

Designing an Effective Reward Management System for Enhancing Performance in the Civil Service

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Abstract

The study explore how designing an effective rewards management system can enhance performance in the civil service. The study posits that reward management systems play a critical role in motivating employees and enhancing performance in the civil service. The paper examines the key factors involved in designing an effective reward management system tailored to the unique needs and challenges of the civil service sector. It highlights the importance of recognizing and rewarding exceptional performance while promoting fairness and equity among civil servants. Additionally, the paper discusses potential challenges and limitations associated with implementing such a system, including budget constraints and bureaucratic complexities. The essential components of an effective reward management system are explored, emphasizing clear performance criteria, transparent evaluation processes, and diverse rewards aligned with individual and organizational goals. The potential benefits of an effective reward management system in the civil service are examined, including fostering a performance-driven culture, attracting and retaining top talent, and improving service delivery to the public. The paper concludes by advocating for further research and empirical studies to validate the effectiveness of reward management strategies in the civil service, taking into account contextual factors, organizational culture, and demographic diversity. By designing and implementing an effective reward management system, civil service organizations can enhance employee motivation, drive performance improvement, and contribute to the overall success of the sector.

KeyWords: *Rewards Management, Civil Service, Performance, Motivation, Benefits, Non Financial Rewards, Financial Rewards*

Introduction

Background to the Study

In any organization, the performance of employees plays a vital role in achieving organizational goals and maintaining a competitive edge. This importance is particularly evident in the civil service sector, where the effective delivery of public services is crucial for the overall well-being and development of a nation. To motivate and enhance the performance of civil servants, the design and implementation of an effective reward management system have become a topic of considerable interest and research (Bratton & Gold, 2017).

The civil service encompasses a wide range of government departments, agencies, and public institutions responsible for policy formulation, service delivery, and administrative functions. These organizations are often characterized by a bureaucratic structure, hierarchical management, and rigid systems and procedures. In such an environment, designing a reward management system that recognizes and incentivizes exceptional performance is essential to attract, retain, and motivate competent civil servants (Tongo, 2015). The performance in the Nigerian civil service can vary depending on several factors, including the individual's competence, work ethic, the organizational culture, and the overall management practices within the civil service. It is in this regard, Mukoro (2007) noted, the civil service plays a very special role in governance. Historically, the Nigerian civil service has faced challenges related to bureaucracy, corruption, and inefficiency. However, efforts have been made to improve its performance through reforms and modernization initiatives. These initiatives aim to promote transparency, accountability, professionalism, and merit-based recruitment and promotion processes. In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on the need for civil servants to possess the necessary skills, qualifications, and knowledge to perform their duties effectively (Osibanjo, Pavithra & Adeniji, 2014). Training programs and capacity building initiatives have been introduced to enhance the skills of civil servants and improve service delivery. Despite these efforts, some persistent issues continue to affect the performance of the Nigerian civil service. These include bureaucratic bottlenecks, inadequate resources, outdated processes, low morale, and corruption. These challenges can hinder productivity, efficiency, and the delivery of quality services to the citizens. In addition to the above, it has been noted that rewards management system within the Nigerian civil service is not often properly design leading to a plethora of problems. It is important to note that the effectiveness of the reward management system in Nigeria's civil service depends on various factors, including its design, implementation, and alignment with organizational goals. Regular evaluations, feedback mechanisms, and adjustments are necessary to ensure that the system remains fair, relevant, and capable of driving performance improvement among civil servants. It is against this backdrop that this study will examine how designing an effective reward management system can enhancing performance in the civil service.

Statement of the Problems

The Nigerian Civil Service, like many other public sectors around the world, faces numerous challenges in its reward management system. Reward management refers to the processes and strategies used to attract, motivate, and retain employees by providing them with appropriate and equitable rewards. In the case of the Nigerian Civil Service, these challenges have a significant impact on employee morale, productivity, and the overall effectiveness of the public administration. Chief amongst these challenges according to Ojo (2017) are: Inadequate Compensation: One of the major challenges is the issue of inadequate compensation. Civil servants often face low salaries and a lack of financial incentives, which fails to attract and retain high-quality talent. This low compensation affects motivation, leads to a lack of commitment, and increases the likelihood of corruption and unethical behavior. Another factor is the issues of salary disparities. According to Adeleke (2018), disparities in salaries within the civil service create a sense of inequity and demotivation among employees. The current system often does not adequately consider factors such as qualifications, experience, and performance, leading to inconsistencies in pay scales. This lack of transparency and fairness creates a negative work environment and hampers productivity. Limited career progression opportunities was also identified as a challenge. The civil service often lacks well-defined career progression paths, which can discourage talented individuals from joining or staying in the service. The absence of clear promotion criteria based on merit and performance further erodes motivation and undermines the sense of achievement among employees. Furthermore, inefficient performance management is another critical problems. In the opinion of Nwosu (2015), the performance management system in the Nigerian Civil Service is often ineffective and lacks objectivity. Performance appraisals may be subject to biases, favoritism, or political interference. This leads to a lack of trust in the system and demoralizes employees who perceive that their efforts and contributions are not fairly recognized. More so, the absence of effective performance-based incentives contributes to a lack of motivation and reduced productivity. Without proper recognition and rewards for exceptional performance, employees may feel undervalued and less inclined to put in their best effort. This further perpetuates a culture of mediocrity within the civil service.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine how designing an effective reward management system will enhancing performance in the civil service. The specific objectives includes the followings:

- (1). To identifying the current challenges in the Nigerian Civil Service reward management systems.
- (2) To discuss and establish the link between rewards and performance in the Nigerian Civil service.
- (3) To identify and discuss key components of an effective rewards management system for the Nigerian Civil service.

