



THE IMPACT OF NON-FINANCIAL INCENTIVES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF WORKERS IN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA (A CASE STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF ABUJA)

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Abstract

The paper focused on the impact of non-financial incentives on the performance of Workers in higher institutions in Nigeria: a case study of University of Abuja. Employees would be ineffective if not well motivated. The objective of the study was to determine the extent to which non-financial incentives can motivate workers. Analyze the impact of non-financial incentives on workers' productivity in achieving organizational objectives, to identify if there is any relationship between non-financial incentives and workers' productivity. This research work is a survey research design, which possesses the characteristics of a quantitative nature, self-monitoring and theory based. Questionnaires were administered on the 320 samples selected subsequently; presentation and analysis of data based on the responses to the questionnaires were done. Data were collected and analyzed using simple tables and percentage. At the end of analysis some findings were established, which asserted that Non-financial incentives do motivate workers into higher productivity. In the view of the above, this study recommended among many other things that management of institutions like University of Abuja should employ the use of praise and recognition which are very important in the work place, For greater performance and to achieve organizational objectives, management should also get employees involved in decision making process, especially on those aspects that affect them on the job. Effort should be made to see that each of the workers is given at least a non-financial incentive which is commensurate with the work he or she performs in the organization.

Keywords: Non-Financial Incentives, Productivity, Recognition and Employees.

Background of the Study

One of the primary objectives of any organization is to satisfy both the organization and employee goals are not an exception. Any attempt to satisfy one to the detriment of the other will result in chaos and conflict and the achievement of set objectives will be far-fetched.

Workers performance depends on how well they are treated. It is assumed that if a man knows that he will be duly rewarded for his efforts in his place of work he will put in his best because a happy worker is a productive worker. Much should not be expected from a man who is hungry and has no way or hope of feeding himself.

Many financial rewards mainly generate short-term boosts of energy, which can have damaging unintended consequences. Every employee certainly appreciates more money, but money does not buy happiness, nor does it buy engagement and loyalty. Non-financial incentives inspire and engage employees in ways that money is incapable of doing. Non-financial incentives are the types of rewards that are not a part of an employee's pay. Typically, they cost the company little or no money, yet carry significant weight. Incentives of this nature are particularly effective for workers who are comfortable with their salaries or have been in the position for a long time. As organisations continue cut employees' compensation, the use of non-financial incentives for employees are more crucial than ever.

Every organization's primary aim has to do with the improvement of employees' efficiency and productivity. According to Chukwuemeka (2015), "Motivation relates to a conscious attempt made by the executive to influence the direction and role of individual and group behaviours. A manager should understand the process of human-behaviour while performing his managerial function of directing and leading. He can get things done through other people willingly by motivation. Motivation inspires the subordinates to work with zeal, willingness and helps to achieve enterprise goals. It promotes team work. It can tap the human potential in the best possible manner. Managers must continuously be in search of the causes that motivate employees and develop a motivational system which may satisfy most of their needs. Otherwise, productivity will not increase".

Certain techniques can be used as incentives to positively influence the productivity of the workers. The two common types of incentives used by organisation to motivate workers are: Monetary or Financial Incentives and Non-Monetary/Non-Financial Incentives. Our focus here is on the non-financial incentives only. These are the incentives which cannot be calculated in terms of money. Generally people working at high job position or at high rank get satisfied with non- Financial incentives. The common means or ways of non-monetary incentives are: Status, Organizational Climate, Career Advancement, Job Enrichment/Assignment of Challenging Job, Employees Recognition, Job Security, Employee's participation, Autonomy/Employee Empowerment, etc.



On the other hand, Porter, Lawler and Hackman (1974), indicate three main characteristics of a motivating job, first the job must allow a worker to feel personally responsible for a manful or otherwise experienced as worth-while to the individual. Secondly, the job must provide feedback about what is accomplished. Finally, if the level of independence by the worker is high, his degree of participation in decision making will equally be high; this leads to increase productivity and job satisfaction.

Employees work in any enterprise in order to satisfy their needs and in most cases they do not contribute towards the organisational goals (as much as they can) because they are not adequately motivated. The process of motivation involves needs, drives and goals. Need is behind most of the actions of a man. Better facilities, more pay, recognition, opportunities for promotion etc. are some of the needs of the people. Drives are called motives representing the behaviour in the process of motivation. Every undertaking has certain goals to achieve. These goals can be achieved only through the efforts of its employees. The basic problem is to identify what makes (or moves) people to act.

