



April 2022

Findings from the 2022 Staff Satisfaction Survey

The University of the West
Indies, Mona Campus

Prepared by the Office of Planning and
Institutional Research

<https://www.mona.uwi.edu/opair/>

2022 Staff Satisfaction Survey

The fourth annual Staff Satisfaction Survey was administered during February 14th to March 14st 2022 in an effort to gauge satisfaction with employment at The University of the West Indies. Areas of enquiry concerned the physical environment, interpersonal relations, corporate outlook, leadership, and staff engagement. The information gathered will be useful for evaluating progress under the University Strategic Plan and for informing quality assurance and accreditation reviews of departments and programmes of the University.

The platform, SurveyMonkey®, was used to administer the online survey. For this year's cycle, staff received an anonymous link to the survey via their official UWI email address. The link was also accessible via University enterprise systems in an effort to boost response rates. Further, an incentive in the form of a gift voucher valued at USD\$50 was eligible to one participant through a draw.¹ These methods of reaching staff were slightly more effective in obtaining responses compared to the method used in the previous year, 2021.

Of the 3,447 employees at the Mona Campus as at January 2022, 397 members participated for a response rate of 11.5%. This compares to response rates of 11% in 2021, 10% in 2020, and 20% in 2019.

As seen in Table 1, the 2022 survey sample shows uneven distribution with the actual population by category of worker. There was over-representation of the Senior Administrative and Professional group and under-representation of the Administrative and Technical and Services group, respectively.

Table 1. Staff Population and Sample by Category of Worker

Staff Category	Population		Sample	
	N	%	N	%
Academic	1,236	35.9	153	38.5
Senior Administrative and Professional	457	13.3	101	25.4
Administrative and Technical and Service	1,754	50.9	137	34.5
Unreported	0	0.0	6	1.5
Total	3,447	100.0	397	100.0

In presenting the findings to the survey, comparisons are provided for the previous years to gauge progress. Given the response rates, it is prudent to not generalize the results to the entire staff population.

¹ The lucky winner was Dr. Mervin Chisholm.

Summarizing Results

The Staff Satisfaction Survey used a Likert-type scale whereby respondents could register their agreement as follows:

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Somewhat disagree
4. Neither disagree nor agree
5. Somewhat agree
6. Agree
7. Strongly agree
8. Not applicable in this instance

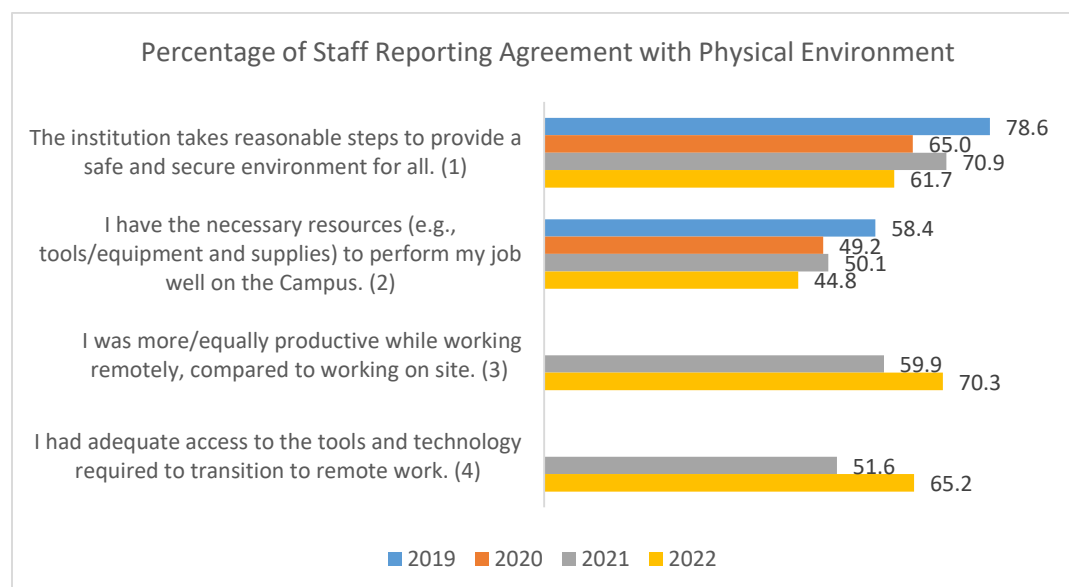
For simplicity, items 1, 2 and 3 are combined to reflect *Disagreement or Dissatisfaction* while items 5, 6 and 7 are combined to reflect *Agreement or Satisfaction*. Items 4 and 8 are not presented but are considered in the calculation of percentages (see outputs at end of document).

