investigation. Descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, and the partial least squares structural equation modeling technique were employed for the study. The findings indicated that when employees perceived that fairness in promotion decisions motivated them to perform better, the influence of promotions on their performance was positive and significant. Additionally, the mediation analysis revealed that when employees believed that fairness in promotion decisions motivated their performance, promotions had a favorable and significant impact on their performance, although this was only a partial mediation. The overall results demonstrated that promotions significantly and positively impacted workers' performance. The study recommended that the University of Abuja administration should prioritize equity in promotion processes to enhance employee performance. Furthermore, to support employees in meeting promotion requirements, the university's management must ensure impartiality in promotion decisions.

Keywords: Confirmatory factor analysis, Employee performance, Exploratory factor analysis, Partial least squares structural equation modelling, Promotion, University of Abuja.

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Contents

Contribution of this paper to the literature

This study was the first to investigate the modulating effect of employees' belief that fairness in promotion decisions motivates employees' performance, specifically examining the impact of promotion on employees' performance at the University of Abuja.

1. Introduction

Studies on organizational behavior and human resource management have focused on how promotions influence worker performance. According to Lazear (1992), promotions are regarded as a vital component of career advancement and serve as a primary motivator for employees to enhance their performance. Promotions, as noted by Pergamit and Veum (1999), play a crucial role in increasing employee performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Conversely, Folger and Konovsky (1989) argued that the effectiveness of promotions in motivating employees depends on various factors, including perceived fairness in the promotion process. One significant factor that can limit the relationship between promotion and employee performance is employees' perception that fairness in promotion decisions influences performance.

According to the equity hypothesis, workers perceive equity when they believe their contributions and efforts are valued and appropriately compensated (Adams, 1965). According to Greenberg (1987), employees are more likely to perform better if they believe that the requirements for promotions are fair and clear. However, Cropanzano and Randall (1993) contended that demotivation and poorer performance occur when employees perceive the promotion process as unjust or biased. Fair promotions can boost employees' enthusiasm and performance in the fiercely competitive and dynamic academic environment, where workers either succeed or fail, become prominent or disappear. Conversely, unethical promotion practices lead to lower morale, disengagement, and turnover.

The study's findings will shed light on the circumstances under which promotions at the University of Abuja are most successful in raising employee performance. Furthermore, this study is essential since promotion equity is a metric used to evaluate the performance and motivation of university-educated staff. Duru, Eze, Yusuf, Danjuma, and Saleh (2023) stated that in developing and developed economies, promotion acts as a veritable instrument for self-development, the attainment of workers' satisfaction, the development of the spirit of competition, reduction of workers' turnover, the attraction of skilled and industrious individuals, and the realization of optimal performance from the workforce (p. 2). No wonder (Tilahun, 2019) stated that "the loss of employees represents a loss of skills, knowledge, and experiences which can create a significant economic impact and cost to the organization as well as impacting the needs of customers" (p. 4).

Previous research on promotions mostly examined the connection between promotions and worker performance (Ansah, 2017; Duru et al., 2023; Hidig, 2014; Ligare, Wanyama, & Aliata, 2020; Muhati & Makhamara, 2023; Njiraine, 2019; Nyaga & Omuya, 2024; Owota & Raimi, 2022; Peter, 2014; Ratemo, Bula, & Felistus, 2021; Razak, Sarpan, & Ramlan, 2018; Rinny, Purba, & Handiman, 2020; Rochaeni, Ludiin, & Ramly, 2019; Salsa & Dewi, 2024; Setyawati, Woelandari, & Rianto, 2022; Tasman, Siregar, & Nasution, 2021; Winoto, Surati, & Wahyulina, 2021). Furthermore, there were not many studies that looked at the relationship between employee performance and promotions with a moderating element (Arisaq, Rivai, & Lukito, 2023; Irawan, Briggs, Azami, & Nurfaliza, 2021; Izudin, Suharto, & Sanusi, 2024; Lumbanraja, Haryono, & Njotowidjojo, 2024; Nurteja, Lumbanraja, & Absah, 2022; Trihudiyatmanto & Maesaroh, 2023; Vasudevan & Kumar, 2024).

