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Effects of Reward System on Productivity in the Local Government System in Benue State

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Abstract
The study investigated the effect of reward system on productivity in the Local Government System in Benue State. The study made use of the structured questionnaire as the major instrument for data collection. The descriptive statistic of mean and standard deviation were used for answering the questions while the inferential statistic of Chi-square was used testing the hypothesis. The found out that, productivity in the local government system is dependent on reward system given that the calculated value of the chi-square (489.7) is greater than the critical value of the chi-square (16.92) at 5% level of significance. The study concludes that, rewarding employees is critical not only to increase in the level of productivity but also leads to job satisfaction on the part of the employees. The study therefore recommended that, both employers and leaders or local government to as a matter of urgency design appropriate employees rewarding systems and implement same in their various local governments in order to enhance productivity and achieve their desired goals.
Keywords: Reward System, Productivity and Local Government System

Introduction

Critical to the success of every organization is the welfare and working conditions of the employees. Most often than not, motivation and reward are used interchangeably. Motivation or reward of employee is a highly relative matter since it varies in degrees, dimensions and places of employment (Issah, 2012). Thus, the policies formulated in any organization cannot be enthusiastically and successfully implemented when the employees are very apathetic with the conditions prevailing in their workplace. Hence, reward/motivation of employees in any organization is a sine qua non to the achievement of the desired or designed goals or objectives.

The relationship between leaders and their employees is expected to be mutually reciprocal in that, while leaders expect employees to give their best, employees on the other hand expect leaders to reward or motivate them during or after giving in their best.

The condition of employment in Nigerian local governments is not fundamentally different from other organizations in the country which implies that reward/motivation is likely to encourage performance and consequently, productivity. This paper therefore seeks to find out the influence that reward system have on productivity in the Local Government System in Benue State. It tests the hypothesis that, reward system has no significant effect on productivity in the local government system in Benue State. This study is considered apt because, the issue of productivity of the Local Government employees has been a contentious issues over time. This study is particularly important because, it avails leaders of the Local Government system the opportunity of finding a way out of the low productivity level in the system. Also, there is no known study on the influence of reward system on productivity in the Local Government System in Benue State. The findings of the study will benefit operators of local government system like administrators, workers and other opinion leaders. It will also be relevant to the academia, Federal and States governments as a guide to policy formulation and implementation with the view to enhancing employees' productivity in the system. The rest of the paper is divided into five sections; literature review, methodology and analysis of results.

Literature Review

Reward System

Employees in any organization either public or private like to be appreciated and valued for higher productivity. Cook and Hunsaker (2001) view reward systems as programs set up by an organization to reward employees performance and motivate them for higher productivity. There are two types of rewards; extrinsic and intrinsic rewards. Extrinsic rewards include those tangible benefits such as pay (salary), fringe benefits, pensions, conditions of work and security that individuals receive in return for their efforts. Intrinsic rewards include the psychological rewards that come from experience of work, or from being part of an organization, having a sense of achievement or one's efforts properly recognized and valued (Rollinson, 2002). Workers are also critical stakeholders in an organization. They contribute tremendously for organizational success. To enhance higher productivity, employees expect harmonious reciprocal relationship from management such as fair pay, safe working conditions or providing a work environment which does not endanger employees (Dunford, 1992; Ali & Ahmed, 2008). It is important to know that rewards play a key factor in enhancing organizational productivity. Mutia and Sikalieh (2013) agree that organizations should combine both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation strategies to achieve organizational productivity.

An organization with an effective and good rewards system ensures sustainable achievement of objectives. Employee reward programs are one method of motivating employees to change work habits and key behaviours to ensure business success. A well designed pay and benefit packages can attract people in their numbers to an organization, retain and motivate them. Organizations must acquire skills on how to manage employee rewards properly. This is as a result of what is expected and how much is received. Employee satisfaction is also affected by comparisons with other people in similar jobs to determine the output of their activities in relation to benefit. Rewards must be seen as timely and tied to effective performance and productivity. Employees expect that effective and positive organizational outcome will lead to certain rewards. Therefore, organizations must establish a philosophy about rewards in order to enhance productivity (Brian, 2006; Searle, 1990). The rewards system in the public sector is not fair and not tied to effective performance. It has over the years encouraged disparities leading to dissatisfaction by employees.

A motivated workforce can be a significant factor in organizational success (Nongo, 2005). When employees are motivated to work at higher levels of productivity, the organization as a whole runs more efficiently and is more effective at reaching its goals. This is in contrast to an unmotivated workforce, who can negatively disrupt an organization and distract employees from their work. For this reason, it is imperative that managers understand the power of reward systems and how they are used to influence employee behavior (Sev, Abayan & Wombo, 2013).