Findings from the Sample

Physical Environment

As seen in Graph 1, respondents were more likely to agree with *working in a safe and secure environment* than *having the necessary resources to perform their job well*. For both statements, agreement declined over the previous year. In 2021, two questions were added concerning remote work. The 2022 satisfaction rates on these new questions surpassed those from the previous year. That is, 70.3% of respondents agreed that *remote work was equally or more productive than on-site work* (Q3) while 65.2% of respondents agreed that *they had access to the tools and technology required for remote work* (Q4).

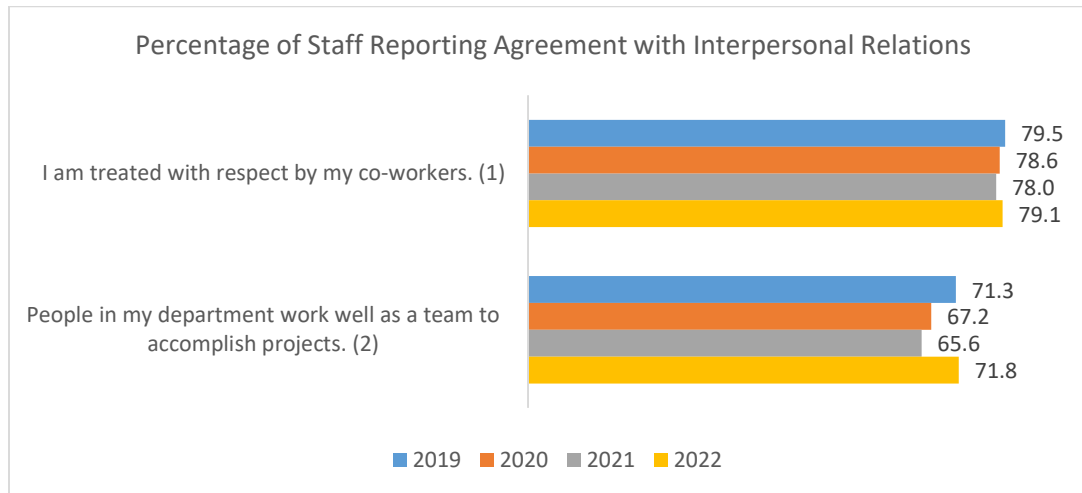
Graph 1



Interpersonal Relations

Agreement was generally high for interpersonal relations. Respondents were more likely to report *being treated with respect by their colleagues* than *working well as a team*. Satisfaction with interpersonal relations saw an increase in 2022.

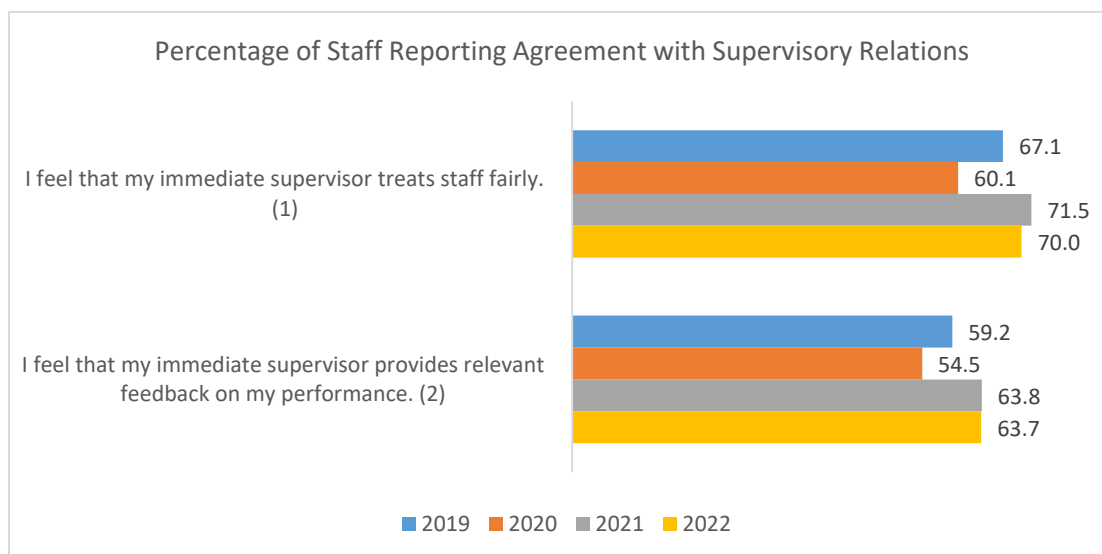
Graph 2



Supervisory Relations

Staff were moderately satisfied with supervisory relations. A higher percentage of respondents reported *being treated fairly by their supervisor* than *receiving feedback from their supervisor on their performance*. For both items, satisfaction decreased slightly in 2022 compared to the previous year.

