WORK PLACE INCENTIVE AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG STAFF OF ADAMAWA STATE UNIVERSITY, MUBI FROM 2014 - 2025

ABRAHAM P. DONATUS
Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Communication and Media Studies, Adamawa State University, Mubi
pkdonatus2024@gmail.com

ROGERS ROLAND WAZAKARI
Department of Political Science, Bayero University Kano-Nigeria
rogersrolandwazakari@gmail.com

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Keywords

Working Environment, Public University, Academic Staff, Job Satisfaction, Incentives.

Abstract

Research Problem: *Staff motivation and work satisfaction at Nigerian public universities are significantly influenced by incentives. However, schools like Adamawa State University, Mubi (ADSU) have the problem of poor, inconsistent and unfair incentive programs which influence staff morale and performance.*
Methods/Theory: *The study was guided by Herzberg's Two Factor Theory Expectancy Theory and Equity Theory. A descriptive survey design was employed with a population of 724 academic and non-academic staff. The stratified sample and Taro Yamane algorithm were used to choose 258 respondents. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and evaluated using descriptive statistics.*
Results: *The results showed that some of the workplace incentives i.e salary, allowances and training possibilities were supplied at a modest level and positively appraised. Training and professional development earned the highest marks whereas recognition, promotion transparency and reward schemes had very poor results.*
Conclusion: *The study demonstrates that the workplace incentives in ADSU has a positive but moderate impact on job satisfaction constrained by concerns of fairness, consistency and poor implementation of non-financial incentives.*
Key Contribution to Knowledge: *The findings reveal that the success of workplace incentives depends on the type, size, equity and value of incentives in a public university system.*

Recommendations: *The study recommends boosting transparency in promotions, strengthening the recognition system and guaranteeing consistency and fairness in the implementation of financial and non-*

financial incentives.

Introduction

Workplace incentives now play an essential role in enhancing employee motivation, productivity and job satisfaction. prizes are monetary and non-monetary prizes provided to employees for their efforts to attain business goals.Job satisfaction highlights the extent to which people like their job (Robbins & Judge, 2022) and it consist of promotion, payments, recognition, job security, work environment and mutual coordination among staff. The study discovered that employees are more motivated, committed and productive when they notice that their organization reward good work. More so, lack of motivation in job can lead to absenteeism and low output (Sattar et al., 2021; Bakotić, 2022).Hence, HR policies such as equitable compensation, career development, training, and recognition systems are crucial to enhance productivity and job satisfaction. Organisational Effectiveness in Some State-Owned Universities.Institutional Policies and Staff Welfare in Adamawa State University (ADSU). Workplace incentives work or don't work largely depending on how valued and relevant they are to employees. Motivation Theory Employees are happier when rewards are achievable and meaningful (Latham, 2021).On the other hand, the perception of favouritism, bias or inadequate awards could reduce the effectiveness of incentive schemes and create unhappiness (Cropanzano et al., 2020). On this note, this study is aiming to analyse workplace incentives and job satisfaction among workers of Adamawa State University, Mubi between 2014 and 2025.

Statement of Problem

Incentives at workplace are designed to improve motivation, job satisfaction and organisational performance of employees. Incentives such as salaries, promotions, allowances, training opportunities and recognition programmes are designed to increase staff commitment to teaching, research and administration in public universities. However, several universities still face the problem of diminishing worker morale and variable levels of job satisfaction (Nwokocha&Iheriohanma, 2021).

The issue is crucial since the job satisfaction is highly correlated with employee devotion, productivity and service performance. Personnel who are unhappy are prone to perform poorly, to be absent and to have unfavourable work attitudes which can have repercussions for teaching quality, research productivity and administrative efficiency (Ogunyomi&Ojikutu, 2020; Nwokocha&Iheriohanma, 2021). We have questioned the sufficiency, equitable distribution and worth of the current incentives to effect upon job satisfaction in the face of the problem of staff motivation at the ADSU. Studies have shown that incentive systems do not work when they are poorly designed or implemented or are not tied to the demands of the workers. There can be challenges like delayed promotions, irregular allowances, inadequate training and poor recognition making the incentives ineffective for ADSU.