Rewards are positive outcomes that are earned as a result of an employee's performance. These rewards are aligned with organizational goals. When an employee helps an organization in the achievement of one of its goals, a reward often follows. There are two general types of rewards that motivate people: intrinsic and extrinsic.

(a) Intrinsic Rewards

Intrinsic motivation is internal to the person in that it is something that you have to offer yourself and is driven by personal interest or enjoyment in the work itself. Because intrinsic motivation exists within the individual, achieving it does not depend on others. Some people believe that the most powerful rewards come from inside a person (Nongo, 2005).

Think of that sense of accomplishment you feel once you have overcome a significant challenge or completed an assignment or work project that required a good deal of effort. Intrinsic motivation provides that personal pat on the back or natural height that reflects a person's ability, competency, growth, knowledge and self-control over their endeavors. Employees who tend to work at higher levels of productivity and strive to develop professionally. Intrinsic rewards include things such as: personal achievement, professional growth, sense of pleasure and accomplishment.

In a knowledge economy where the greatest asset an employee can offer an organization is their intelligence, experience, problem solving ability and change-savvy persona, intrinsic rewards are especially important to workers. In fact, Frederick Herzberg, who is one of the leading theorists of workplace motivation, found intrinsic rewards to be much stronger than financial rewards in increasing employee motivation. This is not to say that employees will not seek financial rewards in addition to intrinsic rewards, rather it just means that money is not enough to maximize motivation in most employees. People want to feel like their contributions matter (Nongo, 2005).

For example, an employee might want to reach a sales quota set by his manager to earn the bonus that is attached to it, but unless the employee feels a sense of accomplishment as part of making those sales, the motivation to achieve the quota is less powerful. Nongo (2005) argues that to help employees with their intrinsic motivation, managers should:

1. Provide meaningful work
2. Allow workers to make choices through a high level of autonomy
3. Provide opportunities for employees to show their competence in areas of expertise
4. Facilitate professional development so that employees can expand on their level of knowledge
5. Offer frequent opportunities for employees to reward themselves
6. Allow employees the opportunity to connect with those with whom they serve to obtain valuable feedback
7. Give them a path to monitor their progress with milestones along the way.

(b) Extrinsic Rewards

Extrinsic motivation is based on tangible rewards. Unlike intrinsic motivation that is self-administered, extrinsic motivation is external to the individual and is typically offered by a supervisor or manager who holds all the power in relation to when extrinsic rewards are offered and in what amount. Extrinsic rewards are usually financial in nature, such as a raise in salary, a bonus for reaching some quota or paid time off. However, extrinsic rewards can also be as simple as getting the better office, verbal praise, public recognition or awards, promotions and additional responsibility (Dugguh, 2004).

These material rewards can be motivating to employees because pay, time off, advancement and recognition are important to most workers. Just imagine how de-motivating it would be to underpaid, overworked and unappreciated, and you can quickly see how important extrinsic rewards are to organizational success. An extrinsically motivated person will work on a task that they do not particularly care for simply because of the anticipated satisfaction that will come from some extrinsic reward. For example, the employee may not be interested in the product he is selling, but reaching the quota means the bonus, therefore he is motivated to put forth the effort he needs to meet the sales quota.

Providing employees with extrinsic rewards is relatively straightforward and usually built into performance reviews or individual projects. They are particularly useful in the short-term for motivating employees to work towards one specific organizational goal. Meeting the sales quota for a bonus is an example of offering an extrinsic reward for a short-term goal.

Productivity

Generally speaking, productivity is defined as the relation of output to input. Productivity is therefore, on the one hand, closely connected to the use and availability of resources. This means in short that productivity is reduced if an organisation's resources are not properly used or if there is a lack of them. On the other hand, productivity is strongly linked to the creation of value. It is argued that productivity is one of the basic variables governing economic production activities, perhaps the most important one (Singh, Motwani & Kumavi, 2000). Elimination of waste give rise to improve productivity.

Productivity is a relative concept, which cannot be said to increase or decrease unless a comparison is made, either of variations from competitors or other standards at a certain point in time, or of changes over time. Misterek, Dooley and Anderson (1992) agree that improvements in productivity can be caused by five different relationships:

(1) Output and input increases, but the increase in input is proportionally less than the increase in output.
(2) Output increases while input stays the same.
(3) Output increases while input is reduced.
(4) Output stays the same while input decreases.
(5) Output decreases while input decreases even more.