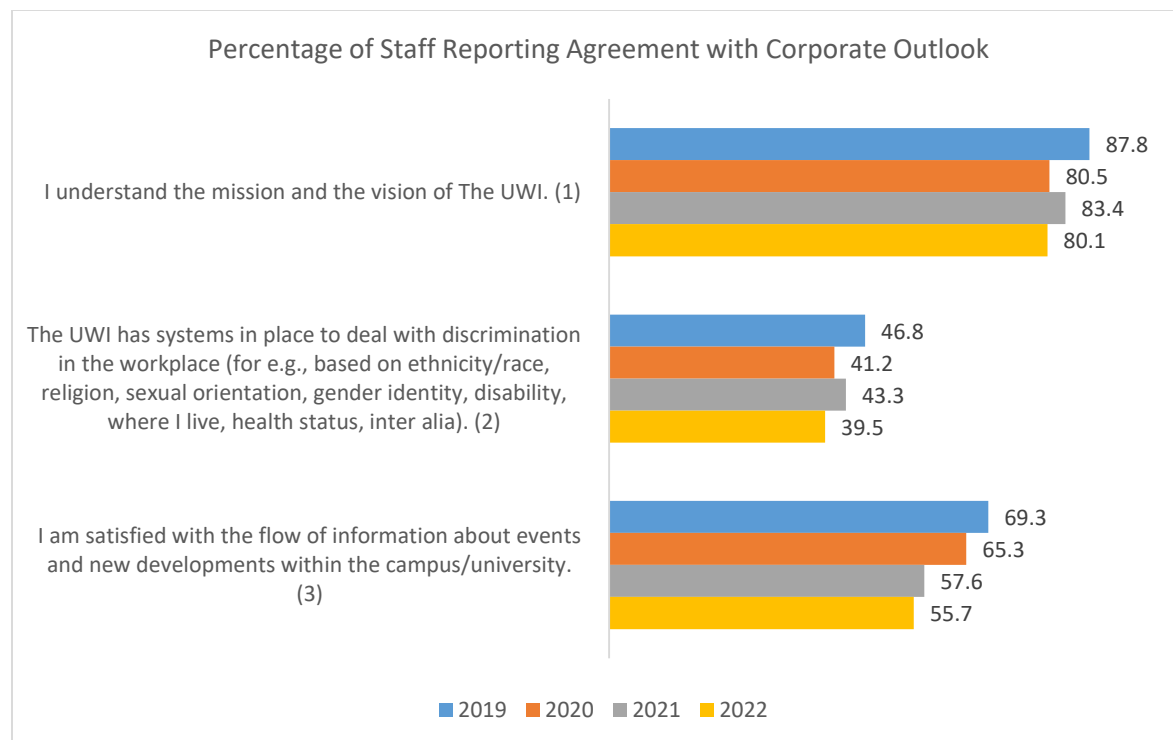
Graph 3



Corporate Outlook

When asked about corporate aspects of the University, respondents gave high ratings to *understanding the mission and vision of the University*, followed by moderate ratings to *information flow* and low ratings to *processes for dealing with discrimination in the workplace*. In 2022, satisfaction declined in all three areas compared to the previous year.

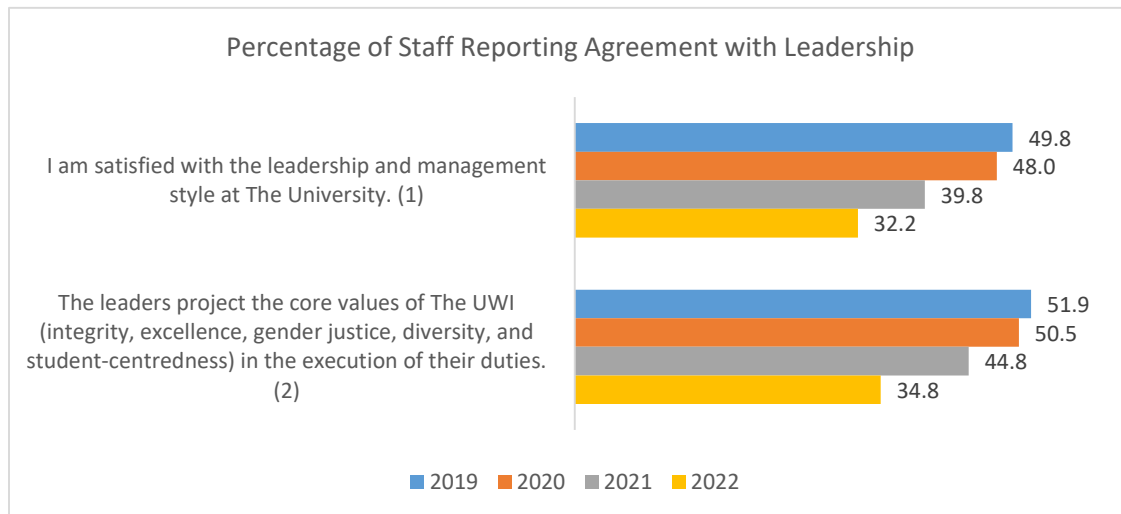
Graph 4



Leadership

Satisfaction with the leadership of The UWI continued to trend downwards in 2022. There was more than a five percentage-point decline in satisfaction with the *leadership and management style at The University* and with *the leadership projecting the core values of The UWI in the execution of their duties*.