Once more, none of this research examined how promotions affect workers' performance using the intervening variable that workers believe fairness in promotion decisions drives workers' performance. Furthermore, none of the research was conducted in Nigeria. As a result, little is known about the relationship between promotions and employee performance at the University of Abuja, with employees' perceptions that fairness in promotion decisions serve as a moderating factor. Employees' perception that fairness in promotion decisions drives employee performance at the University of Abuja will be used in this study to investigate the impact of promotions on employee performance. The issue to be addressed is how employees' perceptions of fairness in promotion decisions influence their performance in the relationship between promotions and performance at the University of Abuja.

This study will contribute to the literature by investigating, for the first time, the modulating effect of employees' belief that fairness in decisions of promotions motivates employees' performance on the effect of promotion on employees' performance at the University of Abuja. Four sections make up the remainder of this work. The theoretical foundation and literature review are covered in the second section. Section three covers the methodology. Section four concentrates on results and discussions, while section five focuses on the conclusion and suggestions.

2. Theoretical Framework and Empirical Issues

The study's theoretical underpinning will be the expectation theory. This hypothesis serves as the prism through which the impact of promotions on workers' performance will be examined, taking into account the moderating influence of workers' perceptions that fairness in promotion decisions inspires work. The expectancy theory highlights how employees' performance and motivation are impacted by their belief that their efforts will lead to desired results, such as promotions. When compared to employees who did not obtain promotions, those who did will have higher performance levels. Employees' perceptions of fairness moderate the link between the two variables of interest. Therefore, when workers feel that fairness in promotion decisions inspires performance, the relationship between promotion and employee performance is greater.

Three points of view form the basis of the theory. These are expectation, instrumentality (the conviction that performance will result in a particular outcome), and valence (attractiveness). Valence is the term used to describe the emotional tendencies that people associate with results (rewards). It also conveys the seriousness of an employee's need for intrinsic (like job satisfaction) or extrinsic (like money, promotions, time off, benefits, etc.) rewards. Therefore, management must determine the values of the employees. Valence measures the significance of the awards that employees receive for their achievements. This concept can be used in many areas of the workplace, from hiring to identifying what drives specific workers. That being said, Vroom (1964) contended that expectation is the belief that a specific behavior will lead to a desired consequence. By giving employees clear expectations, feedback, and recognition, promotions can boost their motivation and increase the valence of desired results. According to the expectation theory, employees are more motivated when they perceive a clear connection between performance, effort, and reward (Vroom, 1964).

This study assessed studies that looked at the association between employee performance and promotion using a moderating variable. This was predicated on the fact that no study examined how promotions affected workers' performance using workers' perceptions that fairness in promotion decisions drives workers' performance as an intervening variable. At the Food, Agriculture, and Fisheries Department of Wonosobo Regency, Trihudiyatmanto and Maesaroh (2023) employed the Partial Least Squares (PLS) Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) methodology to investigate the relationship between job promotion and employee performance, with job satisfaction acting as a moderating factor. Data for the study were gathered through questionnaires and interviews with 121 employees. The findings showed that work performance was positively impacted by job promotion and job satisfaction.

Furthermore, Lumbanraja et al. (2024) employed the PLS-SEM technique to examine the impact of training and promotion sessions on worker productivity at Reliance Insurance Indonesia, controlling for motivation. The findings demonstrated that staff productivity was positively impacted by training and promotions. Additionally, productivity was positively impacted by motivation. Furthermore, the relationship between productivity and training is mediated by motivation. Using job satisfaction as a mediating factor, Vasudevan and Kumar (2024) investigated the relationship between employee performance, pay, recognition, appreciation, and promotions. The study employed the PLS-SEM approach. The results showed that employee performance was positively impacted by pay, work satisfaction, promotion, recognition, and appreciation.

In a similar vein, Nurteja et al. (2022) used the SEM methodology to examine how internal promotions and job placements affected PT.X employees' work loyalty and performance. The results showed that employee loyalty was positively impacted by job placement. Employee performance was positively impacted by employee loyalty as well. Additionally, job placement and internal promotions have no bearing on employees' performance. Through work loyalty, the employee's placement had a positive impact on their loyalty.