Productivity is an economic measure of efficiency that summarizes and reflects the value of the output created by an individual, organization, industry or economic system relative to the value of the inputs used to create them (Denisi and Griffin, 2005). They agree that organizations around the world have come to recognize the importance of productivity for its ability not only to compete but also to survive, furthermore, an organization that is serious about productivity will need to lead workers by given them direction and focus to create high quality products and services. Effective leadership in an organization results to enhance productivity (Ene, 2008).

Hartzell (2011) views productivity as a measured relationship between the quality and quantity of results produced and the quantity of resources required for production. Productivity is in essence a measure of the work efficiency of an individual, work unit or entire organization. He further stressed that productivity can be measured in two ways, one way relates the output of an enterprise, industry or economic sector to a single input, such as labour or capital. The other relates output to a composite of input combined so as to account for their relative importance. The choice of a particular productivity measure depends on the purpose for which it is to be used. He further defined productivity as a war against waste. Even if the technical and economic concept of productivity is taken into consideration i.e. productivity is the ratio of output and input. This could be favourable only when planned efforts are made to utilize the scarce resources as economically as possible to achieve the best result. He concludes that among several factors affecting productivity, safety in industry, one of the most important factor to be kept in view for promoting productivity is the rate of output of a worker or machine.

Nwachukwu (2002, p.56) argues that productivity is the measure of how well resources are brought together in an organization and utilized for accomplishing of set result produced in reaching the highest level of performance with the least expenditure of resources. It can be seen as the amount of production in relations to labour put in. Explaining productivity, Kerlinger (1980, p.208) states that public managers have worked under the uneasy assumption that a good, smoothly functioning programme was an effective one. He went further to explain how a manager used to think that if he or she spent the entire budget allocation and did not hear complaints from clients or the public, he or she was running an effective programme. From that perspective, productivity is equated to the quantity of public complaints. Nevertheless, several more precise measures of the public sector have emerged in recent years where productivity is measured in terms of cost efficiency, cost effectiveness, and programme worthiness.

Theoretical Review

The Maslow's (1943) and Herzberg's (1968) job satisfaction theories emphasize how employees should be motivated in order to seek and achieve satisfaction in the workplace environment. These include how the existence of opportunities for achievement develops in organization; with enhanced job recognition and enlargement, responsibility of action, autonomy of decision, challenges and dynamics of the tasks as well as opportunities for growth and development. In addition, other aspects are addressed in the perspectives of how jobs are delegated, of course, with enhanced decentralization of authority. However, employees in organizations (local government) would need to be directly involved in meeting targets and challenges, breaking new frontiers, and therefore, contributing in fashioning new organizational vision, mission and values.

Empirical Studies

Mayson and Barret (2006) in a study on the impact of reward on employee performance found that a firm's ability to attract, motivate and retain employees by offering competitive salaries and appropriate rewards is linked to firm performance and growth. On the other hand, Inés and Pedro (2011) found that the compensation system used for the sales people has significant effects on individual salesperson performance and sales organization effectiveness. Therefore, in an ever competitive business environment, many companies today are attempting to identify innovative compensation strategies that are directly linked to improving organizational performance (Denis and Michel 2011).

According to Nebeker et al. (2001) Customer's satisfaction and organizations performance is the result of its employee's satisfaction. There has been research proving a positive relationship between stock bonus and employee performance. The evidences in Taiwan suggest that there exist positive associations between the amount of stock bonuses and firms' operating performance. It is also found that firms with larger firm size or high growth opportunity tend to adopt stock bonus.

Performance-based compensation is the dominant human Resource practice that firms use to evaluate and reward employees' efforts (Collins and Clark, 2003). Evidently, performance-based compensation has a positive effect upon employee and organizational performance. In a quantitative content analysis of the narrative descriptions of 50 rapid-growth firms and a comparison group of 50 slow-growth companies conducted by Barringer et al., 2005 results demonstrated that employee incentives differentiated the rapid-growth from the slow growth firms. Firms that were rapid-growth oriented provided their employees financial incentives and stock options as part of their compensation packages. In doing so, firms managed to elicit high levels of performance from employees, provide employees the feeling that they 20have an ownership interest in the firm, attract and retain high-quality employees, and shift a portion of a firm's business risk to the employees. Delery and Doty (1996) identified performance-based compensation as the single strongest predictor of firm performance. Both performance-based compensation and merit-based promotion can be viewed as ingredients in organizational incentive systems that encourage individual performance and retention (Cho et al. 2005). Collins and Clark (2003) studied 73 high-technology firms and showed that the relationships between the HR practices and firm performance (sales growth and stock growth) were mediated through their top managers' social networks. Cho et al. (2005) suggested that incentive plans is effective in decreasing turnover rates. Banker et al. (2001) conducted a longitudinal study of the effectiveness of incentive plans in the hotel industry and found that incentive plans were related to higher revenues, increased profits, and decreased cost. In a related study Paul and Anantharaman (2003) found that compensation and incentives directly affect operational performance. To be effective, compensation practices and policies must be aligned with organizational objectives. While performance-based compensation can motivate employees, sometimes employees perceive it as a management mechanism to control their behaviour (Lawler and Rhode, 1976). In such a case, employees are less loyal and committed, thus compensation plans have the opposite than desired outcome (Rodrıguez and Ventura, 2003). Employee turnover can significantly slow revenue growth, particularly in knowledge-intensive industries (Baron and Hannan, 2002).