There has been much research on workplace incentives and job satisfaction, but relatively little has been done on public universities in North-East Nigeria and ADSU in particular. There is no study of the combined influence of the strength of the incentive, fairness and

perceived value on the staff satisfaction over time at one institution. This study therefore addressed this gap by empirically measuring workplace incentives and job satisfaction of ADSU workers from 2014 to 2025 for policy formulation and increasing staff welfare and institutional performance.

Objectives of the Study

The goal of the study is to examine the effect of work place incentive on job satisfaction of staff of Adamawa State University Mubi. Specific Aims of the Study:

i. To explore the nature of incentives in the work environment in Adamawa State University, Mubi

ii. To determine the level of incentives in the workplace and the general satisfaction with the job of the workers of ADSU

Conceptual Clarifications

Incentives in the workplace

Motivate the employees, improve their performance and to raise the organisational participation are the purported objectives of financial and non-financial incentives at the workplace. Incentives at work refer to prizes that are designed to encourage performance and promote the attainment of company goals (Armstrong and Taylor, 2023). Incentives are remuneration, reward or recognition given to enhance productivity and desired conduct (Ogunyomi and Ojikutu, 2020).

Therefore, the effectiveness of the workplace incentives depends not only on the rewards, but also on the employees' expectations, trust towards the firm and cultural context (Kim &Beehr, 2021; Latham, 2021). Workplace incentives are financial and non-financial rewards, benefits and recognition provided to employees to stimulate performance, enhance job satisfaction and strengthen organisational commitment based on the employees' perceptions of fairness, value and relevance in the workplace. This concept provides a suitable framework for analysis of work place incentives and job satisfaction among staff of Adamawa State University, Mubi.

Satisfaction in Job

Job satisfaction is the positive feelings and attitudes of the person about the job. According to Robbins and Judge (2022), job satisfaction is a positive feeling by the individual that results from the job. In terms of intrinsic aspects, achievement and recognition are important according to Locke (2021), whereas wage, perks and working situations are important extrinsic factors. Job satisfaction can be defined as the degree to which a person is positive about his or her job and is affected by personal expectations and organisational conditions (Hoppock, 2020).

Job satisfaction has been defined with an emphasis on its affective and evaluative components. However, the role of incentives at the workplace and perceptions of fairness and worth of awards have not been studied.

Based on these perspectives, this study conceptualises job satisfaction as the degree to which employees experience positive affect, happiness and contentment at work as a result of the nature, strength, equity and perceived worth of incentives in the workplace. This definition is in agreement with the purpose of the study which is to assess the effect of financial and non-financial incentives on the job satisfaction of personnel in Adamawa State University, Mubi.

Theoretical Framework

This study embraces a triangulated theoretical framework of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, Vroom's Expectancy Theory and Adams' Equity Theory to explain the relationship between workplace incentives and job satisfaction of the staff at Adamawa State University (ADSU), Mubi. Collectively, these theories provide a comprehensive account of how financial and non-financial incentives influence employee motivation and perceptions of fairness and job satisfaction more generally.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory distinguishes between motivators and hygiene factors. Hygiene aspects include income, allowances, working environment and job security. Motivators are: recognition, promotion, achievement and professional development. The notion states that hygiene factors are the causes of dissatisfaction while motivators are the causes of satisfaction and commitment. Both sorts of incentives need to be known in the context of the ADSU to understand staff happiness and organisational performance (Herzberg et al., 2020; Armstrong & Taylor, 2023).