Izudin et al. (2024) employed a quantitative approach to investigate how job discipline and promotion affected workers' job happiness and performance at PT. Bank Capital Indonesia's TBK Branch Kuningan Tower. The results demonstrated that work discipline and job promotion had a partial impact on employee performance. Furthermore, the association between work discipline and job promotion cannot be mediated by employee satisfaction. According to the reviewed literature, no study examined how promotions affected workers' performance using the intervening variable that workers believe fairness in promotion decisions drives workers' performance. Additionally, there were a few studies that looked at other moderating factors in the relationship between employee performance and promotions. These investigations were conducted in other nations. The majority of the investigations used the PLS-SEM approach. Nigeria was not the site of any of these investigations. However, this study was informed by the lack of research on how promotions affect workers' performance in Nigeria using a moderating variable. By examining the impact of promotions on University of Abuja employees' performance and using the employees' perception that fairness in promotion decisions drives employee performance as an intervening variable, this study aims to close this gap.

2.1. Hypotheses

These hypotheses were tested for direct effects as follows:

H_{01}: The university rewards excellence in performance through a promotion system; it does not affect employees' performance.

H_{02}: Promotion does not affect employees' performance.

H_{03}: The university rewards excellence in performance through a promotion system that does not mediate the relationship between promotion and employees' performance.

3. Methodology

The research design employed in this study was descriptive. The University of Abuja served as the site of the study. The population consisted of 2,145 employees of the University of Abuja, including 1,505 non-academic staff members and 640 academic staff members. The Yamane (1967) formula was used to determine the sample size, resulting in a sample size of 337 based on the calculation. Stratified random sampling was the technique used for sampling in this investigation. This method involved randomly selecting employees from each stratum in proportion to their representation in the overall population, ensuring that the sample accurately reflected the population's composition. Consequently, the sample sizes for each stratum closely matched their respective population sizes. Utilizing this technique minimized bias in population parameter estimation and enhanced the representativeness of the sample, thereby increasing the reliability of the study findings.

For the investigation, proportionate stratified random sampling was used. A proportionate stratified sample would preserve the population's 30/70 percent divide between academics and non-academics. Academic staff received 337/2145 * 640 = 101 for each stratum, whereas non-academic staff received 337/2145 * 1505 = 236. To reach a sample size of 337 employees, 101 and 236 individuals were selected from the academic and non-academic personnel, respectively. A structured questionnaire was used as the data collection tool. Each construct was given a five-point Likert scale, with 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 denoting strongly disagree, disagree, uncertain, agree, and strongly agree, respectively. Promotion was measured using the eight promotion practice items adopted from Krivokapic-Skoko, O'Neill, and Dowell (2009). However, we adopted 11 Duru et al. (2023) items to gauge employee performance. When compared to other employee performance indicators with correlation values of 0.8 or less, investment in research had the highest loading value; hence, it was used to measure it out of the 11 indicators.

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. The frequency distribution, mean, and percentages were the descriptive statistics employed in the data analysis. The presence of unique items from the promotion practices construct was ascertained using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). The association between observed variables and their underlying latent constructs was also examined using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). To ensure the dependability of the study tool, Cronbach's Alpha dependability test was used. Data analysis was conducted using Jamovi version 2.6.44, JASP version 0.19.3, and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. The study adhered to research ethics principles, including respondents' voluntary involvement, anonymity, confidentiality, integrity, and the right to privacy. Throughout this inquiry, ethical standards such as secrecy, honesty, anonymity, and the respondents' right to privacy were upheld.

4. Results and Discussions

Three hundred of the surveys that were given to the participants were recovered. This indicates an 89% response rate and an 11% non-response rate, respectively. Employee performance metrics and the promotion procedures construct both had Cronbach's alpha reliability values of 0.969 and 0.869, respectively. These figures demonstrated the instrument's dependability. For the entire instrument, a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.932 was achieved. For data analysis, these coefficients were judged to be trustworthy. Table 1 displays the demographic data.

Table 1. Demographic information.