Method of Data Analysis

The paper adopted the descriptive statistics of mean ($\overline{X}$) and standard deviations and the non-parametric test of Chi-square as methods for analyzing the data collected through the use of structured questionnaires. For the descriptive statistic, the cut-off mark of 2.50 was used for decision making on each item of the instrument. Any item with a mean of 2.50 and above was considered agreed while any item with a mean of below 2.50 was considered disagreed. Similarly, the Chi-square test of independence (also known as the Pearson Chi-square or simply the Chi-square) was used for testing the dependency of reward system on productivity in the local government system in Benue State. The chi-square test is considered appropriate for this study because it is a non-parametric statistic for treating data consisting of frequency counts; it permits the researcher to determine whether or not a significant relationship exists between the observed number of cases falling into each category and the expected number of cases based on the null hypothesis (Emaikwu, 2011). The general form of the Chi-square is stated as;

$$\chi^2 = \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$$

Where χ^2 is the value of the calculated chi-square is, O is the observed value and E is the expected value. Similarly, the value of the chi-square can be calculated using the formula;

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \frac{(oij-eij)^2}{eij}$$

Given the degree of freedom (df) = (C – 1) (R – 1)

Where χ^2 = calculated value of the chi-square

oij = observed frequency of the *ith* row and *jth* column

eij = expected frequency of the *ith* row and *jth* column

$\sum$ = summation

Estimation and Discussion of Result

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The result from Table 4.1 below revealed mean scores and standard deviations for all the items on the reward system. The study showed that reward system is important and affects the productivity of the local government system. The respondents virtually agreed to all items except that of item one (1) and three (3) where they disagreed that the attitude of leaders to the welfare of local government employees does not affect productivity and employees salaries and other incentives are not paid regularly. The respondents disagree with the attitude of leaders to the welfare of local government employees (*M = 1.93, SD = 1.192*), agree with considerations for reward in the local government system (*M = 2.58, SD = 1.181*). They disagreed with the issue of salaries and other incentives been paid regularly (*M =2.47, SD = 0.961*). They agree that reward and other incentive play significant role on how much they perform their jobs (*M = 2.56, SD = 1.010*). Most of respondents agree that they operate in decent offices (*M = 2.98, SD = 1.028*). Also, majority of the respondents agree that rewarding right people in the local government will affect productivity (*M = 2.84, SD = 1.091*). The overall or cluster mean of 2.60 with a standard deviation of 1.069 implied that, reward system has effect on productivity in local government system in Benue state.

Table 4.1: Reward System and Productivity in the Local Government System

Reward System	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. Does attitudes of leaders to the welfare of local government employees affect productivity?	363	1.93	1.192
2. What is the major consideration for reward in the local government system in Benue State?	363	2.58	1.181
3. Do local government employees have their salaries and other incentives paid regularly?	363	2.47	.961
4. Does reward such as alary and other incentives play any role on how much you perform your job?	363	2.56	1.010
5. Do local government employees operate in decent office or have good office accommodation?	363	2.98	1.020
6. What is the major function in reward system which affects productivity in the local government?	363	2.76	1.028
7. Do you agree that rewarding right people in the local government will affect their productivity?	363	2.84	1.091
Overall Mean and Standard Deviation		**2.60**	**1.069**

Source: Filed Survey, 2016

Two questions (question 4 and 7) were used to generate data for testing the study hypothesis Question 4 has the following frequency distribution

Role of Reward on Productivity	Frequency
Absolutely	110
To a great extent	149
To some extent	88
Not at all	16
	363

Question 7 has the following frequency distribution

Major Factors in Reward that affect Productivity	Frequency
Nepotism	88
God fatherism	133
Disregards for Performance	104
Lack of adherence to Seniority	38
	363

These data were combined to form the contingency Table (Table 4.2)

Table 4.2: Contingency Table Based on Responses of Respondents to Questions 9 and 11 of the first cluster.