Review of Relevant Literature

Reward management refers to the strategic and systematic approach organizations employ to design, implement, and administer compensation and benefits programs for their employees. It encompasses the policies, practices, and processes used to attract, motivate, retain, and reward individuals within an organization, aligning their efforts with organizational objectives and creating a positive and productive work environment

(Armstrong & Taylor, 2017). The concept of reward management involves various elements, including financial and non-financial rewards, recognition, and incentives, which are designed to recognize and reinforce desired employee behavior and performance. It aims to ensure that employees are fairly compensated for their contributions and achievements while promoting a sense of equity, engagement, and satisfaction within the workforce.

Key components of reward management include:

Compensation: This involves the monetary aspect of rewards, including base salary, bonuses, commissions, and other financial incentives. Compensation is typically structured based on factors such as job responsibilities, skills, experience, and market benchmarks to ensure competitiveness and fairness; **Benefits:** These are non-monetary rewards provided to employees, such as health insurance, retirement plans, paid time off, flexible work arrangements, and other perks. Benefits play a crucial role in attracting and retaining talent and enhancing employee well-being; **Recognition:** This refers to acknowledging and appreciating employees' efforts, achievements, and behaviors that align with organizational goals and values. Recognition can take various forms, including verbal praise, certificates, awards, public acknowledgment, or opportunities for career development; **Incentives:** Incentive programs are designed to motivate and reward employees for achieving specific targets, milestones, or performance goals. Examples include performance-based bonuses, profit-sharing schemes, sales commissions, and stock options. Incentives provide additional motivation for employees to excel and contribute to organizational success; **Performance Management:** Reward management is closely linked to performance management systems. It involves setting clear performance expectations, regularly assessing performance, providing constructive feedback, and linking performance outcomes to appropriate rewards (Lawler & Worley, 2019). Performance management helps identify high performers, address under performance, and ensure fairness and objectivity in the reward process; **Pay Equity:** Reward management also focuses on ensuring pay equity within the organization. This involves conducting regular pay reviews, analyzing pay structures, and addressing any gender or diversity pay gaps to promote fairness and minimize potential discrimination (World Bank, 2019). Effective reward management requires organizations to align their reward strategies with their overall business objectives, culture, and values. It should be transparent, consistent, and flexible to adapt to changing circumstances and employee needs. Regular evaluation and feedback mechanisms help assess the effectiveness of reward programs and make necessary adjustments to optimize their impact on employee motivation, engagement, and retention (Lawler & Boudreau, 2018).

Importance of Reward Management Systems in the Civil Service

Reward management systems play a crucial role in the civil service for several reasons. Here are some key points highlighting the importance of reward management systems:

Attracting and Retaining Talent: Reward management systems help attract skilled and competent individuals to the civil service by offering competitive compensation packages. In a highly competitive job market, attractive rewards such as competitive salaries, benefits, and incentives can make the civil service more appealing to potential employees. Furthermore, effective reward systems can help retain talented individuals by recognizing their contributions and providing opportunities for career growth (Becker & Huselid, 2017).

Motivating and Engaging Employees: In the words of Purcell & Hutchinson (2007). Reward management systems contribute to motivating civil service employees and driving their performance. By linking rewards to performance and achievement of objectives, these systems create a sense of purpose and incentivize employees to perform at their best. When

employees see a clear connection between their efforts and the rewards they receive, they are more likely to be engaged, productive, and committed to their work.

Recognizing and Rewarding Excellence: On their parts, Bae, Rowley & Jung (2014) argued that reward management systems enable the civil service to recognize and reward exceptional performance, thereby fostering a culture of excellence. By implementing fair and transparent systems that acknowledge and appreciate outstanding work, civil service organizations can encourage employees to strive for excellence and continuously improve their performance. Recognition can take various forms, such as financial bonuses, promotions, awards, or public acknowledgment.

Enhancing Organizational Performance: Garg & Rastogi (2019), posited that a well-designed reward management systems align individual and team goals with organizational objectives. By setting clear performance targets and providing appropriate rewards, these systems promote a collective effort towards achieving organizational goals. When employees feel valued and adequately rewarded for their contributions, they are more likely to be committed to the organization's success, leading to improved overall performance.

Improving Employee Satisfaction and Well-being: Garg & Rastogi (2019) continued by asserting that reward management systems that offer fair and competitive compensation and benefits contribute to employee satisfaction and well-being. When employees feel fairly compensated for their work, they are more likely to experience job satisfaction and have a positive attitude towards their organization. Adequate rewards also address financial needs and provide a sense of security, reducing stress and improving the overall well-being of civil service employees. It is in this regard, Erude et al (2023) opines, deliberate investment on training of employees by management should be a topnotch priority.

Fostering Equity and Transparency: Coff (2014), on his part aver that reward management systems help ensure fairness and transparency in the civil service. By establishing clear guidelines and criteria for reward allocation, organizations can minimize biases and favoritism, promoting an equitable work environment. Transparent reward systems also provide employees with a clear understanding of how their performance and contributions are evaluated, creating trust and confidence in the organization.

In summary, reward management systems are essential in the civil service as they attract and retain talent, motivate employees, recognize excellence, enhance organizational performance, improve employee satisfaction and well-being, and foster equity and transparency. By implementing effective reward systems, civil service organizations can create a conducive work environment that supports employee engagement, productivity, and overall organizational success.

