The Practice of Rewards and Recognition System Is the Key to Employee Motivation and Improved Efficiency

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Abstract: Rewards and Recognition system refers to the communication between management and employees which rewards them for reaching specific goals or producing high quality results in the workplace. Employee reward system is set up by a company to reward performance and motivate employees on individual and/or group levels. They are normally considered separate from salary but may be m onetary in nature or otherwise have a cost to the company. This article aims at evaluating the Rewards and Recognition (R&R) Programme practiced in Logistic companies and suggesting ways to improve the Programme. The objective of the R&R Programme is to motivate the employees by encouraging them to participate and contribute ideas or suggestions relating to work process and practices. Rewards are given for good suggestions and they are recognized. A comparison between the projects of Logistic companies was performed to understand the commonalities and differences. Project heads and supervisors of selected projects were questioned on various aspects to do an effective study. As a result of the study, an action plan is generated that would improve employee participation in R&R Programme which in turn would improve the effectiveness of the R&R Programme in Logistic companies

Key Words: Effectiveness, Motivation, Rewards and Recognition, work process

1. Introduction

The need to focus on developing, nurturing and retaining human capital has gained prominence in recent years. In order to fulfill this need organizations are turning towards creative, unconventional and intrinsic approaches to formulate their rewards and recognition practices. Organizations look to a variety of methods that ensure employee engagement, productivity and loyalty. Innovative, viable and sustainable rewards and recognition Programmes are now "must-have□ tools for an organization to motivate employees. Rewarding practices fulfill an employee's need to be fairly recognized for their capabilities, efforts and contribution. Organizations implement rewarding practices with an aim to offer competitive salaries, bonus packages, and to share the benefits of peoples' combined efforts in a fair manner.

1.1 REWARD & RECOGNITION

Reward and recognition can be well differentiated as "Reward is tangible or intangible incentives offered to employees for some accomplishment or success such as Monetary bonuses, promotions, gift certificates, flowers, whereas, recognition is the public acknowledgment of an employee's contribution to the organization such as positive feedback, appreciations and encouragement from superiors." Incentive plans, profit sharing schemes and other opportunities for wealth and ownership sharing are the various forms of rewards organizations set out to present their employees for their efficient contribution. "Recognition practices are those that appreciate employee efforts, contribution and results, thus positively recognizing and reinforcing desirable actions and behaviors." Such practices also help to create and maintain a "Climate of Appreciation" in an organization with sincere appreciation of good work and extra effort, regularly and in a wide variety of ways.

The concept of reward and recognition has gained much importance in the current times and has captured the attention of organizational managers and researchers equally (Mandal & Dalal, 2006). Resultantly, around the world in different organizations, reward and recognition are used as motivational techniques for employee's better performance. These reward and recognition are provided in the form of monetary and non-monetary benefits for certain desirable behaviors. (Mark, 2006). Bowen (2002) describes that reward is something which is given or received in return for a success or achievement. In other words reward is used as an appreciation of certain behavior in the shape of monetary or non-monetary incentives after certain accomplishment or a success. Recognition is the sense which is given to an individual for being a valued person of an organization. In more simple words recognition is monetary and non-monetary rewards offered in

the public place or communicated in the work place regarding the success or accomplishment of an individual (Hellman,1997).

Employee recognition is one of the keys to successful employee motivation. Employee recognition follows trust as a factor in employee satisfaction with their supervisor and their workplace. Informal recognition, as simple sometimes as saying thank you and please, should be on every employee's mind every day. Supervisors and coworkers, especially, have the opportunity to praise and encourage best efforts daily.

The formal recognition will be accompanied with an official letter or a handwritten note that reminds the employee why he or she receives the award in detail. Employees cherish these notes forever. A formal recognition program has special challenges that informal methods don't have. But, each has their place in a company that wants to provide a work environment in which employees fell recognized, rewarded, and thanked for their efforts and contributions. Most importantly, in a formal recognition program the employees are made aware on the expectation and improvement the employees seek.

2. Review of Literature

The use of unique rewards systems (such as a cafeteria or flexible reward system) are recommended to meet the needs of workers from different cultural backgrounds (Stone et al., 2015). Based on equity theory (Adams, 1965), employees must be able to see a clear connection between their job performance and the reward system. Further, if employees perceive a lack of equity in rewards, they may lower their level of job performance or leave the organization. Cloninger, Ramamoorthy & Flood (2011) suggest that equality based reward systems have positive effects on citizenship behaviours.