Variable	Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Type of staff	Academic staff	220	73.3
	Non-academic staff	80	26.7
	Total	300	100.0
Number of years worked	Less than 5 years	40	13.3
	6-10 years	49	16.3
	11-15 years	116	38.7
	16-20 years	29	9.7
	21-25 years	40	13.3
	26 years and above	26	8.7
	Total	300	100.0
Marital Status	Married	225	75
	Single	75	25
	Widowed	0	0.0
	Separated	0	0.0
	Never married	0	0.0
	Divorced	0	0.0
	Engaged to be married	0	0.0
	Total	300	100.0
Gender	Male	235	78.3
	Female	65	21.7
	Total	300	100.0
Age	21-25 years	4	1.3
	26-30 years	41	13.7
	31-35 years	124	41.3
	36 - 40 years	14	4.7
	41-45 years	42	14.0
	46-50 years	15	5.0
	51-55 years	45	15
	56-60 years	15	5.0
	61-65 years	0	0.0
	66-70 years	0	0.0
	Total	300	100.0
Education	No education	0	0.0
	Primary education	0	0.0
	Secondary education	16	5.3
	Polytechnic education	12	4.0
	Tertiary education	272	90.7
	Total	300	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2022.

Table 2. Effects of promotion practices at the University of Abuja.

Code	Opinion	Strongly agree (X5)	Agree (X4)	Undecided (X3)	Disagree (X2)	Strongly disagree (X1)	Sum	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank
PRP1	The university provides clear and consistent requirements for promotion.	275	424	174	88	37	998	3.33	1.28	1st
PRP2	The university treats you fairly and equitably with regard to promotion.	50	500	150	136	47	883	2.94	1.19	2nd
PRP3	The university is fair and equitable in its treatment of management.	45	252	177	210	64	748	2.49	1.13	4th
PRP4	The university provides opportunities for career development.	190	116	126	212	85	729	2.43	1.33	5th
PRP5	The university supports ongoing professional development.	245	92	102	86	151	676	2.25	1.53	7th
PRP6	The university provides promotional opportunities.	215	128	96	44	171	654	2.18	1.54	8th
PRP7	The university acknowledges the long hours you devote to work.	45	344	126	238	44	797	2.66	1.13	3rd
PRP8	The university rewards excellence in performance through a promotion system.	45	360	99	70	133	707	2.36	1.38	6th

Note: PRP denotes promotion practices.
Source: Field Survey, 2022.

Table 1 presents the respondents' background characteristics. It was found that academic staff comprised 220 respondents, or 73.3%. Conversely, 80 respondents, or 26.7%, were non-academic staff members. It was observed that 116 respondents, or 38.7%, have spent 11–15 years working at the University of Abuja. The remaining portion, or 61.3%, was distributed among those with less than five years, six to ten years, eleven to fifteen years, sixteen to twenty years, twenty-one to twenty-five years, and twenty-six or more years of service. Regarding marital status, 75 respondents, or 25%, were single, while 225 respondents, or 75%, were married.

However, those who were widowed, separated, divorced, never married, and engaged to be married all received an equal amount of 0 or 0%. According to the results, 235 respondents, or 78.3% of the sample, were men, and the remaining 65 respondents, or 21.7% of the sample, were women. Additionally, the plurality of respondents 124, or 41.3% were between the ages of 31 and 35. On the other hand, 58.7% of the remaining respondents were in the following age groups: 21–25, 26–30, 36–40, 41–45, 46–50, 51–55, and 56–60 years past the age of sixty. Regarding education, university education was held by 272 respondents, or 90.7%. Furthermore, 16 respondents, or 5.3%, had completed secondary school. Nonetheless, 12 respondents, or 4%, held a polytechnic degree.

A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire was used to assess the efficacy of the University of Abuja's promotion strategies (see Table 2). Promotion was measured using eight items adopted from Krivokapic-Skoko et al. (2009). The respondents were asked to rate their degree of agreement with the University of Abuja's promotion practices. The decision-making benchmark was the average of a five-point rating system (3.00). The opinion was considered to be in agreement if the mean value was ≥ 3.00. Conversely, the opinion was considered unpopular if the mean value was less than 3.00. According to the responses, the university offers uniform and transparent advancement standards. It was the only promotion construct factor with a mean score higher than 3.00 and was ranked first. However, the respondents acknowledged that the University of Abuja's remaining promotion strategies were ineffective. The fact that these promotion practices were ranked below the mean score of 3.00 further supports this conclusion.