Vroom's Expectancy Theory takes this idea a step further by demonstrating how effort, performance and rewards are related. The notion suggests that employees are driven if they perceive that their effort would lead to improved performance and their performance would lead to valued results. Therefore, the effectiveness of incentives at work is not only determined by the appearance of incentives, but also by the way employees perceive the attainability, relevance, and value of incentives (Vroom, 1964; Kim &Beehr, 2021).Equity Theory is more explicit about this point and stresses the necessity of justice of reward distribution. Perceived disparities in wage, promotion, recognition or training chances can lead to decreased motivation, and job satisfaction while fair and transparent reward systems create commitment, and positive work attitudes (Colquitt et al., 2001; Ogunyomi&Ojikutu, 2020). Employees assess the ratio of their inputs to outputs relative to others, Adams (1965)

The triangulation of these theories gives the entire explanation of the job satisfaction. Herzberg looks at the notion of incentives and how they affect satisfaction. Expectancy Theory describes the effect of incentives on conduct in terms of the links between effort and rewards. Equity Theory states that employees' responses to rewards are a function of their perceptions of fairness. Theories provide a robust framework to study the qualities, effectiveness, equity and perceived value of incentives in the workplace, and their influence on job satisfaction of ADSU workers in the period 2014-2025. The framework also guides the interpretation of the findings and the formulation of evidence-based recommendations to improve employee motivation and satisfaction and institutional effectiveness.

Methodology

The study adopted mixed method survey methodology to examine the impact of workplace incentives on job satisfaction of workers of Adamawa State University (ADSU), Mubi. The method of the survey is suitable as it aids to gather qualitative and quantitative data on the experiences, opinions and attitudes of employees on workplace incentives and job satisfaction.

The study was carried out in Adamawa State University, Mubi, a state owned university established in 2002 to increase access to higher education in North-East Nigeria (Ulearngo, 2023). The population of interest includes the 724 permanent academic and non-academic staff

of the university (Office of the Registrar, 2025). The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane's sampling process with 5% margin of error which was 258 respondents. The stratified sample technique was utilised to ensure good representation of academic and non-academic personnel categories. Using the following formula the calculation is made:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

where :

n= sample size required

N = number of people in the population

e = allowable error (%)

Substitute numbers in formula

$$n = \frac{724}{1 + 724(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{724}{1 + 724(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{724}{1 + 1.81}$$

$$n = \frac{724}{2.81}$$

$$n = 257.65$$

$$n = 258$$

Data were obtained from primary and secondary sources. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire used a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree; interviews provided a more in-depth exploration of staff attitudes towards the nature, strength, fairness, and value of workplace incentives. Secondary data were obtained from institutional records, policies, staff handbooks, yearly reports and relevant scholarly publications.

The validity of the research instrument was tested by a review by the supervisor and other experts in terms of relevance, clarity and its connection with the study objectives. Reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha. Coefficients of 0.70 and above are suitable for social science researches. Quantitative data were analysed by descriptive statistics, frequencies, percentages and mean scores. The hypotheses were investigated using chi-square ($\chi 2$) analysis. The Chi-square test is ideal to analyse the relationship between the categorical variables based on the responses to a Likert scale. The analysis was done using SPSS version 26. Qualitative data from interviews were evaluated by thematic analysis, which involved transcription of interviews, coding of data, classification of codes and interpretation of emerging themes. The combination of quantitative and qualitative results provided methodological triangulation that boosted the validity, reliability and depth of the study (Colquitt et al., 2001; Cropanzano et al., 2020).

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Category	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	162	**62.8**
	Female	96	**37.2**
	Total	**258**	100.0
Age	20-29 years	38	**14.7**
	30-39 years	82	**31.8**
	40-49 years	76	**29.5**
	50-59 years	48	**18.6**
	60 years and above	14	**5.4**
	Total	**258**	100.0
Staff Category	Academic Staff	102	**39.5**
	Non-Academic Staff	156	**60.5**
	Total	**258**	100.0
Educational Qualification	SSCE/NECO	22	**8.5**
	ND/NCE	36	**14.0**
	HND/Bachelor's Degree	88	**34.1**
	Master's Degree	67	**26.0**
	PhD	39	**15.1**
	Others	6	**2.3**
	Total	**258**	100.0
Rank/Position	Junior Staff	70	**27.1**
	Senior Staff	62	**24.0**
	Principal Officer	10	**3.9**
	Lecturer I and Below	58	**22.5**
	Senior Lecturer and Above	58	**22.5**

	Total	**258**	100.0
Years of Service in ADSU	Less than 5 years	46	**17.8**
	5-10 years	72	**27.9**
	11-15 years	64	**24.8**
	16-20 years	48	**18.6**
	Above 20 years	28	**10.9**
	Total	**258**	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2026.

