

Employee Incentive Program: Its Role in Enhancing Employee Performance, in Selected Companies in Kingdom of Bahrain

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Abstract: The research is about the role of incentive program on employee performance. These incentive programs refer to the financial and non financial incentives. This has been done to assess how these types of rewards can have positive effects or influence the quality of work, quantity of work, attendance and punctuality, work behavior and cooperation. The methodology used to facilitate the research included descriptive – evaluative approach in order to answer the questions posted in the statement of the problems. The main tool for the data gathering and collection in this research was the questionnaire which was designed and validated by the researcher. Unstructured interviews were conducted to get more information, which supplemented the responses gathered through the use of the questionnaire. The results of the research showed that both the financial and non financial are appreciated by the respondents, in fact they all agreed on the contribution of these to the different performance criteria. However, it was very clear on the correlation that financial rewards are valued more by the respondents to have a much stronger effect on the employee performance.

Keywords: financial incentive, non financial incentive, quality of work, quantity of work, performance criteria.

I. INTRODUCTION

Every individual needs some form of motivation so that he will be more inspired to work [1]. Many successful companies acknowledge that the most important asset of the organization is its people. However, people only become the best and most important asset of the organization if the employees are functioning effectively and exhibiting a high performance level.

Employee performance is a combination of ability and motivation[2]. Ability is derived from having the necessary knowledge, skills, training and resources in doing the job while motivation is derived from the work environment. Motivation is the inner force that drives the person to perform well or even more than what is expected [3].

Giving that inner drive to employees is called motivation and this comes in 2 forms, financial and non financial motivation [4, 5]. There are early theories of motivation which have been used as basis to motivate employees. These are the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, McGregor's Theory X and Y, Herzberg's 2 Factor Theory and McClelland 3 Need's theory [6]. Motivations come in different forms. It could be in terms of financial or non financial that can affect every employee's performance.

This research intends to study the role of incentive program in enhancing employee performance in selected

organizations in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Specifically, it intends to answer the following questions:

1. What is the general perception of the respondents on the incentive program in enhancing employee performance when grouped according to profile?
2. What is the perceived role of non-financial incentive program in enhancing employee performance when grouped according to profile?
3. What is the perceived role of financial incentive program in enhancing employee performance when grouped according to profile?
4. What is the relationship of incentive program and employee performance?

The following objectives that are expected to be met after the conduct of this research:

1. To know the general perception of the respondents on the incentive program in enhancing employee performance,
2. To understand the perceived role of non-financial incentive program in enhancing employee performance.
3. To see the perceived role of financial incentive program in enhancing employee performance.
4. To check whether there is a relationship between incentive program and employee performance?

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Since the main objective of this research is to find the role of incentive program in enhancing employee performance in selected companies in the Kingdom of Bahrain, therefore this research used descriptive – evaluative approach. Respondents who are Human Resource Managers and Supervisors of different companies in Bahrain are to be given questionnaires which will be collected later in a specified date.

Results and Discussion

1. On the general perception of respondents on the incentive program based on their profile.

1.1. Both male and female respondents have similar responses shown in Table 1 (4.51) which is “strongly agree” when asked about whether financial incentives improve their quality and quantity of work, behaviour such as commitment, volunteerism among others.

1.2 General perception based on the age group of the respondent in Table 2 showed a “strongly agree” response (4.53) when asked about behavior, commitment, volunteerism, improving quality of work as a result of financial incentive.

1.3 Respondents grouped according to their highest academic qualification in Table 3 somewhat agreed (4.35) agreed on the role of incentive program in enhancing employee performance.

1.4 Both supervisory and managerial level in Table 4 (4.51) strongly agreed that motivation and behaviour are influenced by financial incentives.

1.5 Regardless of the number of years (Table 5) they have worked with the company, the respondents strongly agreed (4.60) that employees are motivated with financial incentives given to them.

1.6 Respondents are grouped based on the size of the company in Table 6, and strongly agreed (4.55) that employees are motivated to improve their quality and quantity of work as well as their behavior in terms of commitment and volunteerism when there is financial incentives specifically money.

1.7 Respondents grouped based on the departments (Table 7) they are working for strongly agreed (4.52) that financial incentives motivate them to exhibit commitment and volunteerism at work.