Theoretical Framework

This paper adopted the expectancy theory. The expectancy theory is a motivation theory that suggests that individuals are motivated to act in a certain way based on their expectation of achieving a desired outcome. According to this theory, an individual's level of motivation is a function of three key factors: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Expectancy refers to an individual's belief that their effort will result in a desired level of performance. Instrumentality refers to an individual's belief that achieving a certain level of performance will result in a desired outcome, such as a reward or recognition. Valence refers to an individual's perceived value or importance of the outcome. One of the strengths of the expectancy theory is that it provides a useful framework for understanding the complex relationship between motivation and behavior. It emphasizes the importance of individual perceptions and beliefs in shaping behavior, which is a valuable insight for managers and

leaders who are trying to motivate employees. However, the expectancy theory has also been criticized for several reasons. First, the theory assumes that individuals are rational and logical decision-makers who are able to accurately assess the probability of success and the value of outcomes. In reality, individuals may be influenced by a variety of factors, such as emotions, biases, and external pressures, which can affect their motivation and decision-making. Second, the theory does not account for the social and cultural context in which individuals operate. People's expectations, beliefs, and values are shaped by the social and cultural norms of their environment, and these factors can have a significant impact on their motivation and behavior. Finally, the theory has been criticized for its narrow focus on extrinsic motivation, such as rewards and recognition. While extrinsic motivators can be effective in certain situations, research has shown that intrinsic motivators, such as a sense of purpose, autonomy, and mastery, can also play a critical role in shaping behavior. In conclusion, the expectancy theory is a useful framework for understanding the relationship between motivation and behavior, but it has its limitations. To fully understand the complex nature of motivation, it is important to consider a wide range of factors, including individual perceptions and beliefs, social and cultural context, and both extrinsic and intrinsic motivators. Despite this shortcomings, the expectancy theory offers a more objective and relatable foundation to understanding the relationship between motivation and employee commitment.

As a motivational theory expectancy theory gives insight into how individuals make decisions about the effort they will put into a task or activity. The theory suggests that an individual's motivation is based on their beliefs about the relationship between effort, performance, and rewards. The theory asserts that people are more likely to be motivated when they believe that their efforts will lead to good performance, and good performance will lead to rewards.

In the context of designing an effective reward management system for enhancing performance in the Civil Service, the expectancy theory can be applied to explain how the reward management system is used to motivate employees. Reward management is the process of creating and implementing a system of rewards and incentives that motivate employees to perform better. In the Civil Service, the reward management system is used to motivate employees to achieve the goals of the government and to improve their job performance. Expectancy theory proposes that individuals make decisions based on three key factors: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Expectancy is the belief that an individual's efforts will lead to improved performance. Instrumentality is the belief that improved performance will lead to rewards, and valence is the value an individual places on those rewards.

In the Civil Service, the reward management system is designed to ensure that employees perceive a strong link between their effort, performance, and rewards. The reward management system is based on a number of factors that are intended to motivate employees and improve their job performance. These factors include: **Performance Appraisal:** The performance appraisal system is used to evaluate the performance of employees. The performance appraisal system provides feedback to employees about their performance and identifies areas where they can improve. This feedback helps employees to understand the relationship between their effort and their performance. **Incentives and Bonuses:** Incentives and bonuses are used to reward employees for good performance. These rewards are based on the performance appraisal system and are designed to encourage employees to improve their performance. **Training and Development:** Training and development programs are provided

to employees to improve their skills and knowledge. These programs help employees to perform better, which can lead to better performance appraisal scores and rewards. **Recognition:** Recognition is an important aspect of the reward management system. Employees who perform well are recognized for their achievements. Recognition can take the form of awards, certificates, or public acknowledgment. **Career Development:** Career development is an important part of the reward management system. Employees who perform well are given opportunities for career advancement. This can include promotions, transfers, or opportunities to take on new challenges.

Expectancy, instrumentality, and valence are three key variables of motivation and are used to explain how rewards management systems function within organizations. The Nigerian civil service is no exception, and these variables can be used to explain how the rewards management system works in this organization. Expectancy refers to the belief that an employee's efforts will lead to high performance. In the civil service, if an employee believes that their efforts will result in high performance, they are more likely to be motivated to work hard. For example, if an employee believes that their hard work will lead to a promotion or a pay raise, they are more likely to put in extra effort to achieve their goals. Instrumentality refers to the belief that high performance will lead to rewards. If employees believe that their high performance will lead to rewards, they will be more motivated to work hard. For example, if an employee believes that their high performance will result in a bonus or a promotion, they are more likely to be motivated to perform at a high level. Valence refers to the value an employee places on the rewards offered by the organization. If employees value the rewards offered, they will be more motivated to work hard to achieve them. For example, if an employee values a pay raise, they will be more motivated to work hard to earn one. The rewards management system in the civil service is designed to take these variables into consideration. The system is designed to ensure that employees believe that their efforts will lead to high performance, that high performance will lead to rewards, and that the rewards offered are valued by employees. The system offers a range of rewards, including promotions, pay raises, bonuses, and recognition. These rewards are designed to motivate employees to work hard and perform at a high level. Overall, the rewards management system in the Nigerian civil service is designed to motivate employees by taking into consideration the variables of expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. By offering rewards that are valued by employees and are tied to high performance, the system is designed to motivate employees to work hard and perform at a high level, ultimately leading to improved organizational performance.

Discussing the Relationship Between Rewards and Employee Performance

The relationship between rewards and employee performance is a complex and multifaceted topic that has been extensively studied in the field of organizational behavior and human resource management. Rewards, in the context of this discussion, refer to the various forms of compensation, recognition, and incentives that employees receive from their employers in exchange for their work and contribution to the organization (Gupta & Shaw, 2014). Employee performance, on the other hand, refers to the level of productivity, efficiency, effectiveness, and overall job-related outcomes demonstrated by an employee.