A manager can get things done through other people willingly through motivation. Motivation inspires the subordinates to work with zeal, willingness and initiates to achieve enterprise goals. It promotes team work. It can tap the human potential in the best possible manner. Managers must continuously be in search of the causes that motivate employees and develop a motivational system which may satisfy most of their needs. Otherwise, productivity will not increase. Leadership and motivation are thus the two wings of direction in the process of management. This paper is therefore an attempt to examine the impact of non-financial incentives on the performance of workers in higher institutions in Nigeria with University of Abuja as a case study.

Statement of the Problem

There has been wide spread complaints, comments and write-ups on the poor job performance and the resultant unimpressive productivity of employees in Nigerian organizations. Some people advance reasons for this ugly phenomenon to the negative attitude of workers ranging from loafing during work hours, idleness to lateness to work etc.

But one may ask, what is within an individual that makes him behave the way he does? Employees who are unmotivated affect the productivity of the team / department. These employees might frequently miss deadlines, fail to meet expectations or quotas, or be unavailable to work extra hours. Lateness also can be a problem with unmotivated employees. (Chukwuemeka, 2015).

The human element is the most intricate and the most complex of all resources available to the manager. It is the same human element that is affected by even the slightest physical, psychological and sociological change in and around him. The problem focus of this study therefore is those internal needs within individual or his environment that initiates and sustains his behavior and the determinants of effective job performance. Financial incentives are effective in some instance but ineffective sometimes and often expensive to use.

Hawthorne studies had shown that man is a social being and business operations are not just a matter of having machines and methods but also linking this up with the solid system. There is the need for greater and deeper understanding of the social and behavioural aspects of management. This experiment revealed first that employees are motivated by more than the satisfaction of economic needs because they seek to fulfill social and psychological needs which cannot be met entirely with money. There is a vacuum and every human being is yearning for a social interaction.

As a result of the above conditions and factors, it becomes imperative to study the impact of Non-financial incentives on the performance of workers in higher institution in Nigeria using University of Abuja as a case study.

Objectives of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to find out the Impact of Non-financial incentive on the performance of workers in higher institution in Nigeria; A case study of University of Abuja.

Specifically, the purpose of this study is to;

1. Find out how Non-financial incentives affect the performance and productivity of workers.
2. Find out the problems of using Non-financial incentives to motivate the workers.
3. Find out the ways of solving the problems associated with administering Non-financial incentives on the workers.

Significance of the Study

There are lots of benefits to be derived from this study.



Firstly, this research will help managers to understand that employees can be more productive if the environment of work, the job itself is made interesting and other ways other than monetary incentives are properly applied.

Secondly, the findings of this research will help organizations to understand the non-financial factors or elements which motivate the workers to aspire for high achievements and productivity willingly. By so doing, organizations will be spared of resentment, absenteeism, high labour turn over, industrial accidents, wastages, etc and most importantly will have her productivity and revenue goal fully realized.

More so, employees will also understand that there is more to derive from the work place than just financial incentive which tends to enslave the worker and turn him into a modern slave.

Finally, the outcome of this research work will serve as a reference material to future researchers in related areas of research.

Operational Definition

Autonomy/Employee Empowerment: It means giving more freedom to subordinates. This empowerment develops confidence in employees.

Career Advancement: Promotional opportunities provided to employees which help them improve their skill and efficiency with the hope that they will be promoted to higher level.

Employee Participation: It means involving employee in decision making especially when decisions are related to workers.
Fringe Benefits: Refers to special benefits such as medical facility, free education for children, housing facility, meals, medicals, Insurance, Company car, house allowance, subsidized meals, Paid holiday.

Incentive: A positive motivational influence or an additional payment to employees as a means of increasing output.

Job Enrichment: Jobs which are not routine but offer interesting variety and challenging opportunity to employees to show their skill. Interesting, enriched and challenging job itself is a very good motivator or stimulator.

Job Security: Job security means life time bonding between employees and organisation. Job security means giving permanent or confirmation letter. Job security ensures safety and security need but it may have negative impact.

Literature Review

The primary objective is to review the available literature which falls within the context of this study. Textbooks and journals were used for the study and are considered as secondary information sources. Much has been said about incentives as a means of influencing the workers performance in the work place by various authors. University of Abuja is the main organization among others used as example to support the literature review. The purpose of this section is to get an understanding of non-financial incentives and how it can serve as motivational strategies in achieving organization objectives.