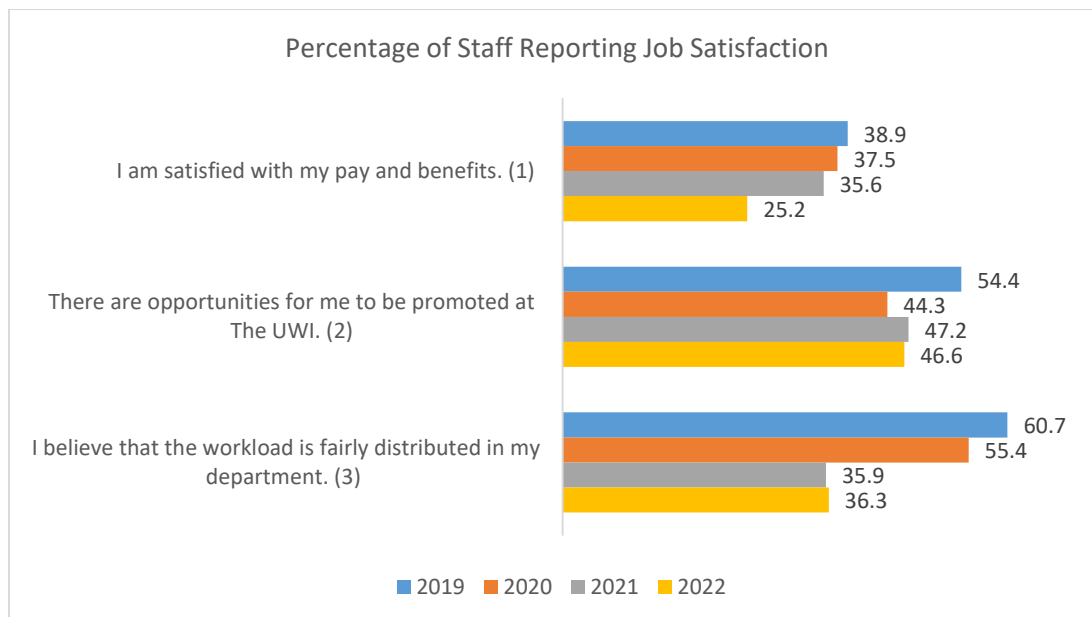
Graph 5



Job Satisfaction

When it came to aspects of their job, respondents were more satisfied with *opportunities for promotion* than *pay and benefits*. Of note was the ten percentage-point decline in satisfaction with *pay and benefits* in 2022. In addition, only 36.3% of respondents believed that the *workload is fairly distributed* in their department. The question on workload was reworded in 2021 from the statement *I can accomplish my assigned workload within the expected time frame*. The rewording of this question changed the context from *ability to complete job tasks* to *equity in workload assignment*.

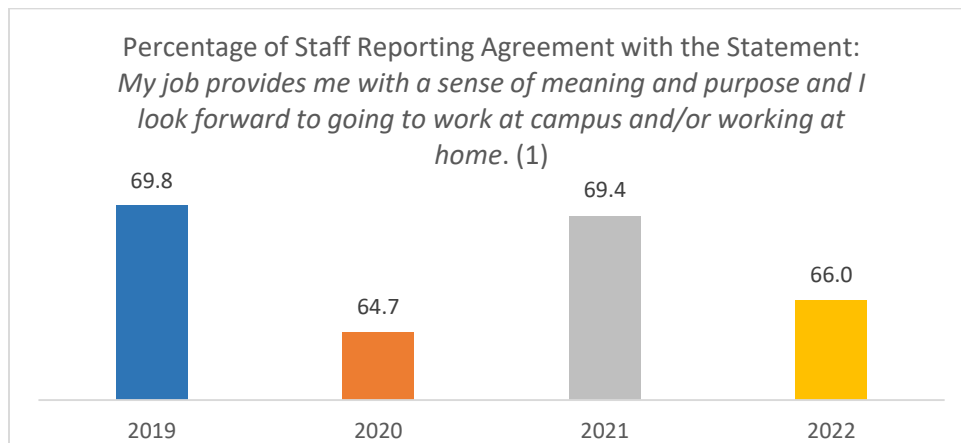
Graph 6



Staff Engagement

Despite generally low satisfaction with *pay and benefits* and *equitable workload distribution*, approximately two-thirds of respondents reported feelings of engagement by agreeing that *their job provides them with a sense of meaning and purpose and they look forward to going to work*. In 2022, there was a small decrease in satisfaction on this item over the previous year. Nonetheless, two-thirds of respondents were in agreement with this statement.