2. Statement of the problem No. is the perceived role of non-financial incentive program in enhancing employee performance, the following are the results.

2.1 Respondents when grouped according to Sex or Gender in Table 8 believed that non financial incentives have tremendous contribution (4.84) to their performance

2.2 Respondents grouped by age in Table 9 have viewed non financial incentive program to have tremendous (4.82) contribution on the performance criteria mentioned except for the work behavior

2.3 Respondents grouped by their educational background in Table 10 have viewed non financial incentive program

as having tremendous contribution (4.84) to their performance.

2.4 Respondents grouped by the position in Table 11 have viewed non financial incentive program to have tremendous contribution (4.84) to their performance.

2.5 Respondents grouped by the number of years in Table 12 believed on the tremendous contribution (4.86) of non financial incentive program in relation their performance at work.

2.6 Respondents were also grouped by size of the company in Table 13 and they believed on the tremendous contribution (4.85) of non financial incentives to their performance.

3. Statement of the Problem No 3 is the perceived role of financial incentive program in enhancing employee performance.

3.1 Respondents grouped into gender in Table 14, stated that financial incentive program have a moderate contribution (3.00) to the 5 performance criteria .

3.2 In Table 15, respondents grouped by age showed also that they only see a moderate contribution (3.00) of the financial incentive program in improving quality and quantity of work, punctuality and attendance, work behaviour and cooperation.

3.3 Table 16 shows the result when respondents are grouped according to educational background. The 2 groups also rated financial incentive program to have only a moderate contribution to the 5 performance criteria.

3.4 For Table 17, respondents are grouped by position and they view financial incentive program to have a moderate contribution to the 5 performance criteria.

3.5 Table 18 shows the respondents were grouped as to the number of years they have worked with the company and they have viewed financial incentive program to have little contribution in enhancing their performance.

3.6 Table 19 shows the result when respondents grouped according to the size of the company and they said that financial incentives have tremendous contribution

4. The data for the Statement of the Problem No 4 which is about the relationship of Incentive Program and Employee Performance is shown in Table 20.

The data as shown in the Table 20 below are the Pearson r-test results on the relationship of employee performance and the respondents’ affordances of their perception in terms of the general incentive program, financial and non financial incentive program.

From the result, it is shown that respondents do not show relationship of non financial incentives to their performance. The apparent lack of relationship of non financial incentive and performance can be explained by this: In some situation, incentive programs whether financial or non financial will not work well to effect an improved performance. There are reasons for that like (a) no matter what incentive is given the employee simply

does not possess the capacity to perform the task exceptionally. It can be concluded that the employee does not possess the required knowledge or skill so that the task can be done (b) there are no materials or tools and equipment or any other resources available so that he can perform the task. For these reasons, not any incentive can give a link to the desired performance [38].

III. CONCLUSION

Below are the summary of conclusions based from the findings:

Respondents believe that both financial and non financial incentive enhances employee performance.

On the perceived role of non-financial incentive program in enhancing employee performance, respondents although they do not see that non financial incentives are influencing their performance, but they are appreciative of the different non financial incentives given to them.

The financial incentive program is seen to just have moderate contribution in enhancing employee performance.

On whether there is a relationship between incentive program and employee performance, it is concluded that it is not money alone or financial incentives that make employees happy and motivated to work.

Summary of Recommendations.

1. Financial incentives, should be sustained and be clear with the criteria on how employees will be able to get it. For non financial incentives, same is true, criteria should be clear so as not to create animosity and confusion which could later result to conflict.

2. On the perceived role of non-financial incentive program in enhancing employee performance. It is recommended that companies should reflect how recognition and appreciation can be given in a manner that will be most treasured by the employees.

3 For financial incentive program , there should be sustainability and clarity of criteria for financial incentive, and companies should consider giving intrinsic motivation.

4. On the relationship between incentive program and employee performance, it is recommended that if possible companies should couple the non financial incentive program with the financial incentives. As given in the previous discussion, the company should ensure that employees possess the necessary knowledge and skills on the job to give everyone within the organization equal opportunity to get the incentives. The companies should also ensure that all resources needed to perform high level

of excellence, are available so that employees would not be frustrated not being able to perform well and get incentives due to company's mistake.