Table 3. Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis.

Code	Construct and observed factors	Loadings	Eigenvalues	Percentage of variance	Cronbach's alpha
	Construct: Promotion practices				
PRP1	The university provides clear and consistent requirements for promotion.	0.713	4.199	52.483	
PRP2	The university treats you fairly and equitably with regard to promotion.	0.786	2.239	27.988	
PRP3	The university is fair and equitable in its treatment of management.	0.856	0.67	8.372	
PRP4	The university provides opportunities for career development.	0.851	0.292	3.645	0.869
PRP5	The university supports ongoing professional development.	0.79	0.279	3.482	
PRP6	The university provides promotional opportunities.	0.779	0.157	1.963	
PRP7	The university acknowledges the long hours you devote to work.	0.405	0.124	1.554	
PRP8	The university rewards excellence in performance through a promotion system.	0.47	0.041	0.514	
	Total variance explained by promotion practices			100	

Table 3 displays the EFA result. Promotional practices were not rejected in any way. The factors as a whole demonstrated strong internal dependability and were approved for further examination. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity reached statistical significance (χ^2 2304.44, p<0.0000) based on Bartlett (1954), and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) index was 0.754, above the suggested value of 0.6, specified by Kaiser (1970), suggesting that the data were appropriate for factor analysis. The initial analysis's findings showed that two factors, each accounting for 52.48% and 27.99% of the variance, had Eigenvalues greater than 1. The relevance of the Bartlett Test of Sphericity further emphasized the value of factor analysis. However, due to multicollinearity issues, this study only used components of the promotion construct with correlation coefficients of 0.8 or less. Therefore, when compared to other indicators of the promotion construct, PRP1, PRP2, PRP3, PRP4, PRP6, and PRP8 were the only components with correlation coefficients of 0.8 or less. As a result, PRP5 and PRP7 were excluded and not recommended for further examination.

Table 4. Results of exploratory factor analysis.

Code	Construct and observed factors	Loadings	Eigenvalues	Percentage of variance	Cronbach's alpha
	Construct: Employees' performance				
EP1	Quality services	0.77	8.52	77.454	
EP2	Effectiveness	0.85	0.985	8.952	
EP3	Service delivery	0.884	0.427	3.88	
EP4	Productivity	0.918	0.291	2.643	
EP5	Mental production (Decisions)	0.75	0.228	2.077	
EP6	Return to government	0.891	0.146	1.323	0.969
EP7	Investment in research	0.902	0.117	1.063	
EP8	Web ranking	0.902	0.104	0.947	
EP9	Task done	0.931	0.082	0.749	
EP10	Observable action	0.931	0.061	0.558	
EP11	Rate of innovation	0.931	0.039	0.355	
	Total variance explained by employees' performance			**100**	

Note: EP denotes employees' performance for the factors.

To determine the number of elements that best represent the data, an EFA was performed on eleven employee performance indicators in Table 4. But none of its components were disapproved of. Every component showed strong

internal dependability. A check was performed to ensure that minimum requirements were met and that there was a moderate amount of correlation between the variables. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity gained statistical significance (χ^2 4800.98, p<0.0000) based on Bartlett (1954), and the KMO index was 0.924, above the suggested value of 0.6, stated by Kaiser (1970), suggesting that the data were appropriate for factor analysis. The first analysis's findings showed that one factor, accounting for 77.45% of the variance, had Eigenvalues greater than 1. The Bartlett test of sphericity's significance further demonstrated that factor analysis was appropriate. However, due to the issue of multicollinearity, this analysis only included components of the employee performance construct with correlation values of 0.8 or below. Therefore, when compared to other measures of employee performance, only EP5, EP6, and EP7 had correlation coefficients of 0.8 or below. Consequently, EP5, EP6, and EP7 were recommended for additional analysis, while the remaining components of employee performance were removed. However, in contrast to EP5 and EP6, EP7, which represents research investment and had loading values of 0.902, was used as a stand-in for employee performance in the mediation analysis.