Conceptual Clarification

This work shall give the operative meaning and concept of the key operating words in this research which are; Non-Financial incentive and performance of workers.

Non-Financial incentive

Generally, Incentive can be defined as monetary or non-monetary reward offered to the employees for contributing more efficiently in production process. Incentive can be extra payment or something more than the regular salary or wage. Incentives act as a very good stimulator or motivator because it encourages the employees to improve their efficiency level and reach the target. These are the incentives which cannot be calculated in terms of money.

Performance of Workers/ Employee Performance

Performance means the output of each worker based on his/her activities in the department. It is synonymous with Productivity which is the efficiency and the rate at which goods are produced. It is a concept that expresses relationship between output and input and other resources that produce output. According to (businessdictionary.com), employee performance means job related activities expected of a worker and how well those activities were executed. Many business personnel directors assess the employee performance of each staff member on an annual or quarterly basis in order to help them identify suggested areas for improvement.



Employee's ability to perform effectively in the job requires that he has a complete and up-to-date job description for his position, and that he understand the job performance requirements and standards that he is expected to meet. The supervisor should review the job description and performance requirements with the employee.

Performance and Productivity are also related. Productivity is an overall measure of the ability to produce a good or service. More specifically, productivity is the measure of how specified resources are managed to accomplish timely objectives as stated in terms of quantity and quality. Productivity may also be defined as an index that measures output (goods and services) relative to the input (labour, materials, energy, etc., used to produce the output).

According to (referenceforbusiness.com) Productivity is an objective concept. As an objective concept, it can be measured, ideally against a universal standard. As such, organizations can monitor productivity for strategic reasons such as corporate planning, organization improvement, or comparison to competitors. It can also be used for tactical reasons such as project control or controlling performance to budget.

Productivity is also a scientific concept, and hence can be logically defined and empirically observed. It can also be measured in quantitative terms, which qualifies it as a variable. Therefore, it can be defined and measured in absolute or relative terms. However, an absolute definition of productivity is not very useful; it is much more useful as a concept dealing with relative productivity or as a productivity factor.

Productivity is useful as a relative measure of actual output of production compared to the actual input of resources, measured across time or against common entities. As output increases for a level of input, or as the amount of input decreases for a constant level of output, an increase in productivity occurs. Therefore, a "productivity measure" describes how well the resources of an organization are being used to produce output. (Plenert 2001).

Theoretical Framework

Some scholars had done research on the impact of non-financial incentives on the performance of workers in different organization and came up with the following findings;

Wiese and Coetzee (2013), citing Hanna and Srivastava (1998), highlighted the role of demographics in motivation by writing that motivators in general can vary greatly from one culture to another in an international context. Age, education, gender and job tenure could also influence motivation (Dubinsky & Skinner 1984; Lefkowitz 1994).

Huddleston et al. (2002), also found that demographics were a factor in the motivation of sales representatives in Russia. Wong et al. (1999) noted that different demographic groups look for different motivational factors in their jobs. Significant differences were found in motivational factors such as interesting work, opportunities for advancement and feelings of being involved. As this study focuses on gender, age, education and work experience variables, these demographic variables will be explained in more detail.

Age: Need satisfaction models suggest that the factors that motivate workers may change as people satisfy their needs as they age. Churchill, Ford and Walker (1979), found that as employees aged, their preference for job security increased, while younger workers valued promotions more than older workers. Promotion and interesting work were more important for the age groups 16–25 years and 26–35 years, than for the older (46+) age group. Hair et al. (2010) also found that the opportunity for advancement and promotion is a strong motivator for younger sales representatives. Financial rewards were mostly valued by older, longer-tenured representatives, whereas non-financial rewards were more valued by young sales representatives (Kotler & Keller 2006).

Gender: Wong et al. (1999) found that females valued support and recognition more than their male counterparts. Huddleston et al. (2002) reported that women valued job security more than men; however there is no gender difference in the motivational levels of employees.

Education: Education levels could influence a person, as the importance of rewards and responsibility will change as education levels increase (Churchill et al. 1979). Although Wong et al. (1999) found no difference between education levels and job security, praise and promotion opportunities were more important for more educated employees, while less educated employees valued being more involved in aspects such as quota setting and territory design. Huddleston et al. (2002) reported that better-educated employees valued recognition more, while the opportunity to learn new things, freedom and promotion were not influenced by demographics.