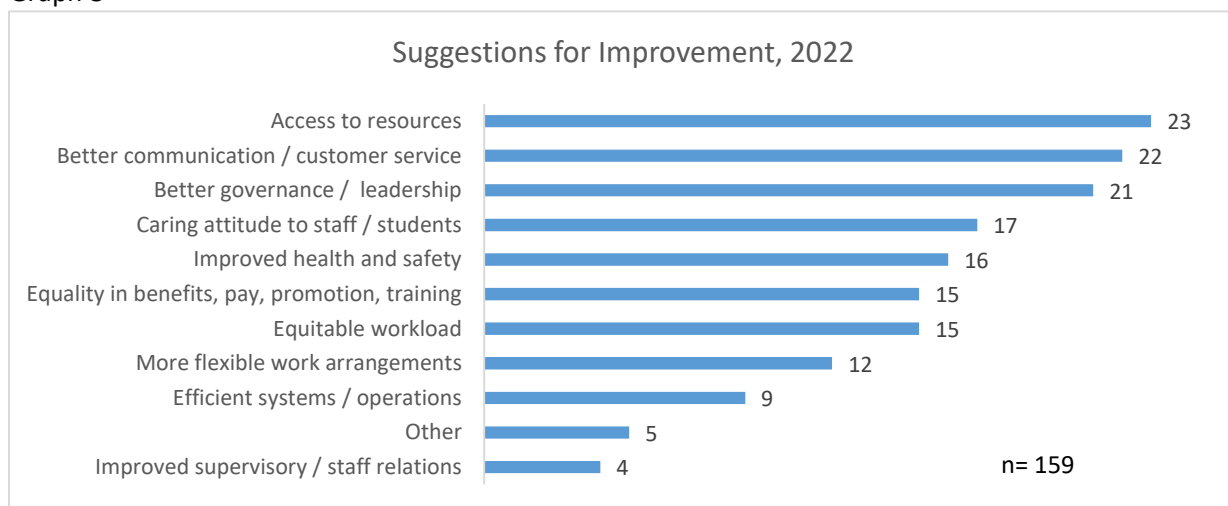
Graph 7



Shared Staff Experiences

To better tap into the perceptions of staff, an open question was included which asked about staff experiences and/or suggestions for improvement (Graph 8). In 2021, 116 persons provided feedback while in 2022, 159 persons responded. A ranking of themes is presented in Graph 9.

Graph 8



Responses were coded under 11 major themes. As seen in Graph 8, most comments concerned *access to resources*. *Resources* included office equipment, functioning air conditioning units, ergonomic

furniture, training and development, overtime pay and benefits, human resources, resources for doing research inclusive of funding, and job descriptions. Some persons claimed to be working under dire conditions for many years, despite repeated appeals for assistance.

A second area in need of improvement was *better communication/customer service*. Two offices that were identified for poor customer service were the Human Resources Management Division and the Bursary. Timely preparation of employment contracts was instrumental to timely and accurate payment of salaries. In general, persons were frustrated by non-functioning phone lines or staff not responding to phone calls or emails. For some persons, information concerning Campus policies and decisions were largely absent due to insufficient staff meetings, while persons attached to units located in the Bahamas or the UWI hospital felt disconnected from the Mona Campus.

A major area in need of improvement was *governance and leadership*. Some persons questioned how resources were being allocated which seemed to favour individual over collective gains. One case in point was the purchase of new vehicles every three years while laboratory equipment and infrastructure remained in a state of disrepair. A related sentiment was the focus on optics instead of practicalities and the waiving of important data pointing to areas in need of improvement. Persons also called for more action to sanction unethical behavior whether such behavior was exhibited at the highest or lowest levels of the academy.

While not entirely distinct from *governance and leadership*, another area of concern was the absence of a *caring attitude to staff and students*. Persons lamented the lack of concern with deficiencies in their office spaces to the lack of responsiveness to their feedback on surveys. Facilities such as public washrooms are in need of supplies while areas on the Campus remain poorly lit, compromising security. In particular, administrative and support staff felt that they are overlooked when administrators solicit feedback and that information from the top does not always flow down. Given the additional stress brought on by COVID-19, some persons have requested a wellness centre with a gymnasium which could serve as a coping mechanism for employees.