Results showed that most of the respondents were males (62.8%) and females were 37.2%. Majority of the responses were in the age range of 30-39 years (31.8%) followed by the group of 40-49 years (29.5%). The majority of answers were provided by non-academic workers (60.5%) compared to academic professionals (39.5%). As for educational qualification, most of the respondents were those with HND/Bachelor's degrees (34.1%) followed by those with Master's degrees (26.0%). The largest group by rank were junior staff who comprised 27.1% of personnel. The lowest group were principal officers who made up 3.9%. Most of the respondents (27.9%) had been working for 5-10 years in ADSU, this shows that most of the participants had enough institutional experience to give knowledgeable responses on workplace incentives and job satisfaction. Table 2: Nature of Workplace Incentives in Adamawa State University, Mubi

Table 2: Nature of Workplace Incentives in Adamawa State University, Mubi

Item	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	SD (σ)	Remark
1	ADSU pays reasonable salaries and wages and carries out regular reviews of them	68 (26.4%)	90 (34.9%)	30 (11.6%)	45 (17.4%)	25 (9.7%)	3.51	1.17	**Agreed**
2	Fair allocation of staff allowances is possible.	60 (23.3%)	85 (32.9%)	32 (12.4%)	55 (21.3%)	26 (10.1%)	3.38	1.20	**Agreed**
3	ADSU has transparent and merit-based promotion systems.	55 (21.3%)	80 (31.0%)	35 (13.6%)	60 (23.3%)	28 (10.9%)	3.30	1.21	**Agreed**
4	The institution offers its professors appropriate training and professional	75 (29.1%)	88 (34.1%)	25 (9.7%)	45 (17.4%)	25 (9.7%)	3.56	1.16	**Agreed**

	development opportunities.								
5	ADSU has systems for recognition and awards of staff outstanding achievement.	50 (19.4%)	70 (27.1%)	30 (11.6%)	65 (25.2%)	43 (16.7%)	3.07	1.27	**Agreed**

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Decision Rule: Mean ≥ 3.00 = Agree (Accepted) Mean < 3.00 = Disagree (Rejected)

Table 2 revealed that there are incentives at workplace in Adamawa State University Mubi. This was largely endorsed by the responders. This is evidenced by the fact that all the items registered means scores over the 3.00 criteria. The most rated component was provision of training and professional development chances ($\bar{x}$ = 3.56) followed by wage adequacy and regular review ($\bar{x}$ = 3.51) which indicate generally positive sentiments on these factors. However, the mean evaluations for the recognition and reward system ($\bar{x}$ = 3.07) and promotion transparency ($\bar{x}$ = 3.30) were low, indicating some dissatisfaction with the staff recognition and career progression procedures. The statistics for standard deviation show a moderate variability of the responses. This suggests variability of personnel experiences by departments. The overall result shows that ADSU has workplace incentives but they are not the same as far as their fairness, consistency and efficacy across the different components are concerned. Table 3: Strength of Incentives at Work Place and Job Satisfaction among Staff of ADSU

Table 3: Strength of Workplace Incentives and Job Satisfaction among Staff of ADSU