Work experience: Career stages are thought to influence individual work-related attitudes, perceptions and behaviour and as such, can influence motivation (Hanna & Srivastava 1998). Age and/or experience are often used as an alternative career-stage indicator. Prior research (Miao, Lund & Evans 2009; Lynn, Cao & Horn 1996) has provided evidence that the importance that employees place on various rewards differs according to their career stage. Employees in the exploration stage prefer support and peer acceptance; in the establishment stage people are motivated by promotion and challenge; employees in the maintenance stage are less competitive and value security, while workers in the disengagement stage are moving into retirement (Lynn et al. 1996; Weaver 1976). According to Huddleston et al. (2002), workers with a little and a lot of experience valued respect and praise more than mid-career workers. Wong et al. (1999) also reported that interesting work was more important for employees that worked for a shorter period of time than for those with longer service that prefer good working conditions. However, the authors found no differences with respect to job security, involvement or promotion and praise, and career stages.

Hair et al. (2011) state that for years, the majority of sales managers assumed that monetary/financial rewards were most valued in motivating a sales force. However, recently managers across all industries are beginning to realize that while monetary rewards are initially motivating, non-financial rewards and intrinsic rewards, such as recognition, are critical in drawing higher levels of performance from the sale force. Money and other financial incentives are soon spent, but public recognition acts as a constant reminder of a sales representative’s accomplishments.

Applebaum and Kamal (2000) also suggest that it is becoming more difficult for small to medium-sized firms to compete with larger counterparts financially in attracting and maintaining employees, and that it will become imperative to understand and identify alternative non-financial incentive/motivators. Gresing (1996) and Weiss (1997) indicated that an increase in compensation and financial incentives in a tight labour market is only effective when combined with non-financial factors. Therefore, while adequate pay may be sufficient in reducing dissatisfaction, it may not be sufficient as a stand-alone motivator. Non-financial motivators such as job enrichment are a means of complementing pay and providing more motivational sources (Appelbaum and Kamal 2000).

Ting (1997) also advocates the use of intrinsically appealing non-monetary motivators in the context of equitable pay. Zoltners et al. (2012) postulates that as selling become increasingly complex, motivating the right sales force behaviours using traditional incentives such as money will become more challenging; they suggest that managers develop a more balanced approach to motivating sales force efforts.

Based on these arguments and the limited research on the importance of non-financial motivators of pharmaceutical sales representatives in South African, a gap has been identified. The authors have therefore attempted to fill this gap by researching the role of demographics in the importance of 25 non-financial motivators. (Wiese and Coetzee 2013).

Method

The simple percentages method was used for the description of respondents’ bio data. The data collected by the researcher was also presented and analyzed using tables, frequencies and percentage method in other to give simple meaning by so doing.

The data relationship will be expressed in percentage to draw on information over the relative dominances of an item of categories of responses expressed.

Results and Analysis

This paper provides insight into the presentation and analysis of data. It also shows an analysis of the characteristics of the respondents, data analysis and interpretation of individual questions, and the general conclusion on the research questions.

Distribution by Sex

Sex	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	112	35
Female	208	65
Total	320	100

Source: field work 2016

65% of the respondents were female while 35% were male. Therefore, the number of male respondents expected to fall within the sample size is relatively lower than the female respondents.



Distribution by Age

Sex	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
25 – 35	80	25
36 – 45	134	42
46 – 55	58	18
56 and above	48	15
Total	320	100

Source: field work 2016

It could be seen that 25% of the respondents falls within the age range of 25 – 35 years, 42% between 36 – 45, 18% between 46 – 55, while 15% falls between the age range 56 and above.

Distribution by Qualification

Qualification	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
WAEC/GCE/O'Level	51	16
OND/NCE	86	27
HND/B.Sc.	119	37
M.Sc./Professional Certificate	64	20
Total	320	100

Source: field work 2016

Table above represents distribution of respondents by educational qualification, 16% of the respondents possess O'level/WAEC/GCE Certificates, 27% OND/NCE Certificates, 37% are with HND/B.Sc., while the remaining 20% possesses M.Sc./Professional Certificates.

Distribution by category in the Institution

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Teaching staff	138	43
Non-teaching staff	182	57
Total	320	100

Source: field work 2016

It reveals that 43% of the respondents belong to the teaching staff category. While 57% of the respondents are in the non-teaching staff category.

Results and Data Analyses

Question 1: Does the institution give Financial/material incentive?