Despite the relaxing of curfews recently in response to COVID-19, some members felt the need to maintain or increase protocols on Campus to ensure the *health and safety* of staff, the next area of concern for respondents. Appeals were made to clean washrooms more than once a day, to providing floor stickers to encourage social distancing, to providing more sanitization stations, and to providing face masks for staff. Some persons also wanted a return to face-to-face teaching to improve their mental health, while other members identified issues related to electrical infrastructure, mold growth, overflowing drains, and inconsistent water supply.

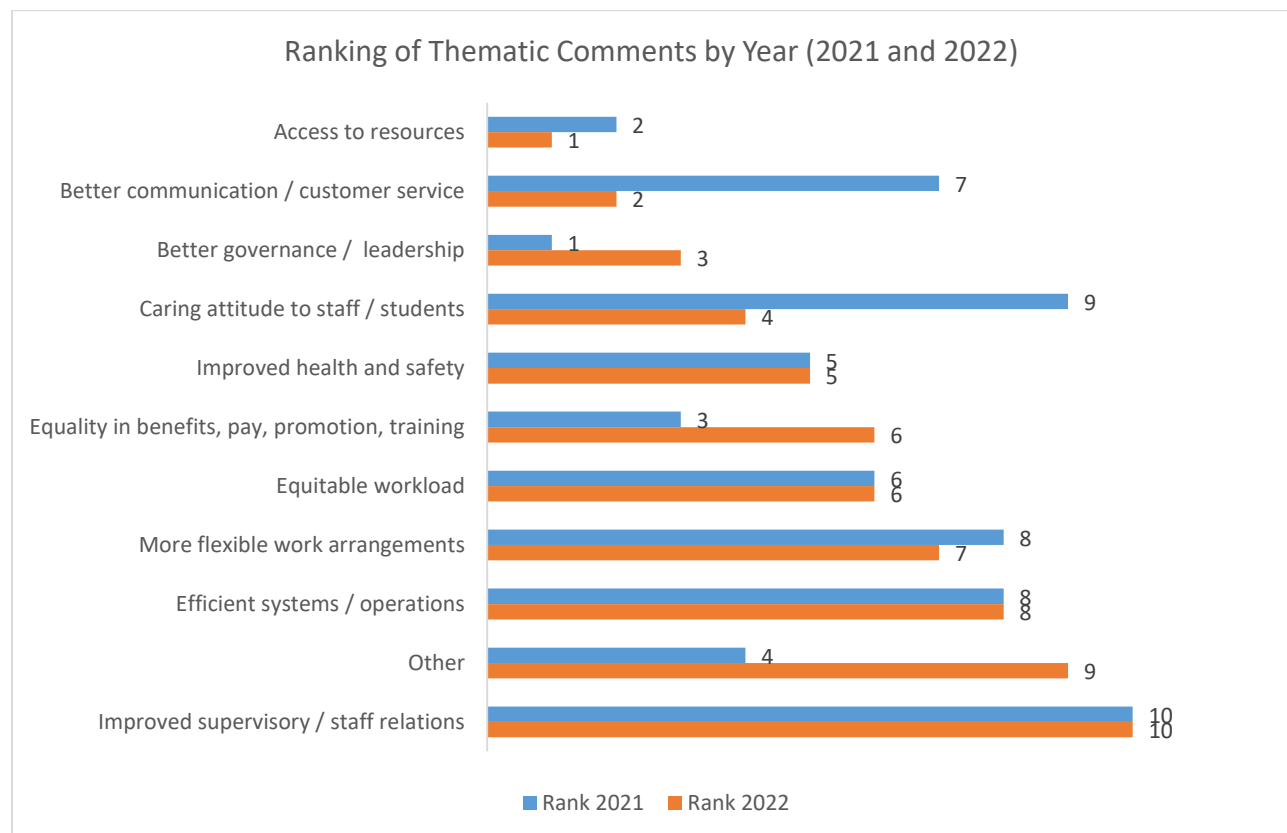
The next areas of concern for staff was *equality of benefits and opportunities* and *equitable workload* distribution. Some persons identified the need for training, which could take the form of live or recorded sessions, for all levels of staff. Opportunities for advancement and promotion were also identified as largely absent for persons attached to the MONATS group. It was also proposed that all persons who are willing and able should have the opportunity to work until the age of 70. Further, while most staff are eligible for subsidized education at the Mona Campus, there are internal processes, whether from the supervisor or Head of Department, that can frustrate this process. Lastly, concerns related to *equitable workload* included understaffing in the Bursary and the resultant overburdening of current staff. Further, the switch to emergency remote teaching has increased administrative duties and expenses.

While many of the thematic concerns are interconnected rather than discrete, the next area of importance was the need for *flexible work arrangements*. The work-from-home policy to cope with COVID-19 has created the desire among some members to want to continue working from home on a permanent or part-time basis. Such a policy would have implications for employee satisfaction, efficiencies, and cost savings.