While the relationship between rewards and employee performance is not linear or universally applicable to all individuals or organizations, there are several key factors and dynamics that influence their connection. Let's explore these factors in more detail: **Motivation:** Rewards play a crucial role in motivating employees to perform at their best. They serve as incentives that can satisfy both intrinsic and extrinsic needs. Intrinsic

motivation arises from factors such as a sense of accomplishment, personal growth, and enjoyment of the work itself. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is driven by external factors such as pay, bonuses, promotions, and recognition (Gupta & Shaw, 2014). Rewards can enhance motivation by providing tangible and intangible benefits that employees value. According to expectancy theory, employees' performance is influenced by their belief that effort will lead to high performance and that high performance will result in rewards. This theory suggests that employees are more likely to exert effort and perform well when they believe their efforts will be recognized and rewarded appropriately (Boxall, 2015). Thus, rewards can positively impact employee performance by strengthening the link between effort, performance, and outcomes. More so, Ini (2014), while deducing from the equity theory holds that rewards and workers performance is strongly link to how workers (civil servants) equate their efforts with rewards. He noted that employees compare their inputs (e.g., effort, skills) and outcomes (e.g., rewards, recognition) to those of others. Employees strive for fairness and perceive inequity when they believe their inputs and outcomes are imbalanced compared to their peers. Rewards that are perceived as fair and equitable can contribute to higher employee performance by fostering a sense of justice, satisfaction, and commitment. Omale (2017) also aver that rewards that are directly tied to performance can have a significant impact on employee performance. Performance-contingent rewards, such as bonuses or merit-based pay, provide a clear link between individual effort and outcomes. When employees perceive a strong connection between their performance and the rewards they receive, they are more likely to exert greater effort and strive for higher levels of performance. While extrinsic rewards are often emphasized, it is important to recognize the role of intrinsic rewards in influencing employee performance. Intrinsic rewards refer to the internal satisfaction and psychological benefits that individuals derive from engaging in meaningful and fulfilling work. Factors such as autonomy, skill development, feedback, and a sense of purpose can enhance intrinsic motivation and ultimately contribute to improved performance (Lean, 2020).

Chidera (2016) on his part believes that the impact of rewards on employee performance can vary based on individual differences. Different employees have unique needs, preferences, and motivations. Some individuals may value monetary rewards more, while others may prioritize recognition, career advancement opportunities, or work-life balance. Understanding and catering to these individual differences is important to design effective reward systems that positively influence performance. Discussing further Eze (2019) posits that context and organizational culture is a key factor that shape the impacts of rewards on performance. In his words, the organizational context and culture play a vital role in shaping the relationship between rewards and employee performance. Organizations with a supportive culture that promotes performance-based rewards and recognizes high achievers are more likely to experience positive outcomes. Additionally, the perceived fairness, transparency, and consistency of reward systems contribute to their effectiveness in driving performance. In all, it is important to note that while rewards can be a powerful tool to enhance employee performance, they are not a one-size-fits-all solution. Factors such as job design, leadership, feedback, and training also significantly influence employee performance. A comprehensive approach that considers multiple factors and aligns

Strategies for Designing an Effective Reward Management System and Alignment with Organizational Goals

Zingheim (2010), aver that aligning the reward management system with organizational goals is crucial for its effectiveness. He went on to outline some strategies to achieve this alignment:

Clearly Define Organizational Goals: Begin by clearly defining the organizational goals. This includes understanding the company's mission, vision, and strategic objectives. By having a clear understanding of what the organization wants to achieve, you can align the reward management system to support these goals.

Identify Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Determine the key performance indicators that directly contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. These could include financial metrics, customer satisfaction ratings, employee productivity, innovation, or any other relevant measures. KPIs help focus the reward system on the most critical areas of performance.

Link Rewards to Performance: Design the reward system to directly link rewards with performance. This can be done by setting clear performance expectations and establishing measurable criteria for evaluating individual or team performance. Rewards should be tied to the achievement of these performance targets.

Differentiate Rewards: Differentiate rewards based on performance levels. By offering different levels of rewards based on performance outcomes, you encourage employees to strive for higher levels of achievement. This can be done through a tiered reward structure, where higher performance levels receive greater rewards.

Provide Variable Rewards: Incorporate variable or performance-based rewards rather than relying solely on fixed compensation. This can include bonuses, profit-sharing, or incentive programs tied to individual, team, or company-wide performance. Variable rewards provide motivation for employees to continuously improve their performance.

Communicate the Connection: Clearly communicate to employees how the reward management system aligns with organizational goals. Explain how their performance directly contributes to the overall success of the organization and how the reward system is designed to recognize and reward their contributions.

Regularly Review and Update: Continuously review and update the reward management system to ensure it remains aligned with evolving organizational goals. As the business landscape changes, so do the goals and priorities. Regularly assess the effectiveness of the reward system and make necessary adjustments to keep it in line with the organizational objectives.

In conclusion, its is important to remember that an effective reward management system is not a one-size-fits-all approach. It should be tailored to your organization's unique needs and objectives. Regularly assess the system's effectiveness and gather feedback from employees to make continuous improvements and ensure alignment with organizational goals.

The Role of Financial Rewards in Enhancing Performance in the Nigerian Civil Service

Financial rewards play a significant role in enhancing performance in the Nigerian Civil Service. The civil service is a critical sector that provides essential services to the government and the general public. Motivating civil servants through financial rewards can lead to increased productivity, improved service delivery, and overall organizational effectiveness. Here are some ways in which financial rewards contribute to enhancing performance in the Nigerian Civil Service:

Motivation and Incentives: Redman, Snape & Ashurst (2013) was of the opinion that financial rewards serve as a motivator for civil servants to perform better. When employees see a direct correlation between their performance and the rewards they receive, they are

more likely to be motivated to put in their best effort. Financial incentives can take the form of salary increases, bonuses, allowances, or performance-based pay, which create a sense of accomplishment and encourage employees to excel.