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Table 1. General Perception as to Sex

Indicators	Male		Female	
	Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	4.68	StA	4.81	StA
2	4.47	SwA	4.23	SwA
3	4.63	StA	4.68	StA
4	4.16	SwA	4.55	StA
5	4.68	StA	4.48	SwA
6	4.58	StA	4.58	StA
7	4.68	StA	4.68	StA
8	4.32	SwA	4.39	SwA
9	4.47	SwA	4.52	StA
10	4.68	StA	4.45	SwA
11	4.37	SwA	4.55	StA
12	4.26	SwA	4.42	SwA
Average	4.500	StA	4.527	StA

Legend: SwA - Somewhat Agree; StA - Strongly Agree

Table 2. General Perceptions as to Age

Indicators	26-35		36-45		46-55	
	Mean	DI	Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	4.89	StA	4.72	StA	4.75	StA
2	4.22	SwA	4.28	SwA	4.44	SwA
3	4.56	StA	4.68	StA	4.69	StA
4	4.78	StA	4.32	SwA	4.31	SwA
5	4.67	StA	4.40	SwA	4.75	StA
6	4.67	StA	4.40	SwA	4.81	StA
7	4.78	StA	4.56	StA	4.81	StA
8	4.00	SwA	4.48	SwA	4.38	SwA
9	4.78	StA	4.44	SwA	4.44	SwA
10	4.33	SwA	4.56	StA	4.63	StA
11	4.56	StA	4.36	SwA	4.63	StA
12	4.33	SwA	4.32	SwA	4.44	SwA
Average	4.546	StA	4.460	SwA	4.589	StA

Legend: SwA - Somewhat Agree; StA - Strongly Agree

Table 3. General Perception as to Educational Background

Indicators	BS		MA	
	Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	4.84	StA	4.63	StA
2	4.32	SwA	4.32	SwA
3	4.68	StA	4.63	StA
4	4.35	SwA	4.47	SwA
5	4.52	StA	4.63	StA
6	4.55	StA	4.63	StA
7	4.58	StA	4.84	StA
8	4.39	SwA	4.32	SwA
9	4.52	StA	4.47	SwA
10	4.52	StA	4.58	StA
11	4.42	SwA	4.58	StA
12	4.39	SwA	4.32	SwA
Average	4.505	StA	4.535	StA

Legend: SwA - Somewhat Agree; StA - Strongly Agree

Table 4. General Perception as to Position

Indicators	Supervisor		Manager	
	Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	4.76	StA	4.76	StA
2	4.31	SwA	4.33	SwA
3	4.62	StA	4.71	StA
4	4.45	SwA	4.33	SwA
5	4.48	SwA	5.67	StA
6	4.52	StA	4.67	StA
7	4.72	StA	4.62	StA
8	4.28	SwA	4.48	SwA
9	4.52	StA	4.48	SwA
10	4.38	SwA	4.76	StA
11	4.55	StA	4.38	SwA
12	4.48	SwA	4.19	SwA
Average	4.506	StA	4.532	StA

Legend: SwA - Somewhat Agree; StA - Strongly Agree

Table 5. General Perceptions as to Number of Years the respondent has been with the company

Indicators	1-3		4-6		7-10	
	Mean	DI	Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	5.00	StA	4.74	StA	4.76	StA
2	4.00	SwA	4.35	SwA	4.29	SwA
3	5.00	StA	4.61	StA	4.71	StA
4	4.50	StA	4.42	SwA	4.35	SwA
5	5.00	StA	4.48	SwA	4.65	StA
6	5.00	StA	4.48	SwA	4.71	StA
7	4.50	StA	4.68	StA	4.71	StA
8	5.00	StA	4.29	SwA	4.41	SwA
9	5.00	StA	4.48	SwA	4.47	SwA
10	5.00	StA	4.52	StA	4.53	StA
11	5.00	StA	4.42	SwA	4.53	StA
12	4.50	StA	4.39	SwA	4.29	SwA
Average	4.792	SwA	4.489	SwA	4.534	StA