Major factors in Reward that affect Productivity	Role of Reward on Productivity				
	Absolutely	To greater a extent	To some extent	Not at all	Total
Nepotism	88(141.03)	0(36.12)	0(21.33)	0(3.88)	88
Godfatherism	22(14.4)	111(0.48)	0(8.0)	0(1.45)	133
Disregard for Performance	0(30.91)	38(0.36)	64(62.36)	0(4.5)	102
Lack of adherence to seniority	0(12.12)	0(16.42)	24(21.08)	16(115.21)	40
Total	110	149	88	16	363

The expected frequencies are calculated using the formula:

$$E_{ij} = \frac{n_i \times n_j}{N}$$

Where E_{ij} is the expected frequency for the cell in the ith row and the jth column
n_i is the total number of subjects in the ith row
n_j is the total number of subjects in the jth column and
N is the total number subjects in the whole table

E(Nepotism and Absolutely) $= \frac{110 \times 88}{363} = 26.67$

E(Nepotism and To a greater extent) $= \frac{149 \times 88}{363} = 36.12$

E(Nepotism and To some extent) $= \frac{88 \times 88}{363} = 21.33$

E(Nepotism and Not at all) $= \frac{16 \times 88}{363} = 3.88$

E(Godfatherism and Absolutely) $= \frac{110 \times 33}{363} = 10.0$

E(Godfatherism and To a greater extent) $= \frac{149 \times 33}{363} = 13.55$

E(Godfatherism and To some extent) $= \frac{88 \times 33}{363}$ =8.0

E(Godfatherism and Not at all) $= \frac{16 \times 33}{363}$ =1.45

E(Disregard for Performance and Absolutely) $= \frac{110 \times 102}{363}$ =30.91

E(Disregard for Performance and To a greater extent) $= \frac{149 \times 102}{363}$ =41.87

E(Disregard for Performance and To some extent) $= \frac{88 \times 102}{363}$ =24.73

E(Disregard for Performance and Not at all) $= \frac{16 \times 102}{363}$ =4.50

E(Lack of adherence to seniority and Absolutely) $= \frac{110 \times 40}{363}$ = 12.12

E(Lack of adherence to seniority and To a greater extent) $= \frac{149 \times 40}{363}$ =16.42

E(Lack of adherence to seniority and To some extent) $= \frac{88 \times 40}{363}$ =9.70

E(Lack of adherence to seniority and Not at all) $= \frac{16 \times 40}{363}$ = 1.76

Thus $\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \frac{(oij - eij)^2}{eij}$ =

$$\frac{(88-26.67)^2}{26.67} + \frac{(0-36.12)^2}{36.12} + \frac{(0-21.33)^2}{21.33} + \frac{(0-3.88)^2}{3.88} + \frac{(22-10.0)^2}{10.0} + \frac{(11-13.55)^2}{13.55}$$

$$+ \frac{(0-8.0)^2}{8.0} + \frac{(0-1.45)^2}{1.45} + \frac{(0-30.91)^2}{30.91} + \frac{(38-41.87)^2}{41.87} + \frac{(64-24.73)^2}{24.73} + \frac{(0-4.50)^2}{4.50}$$

$$+ \frac{(0-12.12)^2}{12.12} + \frac{(0-16.42)^2}{16.42} + \frac{(24-9.70)^2}{9.70} + \frac{(16-1.76)^2}{1.76} = 489.7$$

Using df = (C – 1) (R – 1)
(4 – 1) (4 – 1)
3 x 3 = 9

χ^2 critical at 5% confidence level and degree of freedom of 9 = 16.92
(See Appendix 'A' for detailed analysis)

Decision

Since χ^2 calculated (489.7) is greater than χ^2 critical at 5% confidence level (16.92), the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis which states that "Reward System has significance effect on productivity in the Local Government System in Benue State" is accepted.

This means that; productivity depends on reward system; the more employees are motivated and stimulated, the higher their morals to give in their best which consequently leads to higher productivity. This finding conforms to the finding of Kibisu, Muturi and Elijah (2014) who found out that reward system (salary, house allowance and health benefits) have very strong influence on employee performance. The implication of this finding is that, productivity in the Local Government System will be improved if the reward system is adequate and properly carried out.

Conclusion and Policy Recommendations

The study concludes that, rewarding employees is critical not only to increase in the level of productivity but also leads to job satisfaction on the part of the employees. It also leads to leadership and business successes. It is therefore recommended that, both employers and leaders or local government to as a matter of urgency design appropriate employees rewarding systems and implement same in their various local government in order to enhance productivity and achieve their desired goals.

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