Attracting and Retaining Talent: Offering competitive financial rewards helps attract and retain talented individuals in the civil service. In a highly competitive job market, competitive salaries and benefits are crucial for attracting qualified professionals (Redman, Snape & Ashurst, 2013). When the civil service offers attractive financial packages, it becomes more appealing to prospective employees, ensuring a larger pool of competent candidates to choose from.

Improved Job Satisfaction: Financial rewards contribute to enhanced job satisfaction among civil servants. When employees feel that they are fairly compensated for their efforts and contributions, they are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs. This satisfaction translates into higher morale, increased loyalty, and reduced turnover rates, creating a more stable and productive workforce (Redman, Snape & Ashurst, 2013).

Performance-Based Culture: Udechukwu (2015) further aver that financial rewards based on performance foster a culture of accountability and meritocracy within the civil service. By linking rewards to individual or team achievements, it encourages employees to set goals, take ownership of their work, and strive for excellence. This can lead to a more results-oriented environment, where employees are continuously motivated to improve their performance.

Increased Productivity and Efficiency: Financial rewards incentivize civil servants to be more productive and efficient in their work. When employees know that their efforts will be recognized and rewarded, they are more likely to prioritize their tasks, meet deadlines, and seek innovative ways to improve their performance. This, in turn, leads to better service delivery and higher overall productivity within the civil service (Udechukwu, 2015).

Employee Engagement and Commitment: Financial rewards contribute to higher levels of employee engagement and commitment. When employees feel valued and adequately rewarded, they develop a stronger sense of commitment to their organization's goals and objectives. Engaged employees are more likely to go above and beyond their job requirements, contributing to the overall success of the civil service.

While financial rewards are important, it is essential to consider other non-monetary factors that can also enhance performance, such as providing training and development opportunities, ensuring a supportive work environment, and recognizing employees' achievements through non-financial means like public recognition and career advancement. A holistic approach that combines financial rewards with other motivational strategies can yield the best results in enhancing performance within the Nigerian Civil Service.

The Role of Non-Financial Rewards in Enhancing Performance in the Nigerian Civil Service

Non-financial rewards play a crucial role in enhancing performance in the Nigerian Civil Service. Lawler (2019) on his part argued that while financial incentives such as salaries and bonuses are important, they are not the sole determinants of employee motivation and performance. Non-financial rewards help to create a positive work environment, foster employee engagement, and promote job satisfaction, leading to improved performance. According to Udechukwu (2015), Here are some key ways non-financial rewards enhance performance in the Nigerian Civil Service:

Recognition and appreciation: Acknowledging and appreciating employees' efforts and achievements through verbal praise, certificates, or public recognition ceremonies can boost

their morale and motivation. Recognizing employees' contributions enhances their sense of belonging, encourages them to perform better, and increases their commitment to their work.

Career development opportunities: Providing opportunities for training, professional development, and career advancement demonstrates that the organization values employees' growth. Offering workshops, seminars, and mentoring programs allows civil servants to enhance their skills and knowledge, leading to increased productivity and improved performance.

Challenging and meaningful work: Assigning employees tasks that are intellectually stimulating and align with their skills and interests can enhance their job satisfaction and motivation. When civil servants find their work challenging and meaningful, they are more likely to be engaged and perform at a higher level.

Work-life balance initiatives: Encouraging work-life balance through flexible work arrangements, family-friendly policies, and wellness programs can contribute to employee well-being and job satisfaction. When employees feel supported in maintaining a healthy work-life balance, they are more likely to be motivated and productive in their roles.

Employee empowerment and participation: Involving employees in decision-making processes, seeking their input, and giving them autonomy and responsibility can have a positive impact on their motivation and performance. When civil servants feel empowered and have a voice in shaping their work environment, they are more likely to be engaged, committed, and proactive.

Team building and social activities: Organizing team-building exercises, social events, and employee engagement activities can foster a sense of camaraderie and strengthen relationships among civil servants. Positive relationships and a supportive work culture can contribute to improved teamwork, collaboration, and overall performance.

Public recognition and awards: Recognizing outstanding performance through public announcements, awards, or honors can be a powerful motivator. This not only boosts the morale of the individual receiving the recognition but also inspires others to strive for excellence.

To Udechukwu (2015), effectively enhance performance through non-financial rewards, it is crucial for the Nigerian Civil Service to ensure that these rewards are implemented consistently, transparently, and fairly. Regular communication, feedback mechanisms, and performance evaluations are essential for assessing employees' progress, identifying areas for improvement, and determining the appropriate non-financial rewards to be implemented. Overall, non-financial rewards can significantly contribute to enhancing performance in the Nigerian Civil Service by fostering motivation, job satisfaction, and employee engagement. By creating a positive work environment and addressing the intrinsic needs of civil servants, these rewards can help build a highly productive and efficient workforce.

Key Components of an Effective Reward Management System

In the Nigerian civil service, an effective reward management system is crucial for attracting, motivating, and retaining talented employees. It involves a range of key components that contribute to the overall success of the system. Here are some important elements: An effective reward management system is essential for attracting, motivating, and retaining talented employees within an organization. It helps create a positive work environment and encourages high performance. Here are the key components of an effective reward management system according to Klein, Polin & LePine (2016):

Clear Objectives: The system should have clearly defined objectives that align with the organization's overall goals. These objectives could include attracting top talent, motivating performance, promoting teamwork, and fostering employee engagement.

Competitive Compensation: Competitive and fair compensation is crucial to attract and retain talented employees. The system should ensure that employees are paid a salary or wage that is commensurate with their skills, experience, and market rates. This includes both base pay and variable pay components like bonuses or incentives.