Related to *flexible work arrangements* were suggestions grouped under *efficient systems/operations*. Some members saw the idea of remote work as an opportunity to embrace digitization through interconnected and functioning operating systems. Digital signatures could also be used to sign off on important documents by the relevant personnel.

Last but not least, comments falling under the theme of *improved supervisory/staff relations* addressed issues such as poor leadership, abuse of power, toxic work spaces, and general underperformance in units staffed by persons in supervisory roles. These scenarios are equally relevant to the theme of *governance/leadership* addressed earlier.

Graph 9

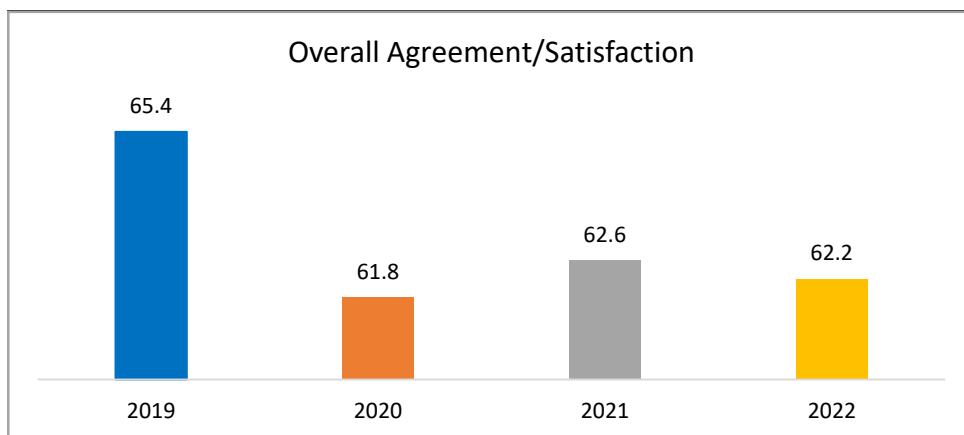


Discussion

The fourth annual Staff Satisfaction Survey has provided useful information for planning and decision making. Staff satisfaction is important for the reputation of the University since a motivated and loyal workforce can add value through efficiencies in operational processes and cost savings to the organization.

In 2022, overall staff satisfaction remained largely unchanged over the previous year, but was far below the rate recorded in 2019 (Graph10).

Graph 10



Note: Satisfaction scores for the purposes of this paper are calculated differently than the official satisfaction scores presented for the University Strategic Plan.

When assessing overall satisfaction by personal characteristics, it is apparent that staff satisfaction increases with age and rank. Women were also more satisfied than men.

For the questions dealing with the physical environment in Graph 1, feelings of safety and security increased with age and rank and more women (64%) felt safe than men (60%). When it came to job functions, there were stark differences between academic and support staff. Whereas 40% of academic staff reported having the resources to perform their job well, the corresponding rate among ATS staff was much higher, at 53%. With regard to the level of productivity, 74% of academics agreed to being more productive at home than on site compared to 65% of ATS staff. Lastly, while 69% of academics declared that they had the technology and tools required to transition to remote work, the corresponding rate among ATS staff was 59%. For all four questions, women had higher agreement/satisfaction scores than men.

In Graph 2, satisfaction with interpersonal relations witnessed an increase in 2022. There were no differences in treatment by rank or age. However, a higher percentage of men (88%) reported respectful treatment than women (81%). Group cohesiveness or teamwork showed some variations. ATS staff were more likely to report teamwork (82%) compared to senior administrative and professional (SAP) staff (71%), and academic staff (66%). Women were also more likely to report teamwork (77%) than men (72%).

Satisfaction with supervisory relations remained more or less constant in 2022 (Graph 3). Academics were more likely to concur with the statement that *supervisors treat staff fairly* (77%) compared to SAP

staff (64%) and ATS staff (69%). Satisfaction with supervisor feedback did not differ by rank or sex but by age group with 68% satisfaction being reported by persons aged 45 and under compared to 62% by persons aged 46 and over.

Staff satisfaction with corporate outlook (Graph 4) declined in 2022. Understanding the mission and the vision of the university varied by rank. SAP staff (88%) were the most likely to report understanding the mission and the vision compared to academics (81%) and ATS staff (76%). Younger staff were less likely to report understanding the mission and the vision (73%) compared to older staff (87%). Younger employees (39%) were also less likely to believe that the university has policies in place to deal with discrimination compared to older employees (46%). Satisfaction with the flow of information did not vary too much by rank but by age group and sex. Younger staff (55%) were less satisfied with the flow of information than older staff (63%) while women (60%) were more satisfied with the flow of information than men (52%).