4.1. Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

As shown in Table 5, the significance of the p-values for the items of the employees' performance construct and promotion practices construct demonstrated that the items loaded onto the corresponding factors and measured what they were intended to measure. The estimate indicated the factor loadings. Employee performance and promotion practices have Cronbach's alpha values of 0.969 and 0.869, respectively. They fall within the permissible range. Factor loadings or the standardized estimates exceeded 0.5. No factor needed to be eliminated to conduct further analysis. To evaluate the standardized factor loadings, the composite reliability (CR) for employee performance and promotion practices was calculated. A CR of at least 0.7 is considered acceptable. As a result, the promotion practices and employee performance scores of 1.00 and 1.03 were deemed good. Likewise, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for employee performance and promotion practices was 1.19 and 1.06, respectively. Since the minimal AVE was 0.5, the data were deemed acceptable. Therefore, there is strong convergent validity between employee performance and promotion practices.

4.2. Results of the Structural Model

Table 6 evaluated the fit indices. Figure 1 illustrates the connection between employees' performance and promotion practices. There is a connection between the two latent variables. The performance of employees is correlated with their indicators. Additionally, the elements of promotion practices are linked to it. To determine whether employee performance and promotion practices align with the data, we will evaluate the fit indices. The Chi-square statistic's outcome was not as expected; it was significant. The likely explanation for this result is that sample size has a significant impact on chi-square. The Chi-square is more likely to be significant if the sample size is large. For this reason, we look at fit indices other than the Chi-square. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that there is strong convergent validity between employee performance and promotion methods.

A satisfactory fit was indicated by the CFI value of 0.99. It indicates that the model can replicate 99 percent of the covariation in the data. The RMSEA value of 0.17 was not good. A good match is indicated by a TLI value of 0.98. The value of the SRMR was 0.09. The better the model, the lower the SRMR. Although our value was low, it was not as expected. Based on standardized residuals, the SRMR is the average difference between the model's actual and projected variance and covariance. If the model fits well, the chi-square value shouldn't be significant. The discrepancy between the estimated and actual covariance matrices in the model increases with the chi-square value. Thus, our model did not fit well.

Table 5. Results of construct reliability and validity tests.

Construct	Estimate	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE	P-value
EmP	1.00-1.15	0.969	1.03	1.19	< 0.001
PrP	0.75-1.14	0.869	1.00	1.06	< 0.001

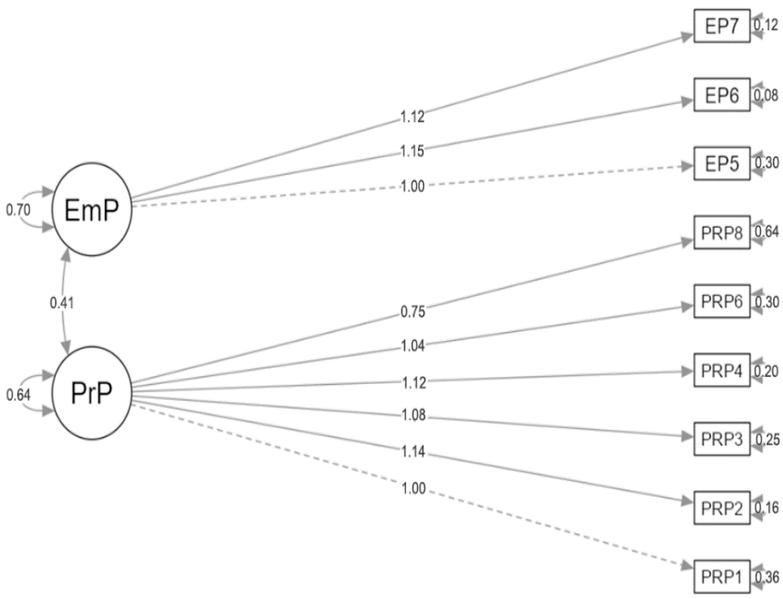

Figure 1. Structural model for study constructs.
Note: Unstandardized Estimate.
Source: Extract from Jamovi Output.

Table 6. Assessment of fit indices.

Fit Indices	Rule	Results
χ^2		97.6
χ^2 P-value	Should be non-significant	< 0.01
CFI	Should be at least 0.90; ideally 0.95	0.99
TLI	Should be at least 0.90; ideally 0.95	0.98
RMSEA	Should be less < 0.08	0.17
SRMR	Should be less < 0.08	0.09

Source: Extract from Jamovi Output.