Legend: SwA - Somewhat Agree; StA - Strongly Agree

Table 6. General Perceptions as to Number of Employees

Indicators	50 and below		51-100		101-150	
	Mean	DI	Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	4.75	StA	4.78	StA	4.75	StA
2	4.25	SwA	4.33	SwA	4.75	StA
3	4.57	StA	4.72	StA	5.00	StA
4	4.32	SwA	4.44	SwA	4.75	StA
5	4.43	SwA	4.72	StA	4.75	StA
6	4.57	StA	4.50	StA	5.00	StA
7	4.64	StA	4.72	StA	4.75	StA
8	4.43	SwA	4.22	SwA	4.50	StA
9	4.43	SwA	4.56	StA	4.75	StA
10	4.61	StA	4.44	SwA	4.50	StA
11	4.43	SwA	4.50	StA	4.75	StA
12	4.39	SwA	4.39	SwA	4.00	SwA
Average	4.485	SwA	4.528	StA	4.688	StA

Legend: SwA - Somewhat Agree; StA - Strongly Agree

Table 7. General Perception as to Department

Indicators	HR		Operations	
	Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	4.76	StA	4.80	StA
2	4.31	SwA	4.40	SwA
3	4.62	StA	5.00	StA
4	4.38	SwA	4.60	StA
5	4.58	StA	4.40	SwA
6	4.56	StA	4.80	StA
7	4.71	StA	4.40	SwA
8	4.38	SwA	4.20	SwA
9	4.49	SwA	4.60	StA
10	4.56	StA	4.40	SwA
11	4.47	SwA	4.60	StA
12	4.38	SwA	4.20	SwA
Average	4.515	StA	4.533	StA

Legend: SwA - Somewhat Agree; StA - Strongly Agree

Table 8. Role of Non-financial Incentive Program as to Sex

		Male		Female	
		Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	Quality of Work	4.84	TC	4.90	TC
2	Quantity of Work	5.00a	TC	5.00a	TC
3	Punctuality/attendance	4.95	TC	4.97	TC
4	Work Behavior	4.84	TC	4.77	TC
5	Cooperation	4.58	TC	4.58	TC
Average		4.842	TC	4.845	TC

Legend: TC - Tremendous Contribution

Table 9. Role of Non-financial Incentive Program as to Age

		26-35		36-45		46-55	
		Mean	DI	Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	Quality of Work	4.78	TC	4.92	TC	4.88	TC
2	Quantity of Work	5.00a	TC	5.00a	TC	5.00a	TC
3	Punctuality/attendance	5.00	TC	4.92	TC	5.00	TC
4	Work Behavior	4.67	TC	4.80	TC	4.88	TC
5	Cooperation	4.44	CC	4.64	TC	4.56	TC
General		4.778	TC	4.856	TC	4.862	TC

Legend: TC Tremendous Contribution; CC - Considerable Contribution

a. t cannot be computed because the standard deviations of both groups are 0

Table 10. Role of Non-financial Incentive Program as to Educational Background

		BS		MA	
		Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	Quality of Work	4.90	TC	4.84	TC
2	Quantity of Work	5.00a	TC	5.00a	TC
3	Punctuality/attendance	4.94	TC	5.00	TC
4	Work Behavior	4.77	TC	4.84	TC
5	Cooperation	4.58	TC	4.58	TC
Average		4.839	TC	4.853	TC

Legend: TC - Tremendous Contribution

a. t cannot be computed because the standard deviations of both groups are 0.

Table 11. Role of Non-financial Incentive Program as to Position

		Supervisor		Manager	
		Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	Quality of Work	4.93	TC	4.81	TC
2	Quantity of Work	5.00a	TC	5.00a	TC
3	Punctuality/attendance	4.93	TC	5.00	TC
4	Work Behavior	4.76	TC	4.86	TC
5	Cooperation	4.55	TC	4.62	TC
Average		4.834	TC	4.857	TC

Legend: TC - Tremendous Contribution t cannot be computed because the standard deviations of both groups are 0.

Table 12. Role of Non-financial Incentive Program as to Number of Years

		1-3		4-6		7-10	
		Mean	DI	Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	Quality of Work	5.00	TC	4.87	TC	4.88	TC
2	Quantity of Work	5.00a	TC	5.00a	TC	5.00a	TC
3	Punctuality/attendance	5.00	TC	4.94	TC	5.00	TC
4	Work Behavior	5.00	TC	4.84	TC	4.71	TC
5	Cooperation	5.00	TC	4.55	TC	4.59	TC
General		5.000	TC	4.839	TC	4.835	TC

Legend: TC - Tremendous Contribution a. F cannot be computed because the standard deviations of both groups are 0.