Performance-Based Rewards: Rewards should be tied to individual and team performance. Establishing performance metrics and linking them to rewards creates a culture of meritocracy and motivates employees to strive for excellence. Performance-based rewards can include bonuses, commissions, profit-sharing, or performance-based pay increases.

Recognition and Appreciation: Alongside financial rewards, non-monetary recognition and appreciation play a significant role in an effective reward management system. Acknowledging and rewarding employees' efforts and achievements through verbal praise, certificates, public recognition, or employee of the month programs helps reinforce positive behavior and boosts morale.

Employee Benefits: A comprehensive benefits package is an important component of a reward management system. It includes health insurance, retirement plans, paid time off, flexible working arrangements, wellness programs, and other perks that enhance employees' work-life balance and well-being. Orimuo et al (2023), sees training of employees, as another way of rewarding them. In that regard, organizations must always come up with strategic training programmes that would enhance efficiency cum performance, whilst on-the-job (Orimuo et al, 2023).

Career Development Opportunities: Employees value opportunities for growth and advancement. A reward management system should incorporate provisions for career development, such as training programs, mentorship initiatives, promotions, and internal job postings. These opportunities not only reward employees' performance but also contribute to their long-term engagement and loyalty. In the opinion of Okereka (2015), human resources development is very vital to organizational success, and it can be carried out on a national scale.

Communication and Transparency: The system should be transparent, with clear communication regarding the reward structure, eligibility criteria, and performance expectations. Employees should understand how rewards are determined and what they need to do to earn them. Regular feedback and performance discussions also help align employees' efforts with the organization's objectives.

Regular Review and Evaluation: An effective reward management system requires periodic review and evaluation. This includes assessing the system's effectiveness in achieving its objectives, evaluating the fairness and competitiveness of compensation packages, and making necessary adjustments based on market trends and internal feedback.

Legal and Ethical Compliance: The system should comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and ethical standards. It should adhere to equal pay principles, avoid discriminatory practices, and ensure that rewards are distributed fairly and transparently.

Flexibility and Customization: Different employees have varying preferences and motivations. An effective reward management system allows for some flexibility and customization to accommodate diverse needs and preferences. This may involve tailoring rewards to individual preferences, offering flexible benefit options, or providing opportunities for employees to choose their preferred rewards. By incorporating these key components,

organizations can establish an effective reward management system that promotes employee satisfaction, engagement, and long-term success.

While the above discussed points in the opinion of Klein, Polin & LePine. (2016), points to an ideal situation, the peculiar nature and character of the Nigerian civil service speaks a discordant tunes. The reality in Nigeria is that the Nigerian civil service faces several challenges when it comes to implementing an effective reward management system. These challenges according to Udechukwu (2015) have significantly hinder the overall effectiveness of the system and impact the motivation and productivity of civil servants. Let's discuss these challenges in detail:

Limited funding: One of the major challenges is the limited financial resources available for the civil service. The government's budgetary constraints often restrict the allocation of funds for reward programs. This limitation hampers the ability to provide competitive salaries, benefits, and incentives to attract and retain skilled professionals. Insufficient funding undermines the effectiveness of the reward management system and can lead to demotivation among civil servants.

Inadequate performance measurement: Another challenge is the absence of a robust performance measurement framework. Without proper performance metrics and evaluation criteria, it becomes difficult to objectively assess employees' contributions and link them to rewards. The lack of clear performance indicators may result in favoritism, bias, and subjectivity in reward allocation, leading to dissatisfaction and demoralization among civil servants.

Lack of transparency and fairness: Transparency and fairness in the reward management system are crucial for building trust and motivating employees. However, in the Nigerian civil service, there is often a lack of transparency in reward allocation processes. This opacity gives rise to perceptions of favoritism, nepotism, and corruption. When employees perceive the system as unfair, it diminishes their motivation, job satisfaction, and overall performance.

Bureaucracy and red tape: The bureaucratic structure and complex administrative procedures in the Nigerian civil service pose significant challenges to effective reward management. Lengthy approval processes, delays in decision-making, and excessive red tape can hinder the timely implementation of reward policies and practices. Such bureaucratic hurdles can frustrate employees and demotivate them, negatively impacting their performance and commitment to their work.

Resistance to change: Implementing an effective reward management system requires a change in the organizational culture and mindset. However, resistance to change is often encountered in the Nigerian civil service due to deep-rooted traditions, resistance from influential stakeholders, and a fear of disrupting the status quo. Overcoming this resistance and fostering a culture that values performance-based rewards can be a significant challenge.

Lack of capacity and expertise: The successful implementation of a reward management system requires skilled human resources professionals who can design, implement, and administer the system effectively. However, the Nigerian civil service often faces a shortage of trained HR personnel with the necessary expertise in reward management practices. This dearth of capacity can undermine the effectiveness of the system and hinder its successful implementation.

Complex organizational structure: The Nigerian civil service is characterized by a complex organizational structure, with multiple tiers, departments, and agencies. This complexity makes it challenging to develop a unified and standardized reward management system across the entire civil service. Harmonizing reward practices and ensuring consistency

becomes a daunting task due to variations in job roles, levels of responsibility, and reporting structures.

Lack of employee engagement: Engaging civil servants in the design and development of the reward management system is crucial for its success. However, in the Nigerian civil service, employees are often excluded from decision-making processes, and their input and feedback are not adequately considered. This lack of employee engagement can result in a disconnect between the reward system and the actual needs and expectations of civil servants.

Current Challenges in the Nigerian Civil Service Reward Management System

The Nigerian Civil Service, like many other civil service systems around the world, faces several challenges in its reward management system. These challenges stem from various factors such as outdated policies, inadequate funding, bureaucratic bottlenecks, and limited transparency. Here are some current challenges in the Nigerian Civil Service reward management system:

Inequitable Remuneration: One of the major challenges is the inequitable remuneration structure. There is often a significant disparity in salary scales and benefits among civil servants, with some earning significantly higher salaries than others in similar positions. This inequity not only breeds discontent and demotivation among employees but also hinders productivity and fosters corruption (Kauhanen, Napari & Böckerman, 2018).