Where:
χ^2=Chi-Square value.
CFI=Comparative Fit Index.
TLI=Tucker-Lewis Index.
RMSEA=Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.
SPMR=Standard Root Mean Square Residual.
EMP = Employees' Performance for Latent Variable.
PrP=Promotion Practices.

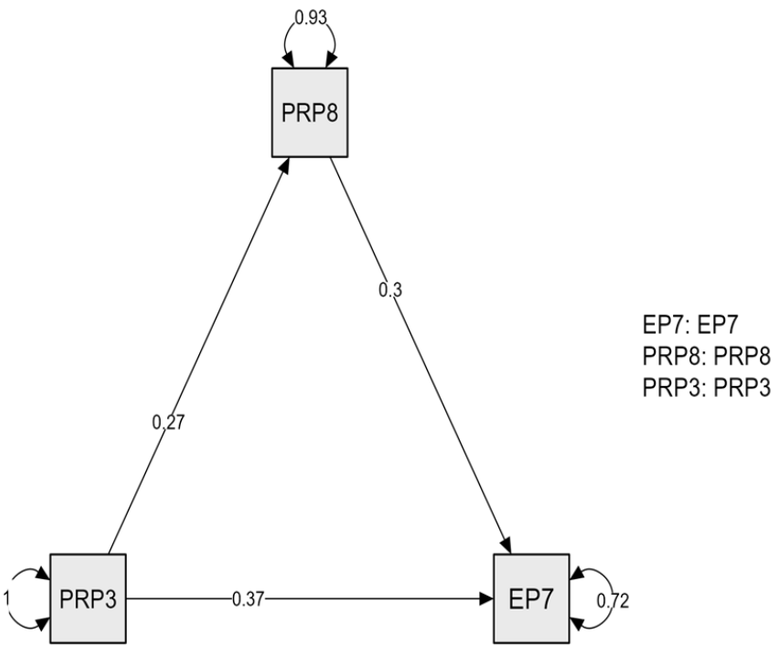

Figure 2. Path plot for effect of promotion on employees' performance mediated by employees' perception that fairness in decisions of promotions boosts employees' performance.

4.3. To Decide between Full or Partial Mediation

$$Assuming\ that\ \ \propto = 0.27, \beta = 0.3\ and\ \varphi = 0.37\ and\ \theta = obtained\ value$$

Decision Rule:

$$a.If\ \theta = \propto \beta \neq 0\ and\ \varphi = 0, then\ Full\ Mediation$$
$$b.If\ \theta = \propto \beta \neq 0\ and\ \varphi \neq 0, then\ Partial\ Mediation$$
$$In\ our\ case, 0.27 * 0.3 = 0.081 \neq 0\ and\ 0.37 \neq 0, then\ Partial\ Mediation$$

The indirect effect, also known as the mediation effect, is composed of the coefficients in the correlations between PRP3 and PRP8 and between PRP8 and EP7. Multiplying 0.27 and 0.3 in Figure 2 or 0.297 and 0.273 in Table 6, which show the movement from PRP8 to EP7 and PRP3 to PRP8 in the path coefficient data, yields the coefficient of the indirect impact or mediation effect. Error values on the path diagram are present but are not shown in the tables.

Table 7. Results of path coefficients.

Path	β	Std. Error	Confidence interval		Z	P-value
			Lower	Upper		
PRP8 ⟶ EP7	0.297	0.091	0.107	0.468	3.255	0.001
PRP3 ⟶ EP7	0.367	0.090	0.178	0.528	4.062	<0.001
PRP3 ⟶ PRP8	0.273	0.095	0.082	0.450	2.877	0.004

Note: Estimator is ML.
ML is maximum Likelihood.
Standardized estimate.
Source: Extract from JASP Output.

Table 8. Results of tested hypotheses.

Hypotheses	Decision
H1, H2 and H3	Rejected the null hypothesis

Source: Extract from JASP output.