Option	Response	% of response
Yes	320	100
No	0	0
Neutral	0	0
Total	320	100

Source: Field survey 2016

From the above table 100% said yes to financial/material incentive while none of the staff said no.

Question 2: How disposed are you to non-financial incentives?

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Highly disposed	192	60
Well disposed	96	30
Disposed	16	5
Not disposed	16	5
Total	320	100

Source: field work 2016



The table above shows that majority of the respondents are highly disposed to the idea of non-financial incentives. 60% of the respondents are highly disposed, 30% well disposed, 5% are disposed and the remaining 5% are not disposed to the idea of non-financial incentives.

Question 3: How would you rate the incentive scheme in your organization?

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Very high	53	16.7
High	69	21.7
Low	91	28.3
Very low	107	33.3
Total	320	100

Source: field work 2016

According to the table above, 16.7% rated very high and 21.7% of the respondents rated high on the incentive scheme in the organisation, while 28.3% rated it low, and 33.3% of the respondents rating of the incentive scheme in the organization very low.

Question 4: How would you describe the impact of the non-financial incentives your organization grants to its employees?

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Motivating	240	75
Beneficial	22	7
Rewarding	48	15
Non-beneficial	10	3
Total	320	100

Source: field work 2016

From the table above, it can be seen that 75% of the respondents feels the non-financial incentives the organization grants is motivating, 7% of the respondents feels that it is beneficial, 15% feels it is rewarding, while the remaining 3% feels it is non-beneficial.

Question 5: What effect has these non-financial incentives had on you?

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Psychological	208	65
Sociological	96	30
Physiological	16	5
Economical	-	0
Total	320	100

Source: field work 2016

From the table above, 65% of the respondents believe that the availability of non-financial incentives has had Psychological impact on them, 30% believes sociological impact, 5% goes with physiological impact while none of the respondents chooses economical impact.

Discussion of Findings

Some individual questions were prepared in the questionnaire in order to expose the answers to the research questions. At the end based on the analysis of data collected, the following findings were made;

The key factors that constitutes Non-financial incentives are as follows; Good relationships with management/heads of department, being well informed, job security, high ethical standards in the institution & job, recognition for workers' efforts and skills, support from management, growth opportunities – learn new things, the opportunity to be creative in my work, new challenges or responsibilities, the flexibility of my job, training opportunities, appraisal and feedback from managers Non-financial incentive affects the performance and productivity of workers by boosting their morale and then increasing job performance which ultimately helps the organization in achieving their objectives.

The need for applying Non-financial incentives instead of financial incentives on the workers is because it affects the psychological state of workers and makes them feel esteemed and recognized. By focusing on non-financial motivational



factors, the internal 'drive' of the employees is stimulated. Non-financial motivational factors are to an extent neglected when the motivation of workers is under discussion.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

People often ask why are workers not more productive even when they receive good wages, are provided with good working conditions, have excellent fringe benefits and steady employment. With all these in place people do not seem to be willing to put forth more than minimum effort. The reason is that, these people are not satisfied with their jobs.

Those factors which stand out as the determinant of job satisfaction are achievement, advancement, responsibility and the job itself. These determinants are also referred to as motivators. However, one's motivational strength and job satisfaction increase as one's perceived effort-performance and performance – reward probabilities increases.

Incentive packages such as Good relationships with management/heads of department, being well informed, job security, high ethical standards in the institution & job, recognition for workers' efforts and skills, support from management, growth opportunities – learn new things, the opportunity to be creative in my work, new challenges or responsibilities, the flexibility of my job, training opportunities, appraisal and feedback from managers and so on, all go a long way to provide a sense of belonging in the minds of workers and also make them perceive and feel they are having a share in the profit of the company. The researcher however, believes that if the management of University of Abuja adheres to the suggestions given in this work, the she is sure of better job performance, higher productivity and peaceful industrial climate among the workers.

Recommendations

This study aims at assisting management of higher institutions to understand the needs of their employees. In addition, the findings should present a clear direction for the management in designing motivational programmes for staff with varying needs and demographical backgrounds.

Following a successful research outcome, the following recommendations were made namely:

1. Management should focus on non-financial motivational factors, the internal 'drive' of the employees is stimulated, and the need for motivation through financial incentive schemes might become less important.
2. Management should try and maintain Good relationships with the workers. This appeared to be the most important non-financial motivational factor among the workers.
3. Communication from top management is extremely important for maintaining a motivational factor such as job security, and workers need to constantly be carried along in some vital decision and be reassured of their positions within the company.

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