The study by Cynthia Eshun and Frank K. Duah(2011) on effects of Reward Systems concludes that a good reward system should incorporate both monetary and non-monetary rewards that are competitive based on the prevailing market rates; such a reward provides a sense of employee motivation hence boosting their level of performance/productivity and commitment to their work which is essential for the organization to experience growth as well as gain a competitive edge against its competitors. Frederick Hansen, Michele Smith and Ries B. Hansen 2002, in their article Rewards and Recognition in Employee Motivation clarifies the differences between the two distinct subsystems of human motivation and describes the different strategic role played by each subsystem. Special emphasis is given on the Reward and Recognition system in the design and implementation of employee motivation programme.

3.1 The Rewards and Recognition Programme in Indian Companies

Recognizing best performers who help deliver strategic priorities in line with the values, is the cornerstone of our global reward philosophy. Workforce today is more articulate about their needs. Employees desire the best of everything in terms of competitive salaries, comfortable lifestyles, job security, career enhancement options, Rewards and Recognitions.

Marriott India calls its employees 'associates'. On their birthdays or anniversaries, the hotel employees are allowed a meal for six in any hotel or a stay to experience their own hospitality at its best. JW Marriott always ensured that employees who joined the company felt themselves a part of the Marriott family. He made managers responsible for the satisfaction of their subordinates," says a Marriott spokesperson. The hotels' discount policies, talent development program, international exposure, open door policy, cross department exposure, performance incentives and rewarding high performers boosts the morale of employees.

Promoting talent, growth and positive relationship with employees makes American Express one of the best companies to work for in India. "American Express takes great pride in fostering a work environment that encourages different backgrounds, talents and perspectives to thrive. Creating an inspiring workplace is a top priority for every leader at American Express," says an Amex spokesperson. 'Reward Blue' is a recognition program that enables leaders and employees to recognise each other – across business units, band levels every day, and reward great work and effort.

Intuit India is ranked fourth in the IT industry category and third among best companies in supporting women to remain at work category. With a diverse workforce, the company promotes an environment where differences are valued and respected. "Parents at Intuit can enjoy various benefits such as maternity & paternity leave, once they are back at work they can avail day-care discounts at our partner crèches. We ensure expectant mothers have dedicated parking and a vehicle at their disposal to make travel less painful," says Shikha Verma, Total Rewards Leader, Intuit APAC. For employees who wish to adopt, Intuit offers Rs 50,000 and 84 days of adoption leave to allow new parents to bond with the child.

Training, knowledge harvesting, recruiting, participation in quality audits and assessments and external certifications qualify for reward points based on certain defined parameters. A company gifting a small mug or a t-shirt with its logo may not be a very big thing for an employee who has decided to leave the organization. But, for those staying on, such gifts can make a lot of difference. "It is nice to wear my company's t-shirt. It

inspires me and is also a way to show that I work for such-and-such company," says a software engineer who got the t-shirt as an instant reward. Giving instant gifts to reward employees is catching up. Cognizant Technology Solutions and Perot Systems, with large software development centres in India, have used the instant reward scheme to motivate their employees.

In Logistics companies, the Rewards and Recognition Programme encourages employees to voluntarily participate and contribute ideas and suggestions relating to work process and practices. It needs to be ensured that the employees' participation in this Programme must result in enhanced productivity, reduced costs and greater customer satisfaction. The executives need to be encouraged to participate and give their suggestions for continuous improvement in areas that broadly cover Process improvement, Cost Saving, Delivery beyond Normal, Customer Appreciation and Elimination of waste. It is very much essential that all staff members are encouraged to give their suggestions for continuous improvement in areas that broadly cover Waste elimination, Process improvement, Cost savings and Customer appreciation.

3.2 Objectives of the Study
i)   To know about the awareness of the project head and supervisors about the R&R Programme.
ii) To understand the performance of their team this is rated by the customer Satisfaction Index
iii) To study the involvement of staff in the R&R Programme.

iv) To suggest few measures to the Organization Capability Team of the Human Resources Department of the company for effective generation of R&R numbers every month.
By studying these objectives the Logistics companies will become aware on the impediments that come across in the generation of R&R. This will also enable the Management to employ necessary changes to the R&R Programme of Logistics companies.

3.   Methodology
This study is a descriptive research aimed to gain insight into the perceived factors that influence the R&R numbers generated from the selected projects of Logistics companies located in Thoothukudi District. The author executed the study by collecting data through primary and secondary sources and later processing the data using statistical tools to arrive at a reliable solution for the identified problem.