Item	Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	SD (σ)	Remark
6	The ADSU has sufficiently strong workplace incentives to motivate the performance of personnel.	72 (27.9%)	95 (36.8%)	28 (10.9%)	40 (15.5%)	23 (8.9%)	3.59	1.14	**Agreed**
7	ADSU incentives are uniform and reliably administered in the departments.	65 (25.2%)	88 (34.1%)	30 (11.6%)	50 (19.4%)	25 (9.7%)	3.46	1.18	**Agreed**
8	Incentives at the workplace of ADSU are very important in determining productivity and efficiency of the personnel.	80 (31.0%)	90 (34.9%)	25 (9.7%)	40 (15.5%)	23 (8.9%)	3.64	1.12	**Agreed**

9	ADSU incentives are uniform and reliably administered in the departments.	78 (30.2%)	92 (35.7%)	25 (9.7%)	38 (14.7%)	25 (9.7%)	3.62	1.10	**Agreed**
10	I am satisfied with the workplace incentive program offered by ADSU.	70 (27.1%)	85 (32.9%)	30 (11.6%)	50 (19.4%)	23 (8.9%)	3.49	1.16	**Agreed**

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Decision Rule: Mean ≥ 3.00 = Agree (Accepted) Mean < 3.00 = Disagree (Rejected)

Table 3 shows that the respondents generally considered that the workplace incentives in Adamawa State University, Mubi are strong enough to affect staff motivation and job satisfaction as all items recorded mean scores above the standard of 3.00. The most rated item was the effect of incentives on worker participation ($\bar{x}$=3.64). The use of incentives in increasing staff performance was likewise rated positively on its effect on productivity ($\bar{x}$=3.62) and motivational power ($\bar{x}$=3.59).

However, much lower averages were on consistency and dependability of incentives implementation across departments ($\bar{x}$=3.46) and overall satisfaction with incentives packages ($\bar{x}$=3.49) indicating some level of unhappiness and perceived inconsistency in administration. The response standard deviation values indicate moderate variability in replies, indicating staff experiences vary across departments and types of employment. The results suggest that workplace incentives in ADSU are seen as motivating and beneficial for performance, however challenges of consistency and fairness limit levels of satisfaction in general considerably.

Major Findings

Thus, the study found the following:

i. The survey found out that the incentives given to workers in Adamawa State University, Mubi are generally available and are generally acceptable particularly in the areas of salary, allowances and training opportunities. Most of the respondents believed that these incentives are available and are functional.

ii. The findings revealed that the most positively seen incentives are training and professional development opportunities whereas the least positively evaluated incentives are recognition, reward systems and promotion transparency. This indicates divergences within the non-financial incentives systems.

iii. The findings showed that workplace incentives in ADSU positively impact on staff motivation, commitment and productivity. The respondents believed that incentives provide a motivation for better performance and a reinforcement of the sense of duty.

iv. The study also indicated that incentives do perform well in the workplace but the problems of inconsistency, perceived unfairness and mild discontent with the total incentive packages make them less efficient in offering the best potential job satisfaction among the employees.

Conclusion.

The study reveals that workplace incentives have a positive but moderate effect on staff job satisfaction and performance in Adamawa State University, Mubi. Salaries, allowances and training chances are often given and these help to boost the motivation and productivity of the staffs. But then there are issues in the systems of recognition, transparency of promotion and uniformity of application of incentives across departments. Incentives are then positively correlated with commitment and performance. But job happiness is moderate due to anxiety over equity and fairness. The study highlights the need to improve the openness, consistency and fairness of both financial and non-financial incentives to boost staff motivation and work satisfaction at ADSU.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following thus:

i. The management of Adamawa State University, Mubi should improve and sustain the current financial incentives such as salary and allowances by ensuring prompt payment, regular review and adjustment to current economic realities to further enhance the motivation and welfare of the personnel.

ii. The university should improve non-financial incentives. This means developing effective recognition and reward mechanisms, such as rewarding high performance and giving visible recognition of staff achievements within departments.

iii. ADSU management needs to ensure that promotion processes are clear, merit-based and administered similarly across all departments to ensure fairness, trust and parity among workers.

iv. The University has to put in place a more standardized and uniform policy framework on incentives to remove variances in implementation across units, which will, in turn, improve staff's happiness, dedication and overall productivity .

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