Table 8 shows the outcomes of the hypothesis that was tested. Based on statistical evidence, the null hypothesis was disproved in every instance. The university's promotion system had a positive and significant effect on employees' performance. In addition, the results showed that promotion had a positive and significant effect on employees' performance. This outcome is consistent with Trihudiyatmanto and Maesaroh (2023) and Vasudevan and Kumar (2024) submissions. Nevertheless, it runs counter to Nurteja et al. (2022)'s arguments. Table 7 provided the information on which the first two hypotheses were founded. Furthermore, the university rewards excellence in performance through a promotion system that mediates the relationship between promotion and employees' performance.

Table 9. Effect of promotion on employees' performance.

Variable	Estimate	Std. error	P-value
Outcome variable: EmP			
PrP	0.695	0.066	< 0.001

Source: Extract from JASP output.

Table 9 reports the variables' direct impact on workers' performance. The findings demonstrated that promotions had a positive and significant impact on workers' performance.

Table 10. Results of mediation analysis.

Effect	Path	β	Std. error	Confidence interval		Z	P-value	Conclusion
				Lower	Upper			
Total	PRP3 ⟶ EP7	0.448	0.080	0.291	0.605	5.606	<0.001	Not applicable
Indirect	PRP3 ⟶ PRP8 ⟶ EP7	0.081	0.036	0.011	0.151	2.253	0.024	Partial
Direct	PRP3 ⟶ EP7	0.367	0.083	0.204	0.530	4.420	<0.001	Not applicable

Note: Standardized estimate.
Source: Extract from JASP output.

Where:
EP7=Proxy for Employees' Performance Based on EFA Loadings.
PRP3 = Proxy for Promotion based on EFA loadings.
PRP8=Proxy for Employees' Perception that Fairness in Decisions of Promotions Boosts Employees Performance.

Table 10 presents the mediation analysis's findings. The results of the direct effect demonstrate that when employees believe that fairness in promotion decisions motivates employees' performance, the effect of promotions on employees' performance is positive and significant. The findings suggest that workers' perceptions of fairness in promotion decisions encourage them to perform better, which in turn improves their overall performance. Additionally, the indirect effect or mediation effect indicates that promotion has a positive and significant effect on employees' performance when mediated by employees' belief that fairness in promotion decisions motivates employees' performance.

This finding implies that there would be a stronger correlation between promotions and employee performance if workers believed that decisions about promotions were fair. The mediation hypothesis is supported by this. Therefore, the relationship between promotions and employee performance is mediated by employees' perception that fairness in promotion decisions motivates employees' performance. It was only a partial mediation, though. Hence, there is a partial mediation of the university rewards excellence in performance through a promotion system on the relationship between promotion and employees' performance.

Partial mediation may imply that promotions influence employee performance and that employees' perceptions of fairness in promotion decisions inspire them to perform better. It might also indicate that there are additional, hidden factors that mediate the relationship between employee performance and promotions. Additionally, the total effect's findings demonstrated that promotions significantly and positively impacted workers' performance. Because employees believe that fairness in promotions motivates employees' performance, this result suggests that the relationship between promotions and employees' performance has significantly increased.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of the mediation analysis demonstrated that the direct effect of promotions on workers' performance was positive and significant when mediated by workers' perceptions that fairness in promotion decisions inspires workers' performance. Additionally, the indirect effect or mediation effect result showed that when employees believe that fairness in promotion decisions motivates employees' performance, promotions have a positive and significant impact on employees' performance. The mediation hypothesis is supported by this. It was only a partial mediation, though. As a result, the university partially mediates the relationship between promotion and employee performance by rewarding excellence in performance through a promotion system. Additionally, the total effect's findings demonstrated that promotions significantly and positively impacted workers' performance.

The results of the tested hypothesis demonstrated that the university's rewards for excellence in performance through a promotion system had a positive and significant effect on employees' performance. Furthermore, the findings demonstrated that promotions significantly and positively impacted workers' performance. Additionally, the university rewards excellence in performance through a promotion system that mediates the relationship between promotion and employees' performance. According to the study, in order to boost employee performance, the University of Abuja management should prioritize equity when it comes to promotions. The university's administration should also continue to implement its promotion strategies. Additionally, in order to assist the discipline of their employees in satisfying promotion requirements, the University of Abuja's management must ensure impartiality in promotion.

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