Table 13. Role of Non-financial Incentive Program as to Number of Employees

		50 and below		51-100		101-150	
		Mean	DI	Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	Quality of Work	4.89	TC	4.83	TC	5.00	TC
2	Quantity of Work	5.00	TC	5.00	TC	5.00	TC
3	Punctuality/attendance	4.93	TC	5.00	TC	5.00	TC
4	Work Behavior	4.82	TC	4.72	TC	5.00	TC
5	Cooperation	4.61	TC	4.56	TC	4.50	TC
General		4.850	TC	4.822	TC	4.900	TC

Legend: TC - Tremendous Contribution a. F cannot be computed because the standard deviations of both groups are 0.

Table 14. Role of Financial Incentive Program as to Sex

		Male		Female	
		Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	Quality of Work	3.00	MC	2.81	MC
2	Quantity of Work	3.00	MC	3.00	MC
3	Punctuality/attendance	3.00	MC	3.06	MC
4	Work Behavior	2.84	MC	3.13	MC
5	Cooperation	3.26	MC	2.94	MC
Average		3.021	MC	2.987	MC

Legend: MC - Moderate Contribution

Table 15. Role of Financial Incentive Program as to Age

		26-35		36-45		46-55	
		Mean	DI	Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	Quality of Work	3.00	MC	2.92	MC	2.75	MC
2	Quantity of Work	3.00	MC	3.00	MC	3.00	MC
3	Punctuality/attendance	3.00	MC	3.12	MC	2.94	MC
4	Work Behavior	3.44	MC	3.08	MC	2.69	MC
5	Cooperation	3.11	MC	3.20	MC	2.81	MC
General		3.111	MC	3.064	MC	2.838	MC

Legend: MC - Moderate Contribution

Table 16. Role of Financial Incentive Program as to Educational Background

		BS		MA	
		Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	Quality of Work	2.97	MC	2.74	MC
2	Quantity of Work	3.00	MC	3.00	MC
3	Punctuality/attendance	2.90	MC	3.26	MC
4	Work Behavior	2.94	MC	3.16	MC
5	Cooperation	3.06	MC	3.05	MC
Average		2.974	MC	3.042	MC

Legend: MC - Moderate Contribution

Table 17. Role of Financial Incentive Program as to Position

		Supervisor		Manager	
		Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	Quality of Work	2.93	MC	2.81	MC
2	Quantity of Work	2.79	MC	3.29	MC
3	Punctuality/attendance	3.00	MC	3.10	MC
4	Work Behavior	3.07	MC	2.95	MC
5	Cooperation	3.17	MC	2.90	MC
Average		2.993	MC	3.010	MC

Legend: MC - Moderate Contribution

Table 18. Role of Financial Incentive Program as to Number of Years

		1-3		4-6		7-10	
		Mean	DI	Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	Quality of Work	2.50	MC	2.84	MC	3.00	MC
2	Quantity of Work	3.00	MC	2.94	MC	3.12	MC
3	Punctuality/attendance	3.50	CC	3.10	MC	2.88	MC
4	Work Behavior	3.50	CC	2.94	MC	3.12	MC
5	Cooperation	2.00	VLC	3.10	MC	3.12	MC
General		2.900	MC	2.981	MC	3.047	MC

Legend: VLC - Very Little Contribution; MC - Moderate Contribution; CC - Considerable Contribution

Table 19. Role of Financial Incentive Program as to Number of Employees

		50 and below		51-100		101-150	
		Mean	DI	Mean	DI	Mean	DI
1	Quality of Work	2.86	MC	2.89	MC	3.00	MC
2	Quantity of Work	3.04	MC	2.89	MC	3.25	MC
3	Punctuality/attendance	3.04	MC	3.06	MC	3.00	MC
4	Work Behavior	2.89	MC	3.17	MC	3.25	MC
5	Cooperation	3.21	MC	2.78	MC	3.25	MC
General		3.007	MC	2.956	MC	3.150	MC

Legend: MC - Moderate Contribution

Table 20. Relationship between Incentive Program and Employee Performance

		General Perception	Non-financial Incentive Program	Financial Incentive Program
Employee Performance	Pearson Correlation	.300*	.797**	-.035
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.034	.000	.809
	N	50	50	50

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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