Limited Merit-Based Promotion: Udechukwu (2015) again aver that the promotion process in the Nigerian Civil Service is often plagued by favoritism, nepotism, and political interference. Merit-based promotion, which should reward employees based on their performance, skills, and experience, is not consistently followed. This creates a demoralizing work environment, decreases motivation, and hampers the retention of talented individuals.

Inadequate Performance Evaluation: The lack of an effective and standardized performance evaluation system is a significant challenge. The absence of objective criteria and performance metrics makes it difficult to assess and reward civil servants based on their contributions and achievements. Without proper evaluation, it becomes challenging to identify high-performing employees and provide them with appropriate incentives (Olafsen, Halvari, Forest & Deci, 2015).

Lack of Training and Development Opportunities: The Nigerian Civil Service often lacks comprehensive training and development programs for its employees. Limited investment in capacity building leads to a lack of skill development, which affects the overall performance of civil servants (Udechukwu 2015). Without continuous learning opportunities, employees may become stagnant in their careers, resulting in reduced motivation and decreased productivity.

Inefficient and Delayed Salary Payments: Delayed salary payments have been a recurring issue in the Nigerian Civil Service. Some civil servants, especially at lower levels, experience significant delays in receiving their salaries and benefits. This not only creates financial hardships for employees but also contributes to low morale and decreased productivity (Tongo, 2015).

Corruption and Mismanagement: Corruption remains a pervasive challenge in the Nigerian Civil Service reward management system. The misappropriation of funds, bribery, and embezzlement undermine the fairness and integrity of the system. These corrupt practices erode trust, discourage honest and hardworking civil servants, and perpetuate a culture of unethical behavior (Osibanjo, Pavithra & Adeniji, 2014).

Lack of Transparency and Accountability: Osibanjo, Pavithra & Adeniji, (2014) further stated that the lack of transparency in the reward management system further exacerbates the challenges. Civil servants often do not have access to information regarding the criteria for rewards, salary scales, and performance evaluations. This lack of transparency breeds mistrust, encourages favoritism, and impedes efforts to address issues of inequity and corruption.

Bureaucratic Processes: Cumbersome bureaucratic processes and excessive red tape can impede the effective implementation of the reward management system. Delays in approving promotions, salary increments, and other rewards can create frustration among civil servants. Simplifying administrative procedures and streamlining processes would help alleviate these challenges.

Inadequate Performance Recognition: There is often a lack of proper recognition for outstanding performance within the Nigerian Civil Service. A culture of appreciation and acknowledgment for employees' achievements is essential for motivating and retaining talented individuals. Without sufficient recognition mechanisms, employees may feel undervalued, leading to decreased productivity and engagement.

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach. The Nigerian government should consider implementing reforms that focus on enhancing compensation packages, establishing transparent and merit-based reward systems, implementing performance evaluation mechanisms, investing in employee training and development, simplifying bureaucratic processes, promoting a culture of recognition, and taking strict measures to curb corruption and fraud. These actions can help create a more effective and efficient reward management system within the Nigerian Civil Service.

Designing a performance-based reward structure for the Nigerian Civil Service

Designing a performance-based reward structure for the Nigerian Civil Service requires careful consideration of several factors. Here's a step-by-step approach to help you create an effective performance-based reward system:

Define Performance Metrics: Cameron, & Pierce (2017), start by identifying key performance indicators (KPIs) that align with the objectives of the Nigerian Civil Service. These metrics should be measurable, objective, and reflect the core responsibilities of civil servants, such as productivity, efficiency, quality of work, innovation, and customer service.

Establish Performance Targets: Set clear performance targets for each metric, based on realistic expectations and the desired level of performance. Targets should be challenging but attainable, taking into account the varying roles and responsibilities within the Civil Service.

Differentiate Performance Levels: Create a tiered performance rating system to differentiate employees based on their performance levels. For example, you could establish performance levels such as "Outstanding," "Exceeds Expectations," "Meets Expectations," and "Needs Improvement." This allows for fair and transparent assessment of individual performance.

Link Rewards to Performance: Determine the types of rewards that will be offered for achieving or surpassing performance targets. Rewards can include financial incentives, promotions, recognition, training opportunities, additional time off, or other non-monetary benefits. Ensure that the rewards are meaningful, relevant, and motivate employees to perform at their best.

Allocate Budget: Determine the budget available for performance-based rewards. It's important to allocate resources in a way that reflects the value placed on employee performance and ensures sustainability of the reward structure.

Communicate Expectations: Clearly communicate the performance metrics, targets, and reward structure to all civil servants. Ensure that employees understand how their performance will be assessed, how rewards will be determined, and the overall benefits of the system. This transparency helps create a culture of accountability and fairness.

Regular Performance Evaluation: Implement a regular performance evaluation process to assess employee performance against the defined metrics. This can be done through annual or bi-annual performance reviews, ongoing feedback, or a combination of both. Timely and constructive feedback is crucial for continuous improvement.

Review and Adjust: Regularly review the performance-based reward structure to ensure its effectiveness and make necessary adjustments. Solicit feedback from employees and managers to identify any shortcomings or areas for improvement. Flexibility and adaptability are key to maintaining a relevant and motivating reward system.

Training and Development: Invest in training and development programs to enhance employee skills and competencies. By providing opportunities for growth, you can further incentivize performance improvement and career progression.