For the fourth straight year, staff satisfaction with leadership continued to decline (Graph 5). There were variations by age and sex with regard to support for leadership style. Younger staff (30%) were less likely to support the leadership style than older staff (40%), while women (36%) were more likely to support the leadership style than men (29%). Agreement with *the leadership projecting the core values of the university* differed mainly by age group, with younger members less likely to agree (30%) than older members (44%).

Questions related to aspects of the job itself, in Graph 6, captured some of the greatest variation in satisfaction. While 11% of ATS staff were satisfied with pay and benefits, the corresponding rates were 31% of academics and 37% of SAP staff. Older staff (35%) were also more likely to be satisfied with pay and benefits than younger staff (18%). A similar pattern emerged for opportunities for promotion. While 33% of ATS staff believed they had opportunities for promotion, 51% of SAP staff and 57% of academics believed this to be true. Older employees (60%) were also more likely to report opportunities for promotion than younger ones (39%), while men (54%) were more likely to report opportunities for promotion than women (47%). Equity in the distribution of the workload varied mainly by rank. Whereas 40% of ATS staff believed that the workload was fairly distributed, 38% of SAP staff and 32% of academics believed this to be true.

The last question related to staff engagement (Graph 7) showed that rank and, to a lesser extent, age are important predictors of staff engagement. While engagement was highest among academic (72%) and SAP staff (71%), it was lowest among ATS staff (58%). Older employees (74%) were also more likely to feel engaged than younger ones (64%). No differences were seen by sex.

Comments to the feedback question (Graph 8) resulted in rich information which was organized into 11 themes. Verbatim responses will be shared with the relevant units for review and action.

In conclusion, the fourth cycle of the Staff Satisfaction Survey has highlighted strengths and weaknesses of the academy. While staff satisfaction did not surpass the 2019 level, the loyalty of staff is undeniable as just over two-thirds of staff reported feeling engaged and looked forward to working on campus or at home. The derived metrics from this survey will be useful for gauging progress under the University Strategic Plan and pointing to areas in need of intervention to achieve desired targets by 2022.

Outputs

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2022, Mona Campus

Q1. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements:

	% Distribution (N = 397)				
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable	No Answer
The institution takes reasonable steps to provide a safe and secure environment for all. (1)	30.2	7.3	61.7	0.0	0.8
I have the necessary resources (e.g., tools/equipment and supplies) to perform my job well on the Campus. (2)	50.6	3.5	44.8	0.5	0.5
I was more/equally productive while working remotely, compared to working on site. (3)	18.9	7.8	70.3	2.8	0.3
I had adequate access to the tools and technology required to transition to remote work. (4)	29.7	2.8	65.2	1.8	0.5

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2022, Mona Campus

Q2. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements:

	% Distribution (N = 397)				
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable	No Answer
I am treated with respect by my co-workers. (1)	13.9	6.3	79.1	0.0	0.8
People in my department work well as a team to accomplish projects. (2)	21.7	5.0	71.8	0.5	1.0

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2022, Mona Campus

Q3. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements:

	% Distribution (N = 397)				
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable	No Answer
I feel that my immediate supervisor treats staff fairly. (1)	22.7	6.3	70.0	0.8	0.3
I feel that my immediate supervisor provides relevant feedback on my performance. (2)	23.7	11.1	63.7	1.3	0.3

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2022, Mona Campus

Q4. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements:

	% Distribution (N = 397)				
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable	No Answer
I understand the mission and the vision of The UWI. (1)	8.1	10.6	80.1	0.3	1.0
The UWI has systems in place to deal with discrimination in the workplace (for e.g., based on ethnicity/race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, where I live, health status, inter alia). (2)	24.2	32.0	39.5	3.3	1.0
I am satisfied with the flow of information about events and new developments within the campus/university. (3)	31.7	11.6	55.7	0.0	1.0

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2022, Mona Campus

Q5. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements:

	% Distribution (N = 397)				
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable	No Answer
I am satisfied with the leadership and management style at The University. (1)	53.4	14.4	32.2	0.0	0.0
The leaders project the core values of The UWI (integrity, excellence, gender justice, diversity, and student-centredness) in the execution of their duties. (2)	45.3	18.9	34.8	0.5	0.5

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2022, Mona Campus

Q6. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements:

	% Distribution (N = 397)				
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable	No Answer
I am satisfied with my pay and benefits. (1)	69.5	4.8	25.2	0.0	0.5
There are opportunities for me to be promoted at The UWI. (2)	42.6	8.8	46.6	1.3	0.8
I believe that the workload is fairly distributed in my department. (3)	51.4	11.1	36.3	0.8	0.5

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2022, Mona Campus

Q7. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements:

	% Distribution (N = 397)				
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable	No Answer
My job provides me with a sense of meaning and purpose and I look forward to going to work at campus and/or working at home. (1)	22.4	10.8	66.0	0.3	0.5



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