Monitor and Evaluate: Continuously monitor the outcomes and impact of the performance-based reward structure. Track performance trends, employee satisfaction, retention rates, and overall organizational performance to assess the effectiveness of the system and make data-driven decisions for improvement.

Remember that the success of a performance-based reward structure lies in its fairness, objectivity, and alignment with organizational goals. Regularly assess and refine the system to ensure it remains relevant and motivational for civil servants in the Nigerian Civil Service.

Strategies for fair and transparent reward allocation in the Nigerian Civil Service

According to Cerasoli, Nicklin & Ford (2014), ensuring fair and transparent reward allocation in the Nigerian Civil Service is crucial for promoting employee motivation, job satisfaction, and organizational effectiveness. Here are some strategies that can help achieve this: **Clear and Objective Performance Evaluation:** Establish a well-defined performance evaluation system that is based on measurable criteria and standardized performance indicators. This system according to Maertz, Griffeth, Campbell & Allen (2014), should be communicated to all employees, ensuring transparency and fairness in assessing their performance; **Regular Performance Feedback:** Provide regular feedback to employees on their performance, highlighting their strengths and areas for improvement. This feedback should be constructive, specific, and tied to the established performance criteria. Regular feedback sessions can help employees understand how their performance aligns with the organizational goals and expectations; **Merit-Based Promotions:** Implement a merit-based promotion system that rewards employees based on their performance, skills, and qualifications rather than favoritism or nepotism. According to Deci & Ryan. (2014), the criteria for promotion should be clearly define and ensure that the process is transparent, inclusive, and based on objective evaluations; **Transparent Reward Structure:** Establish a transparent reward structure that clearly outlines the criteria for various rewards, such as salary increases, bonuses, and recognition. Ensure that employees understand how rewards are determined and provide avenues for them to seek clarification or challenge reward decisions if necessary; **Employee Participation:** Involve employees in the reward allocation process by seeking their input and feedback. This can be done through employee surveys, suggestion boxes, or regular meetings. Creating a culture of open communication and employee involvement helps in ensuring fairness and transparency in reward allocation. **Training and Development Opportunities:** Provide employees with opportunities for

training, skill development, and career advancement. Transparently communicate these opportunities and ensure they are accessible to all employees based on their abilities and potential. This helps in nurturing a sense of fairness and providing equal growth opportunities (Deci & Ryan, 2014); **Regular Audits and Oversight:** Cameron & Pierce (2017), also suggest that regular audits and evaluations of the reward allocation process to identify any discrepancies or biases should be conducted. Independent oversight can help ensure adherence to the established policies and procedures, promoting transparency and fairness; **Ethical Leadership:** to ensure a fair reward system, Cameron & Pierce (2017) also suggest the need to foster a culture of ethical leadership within the civil service by setting a good example. Leaders should demonstrate integrity, fairness, and transparency in decision-making processes, which will trickle down to the rest of the organization; **Whistleblower Protection:** Osibanjo, Pavithra & Adeniji (2014), also suggest the need to establish mechanisms to protect whistleblowers who report any malpractices or unfair reward allocation. Encourage employees to come forward with concerns or information without fear of retaliation. **Continuous Improvement:** Regularly review and refine the reward allocation strategies based on feedback, evaluation results, and best practices. It is important to adapt to changing circumstances and ensure that the reward allocation system remains fair and transparent over time.

Implementing these strategies can help promote fairness, transparency, and accountability in reward allocation within the Nigerian Civil Service, ultimately contributing to a more motivated and effective workforce.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The nature of the rewards management system in the Nigerian civil service plays a crucial role in motivating employees and enhancing their performance. A well-designed rewards management system encompasses various aspects, including financial incentives, recognition, career development opportunities, and a supportive work environment. An effective rewards management system in the Nigerian civil service should encompass financial and non-financial incentives, career development opportunities, performance management, employee engagement, transparency, and continuous evaluation. By implementing these strategies, the performance and productivity of employees can be enhanced, leading to a more efficient and effective civil service. By analyzing the existing challenges and implementing effective strategies, it is possible to enhance performance in the Nigerian civil service. The following recommendations is therefore outlined for this paper.

- i. **Financial Incentives:** Monetary rewards such as competitive salaries, bonuses, and allowances are vital in attracting and retaining talented individuals. A fair and transparent compensation structure based on job evaluation and market rates can motivate employees to perform better.
- ii. **Recognition and Non-Financial Rewards:** Acknowledging employees' achievements and contributions through non-financial rewards like public appreciation, certificates, or employee of the month programs can significantly boost morale and encourage better performance.
- iii. **Career Development Opportunities:** Establishing a structured career development framework that includes training, mentoring, and promotion avenues can enhance employee performance. Providing opportunities for skill enhancement and personal growth ensures a competent and motivated workforce.

- iv. Performance Management: Implementing a robust performance management system that sets clear performance expectations, monitors progress, and provides regular feedback can help employees understand their strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. This system can also identify high performers and provide them with appropriate rewards and recognition.
- v. Employee Engagement and Work-Life Balance: Creating a positive work environment with open communication, employee involvement in decision-making, and work-life balance initiatives can improve employee satisfaction and performance. Ensuring a healthy work-life balance enables employees to focus better on their tasks and reduces burnout.
- vi. Meritocracy and Transparency: Promoting a culture of meritocracy where promotions, rewards, and career advancement are based on performance, skills, and qualifications fosters a sense of fairness and encourages employees to strive for excellence. Transparent processes in rewards management build trust and confidence among employees.
- vii. Continuous Evaluation and Improvement: Regularly reviewing the rewards management system to assess its effectiveness, identifying areas for improvement, and adapting to changing needs and expectations can ensure long-term success. Gathering feedback from employees and incorporating their suggestions can lead to a more relevant and impactful rewards system.

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