This descriptive research studies the major four factors that contribute to the R&R numbers generated in selected projects of Logistics companies. A questionnaire was designed to help the authors study the factors. Telephonic interview was scheduled with the selected respondents. The collected data was processed and result was obtained. Interpretation of the result obtained was done to generate valid suggestions that would resolve the problem under the study. Primary data was collected from the selected respondents by using a structured questionnaire prepared to yield the desired data.

Secondary data was obtained from company's annual reports, monthly reports and employee database. The project heads and supervisors of these selected projects constituted the sample. The sample size is 40. All the project heads were included and supervisors were chosen as suggested by the experts in the company. The sampling method used in this research is purposive sampling. As the objective of the study is to understand the involvement of the employees in R&R Programme, the projects were chosen based on the experts' opinion in order to achieve the desired output. The past performance of the project was also considered for the study.

The questionnaire was set with the help of experts in the Organization Capability Team of the HR department of the Logistics companies. Questions were set to study the four major factors under consideration, namely, Awareness about the R&R Programme, Communication about the R&R Programme to staff, Knowledge about the customer rating factors and Participation of staff in R&R Programme. The Questionnaire had 3 open ended questions that sought the respondents opinion on various other reasons that affect the R&R numbers achieved by them, Initiatives to increase the R&R numbers, general suggestions to improvise the R&R Programme.

4.1 Data Analysis and Interpretation
Based on the result obtained from the test of normality, the author has chosen the statistical tool- Mann Whitney U test, Spearman Correlation and Ordinal Regression to analyze the data. The Mann-Whitney U test is used to compare differences between two independent groups when the dependent variable is either ordinal or continuous, but not normally distributed. The Spearman Correlation is a non-parametric measure of the strength and d i r e c t i o n of association that exists between two variables measured on at least an ordinal scale. Ordinal regression is used to predict an ordinal dependent variable given one or more independent variables. It can be considered as either a generalization of multiple linear regressions or as a

generalization of binomial logistic regression. As with other types of regression, ordinal regression can also use interactions between independent variables to predict the dependent variable.

Mann Whitney U Test
To compare the two groups named "Poor R&R numbers" and "Good R&R numbers", are categorized based on the R&R numbers generated from the projects.

Table 1 Ranks for Groups

	Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Awareness about the Numbers	Poor R&R Programme	20	13.95	279.00
Good R&R numbers		20	27.05	541.00
Total		40		
Communication to staff about the Programme	Poor R&R Numbers	20	15.38	307.50
Good R&R numbers		20	25.63	512.50
Total		40		
Knowledge of the Numbers Factors	Poor R&R Customer Rating Good R&R	20	17.50	350.00
numbers		20	23.50	470.00
Total		40		
Staff participation in Numbers	Poor R&R Programme	20	17.05	341.00
Good R&R numbers		20	23.95	479.00
Total		40		

The following inferences are drawn from the above said statistical test result:
a) **Awareness about the Programme** - Mean rank for the group representing the projects with good R&R numbers (27.05) is greater than the mean rank for the group representing the projects with Poor R&R Numbers (13.95). Hence, it is inferred that the respondents of projects generating good R&R numbers are more aware of the R&R Programme when compared to that of the respondents of projects generating Poor R&R Numbers.
b) **Communication to staff about the Programme** - Mean rank for the group representing the projects with good R&R numbers (25.63) is greater than the mean rank for the group representing the projects with Poor R&R Numbers (15.38). Hence it is inferred that the respondents of projects generating good R&R numbers communicate more effectively about the R&R Programme to the staff when compared to that of the respondents of projects generating Poor R&R Numbers.
c) **Knowledge of the Customer Rating Factors** - Mean rank for the group representing the projects with good R&R numbers (23.50) is greater than the mean rank for the group representing the projects with Poor R&R Numbers (17.50). Hence it is inferred that the respondents of projects generating good R&R numbers

have better knowledge about the customer rating factors when compared to that of the respondents of projects generating Poor R&R Numbers.

d) **Staff participation in Programme** - Mean rank for the group representing the projects with good R&R numbers (23.95) is greater than the mean rank for the group representing the projects with Poor R&R Numbers (17.05). Hence it is inferred that the respondents of projects generating good R&R numbers have a relatively more positive opinion about their staff participation in the R&R Programme when compared to that of the respondents of projects generating Poor R&R Numbers.

Table 2. Test Statistics for Comparison of Groups

	Awareness about the Programme	Communication to staff about the Programme	Knowledge of the Customer Rating Factors	Staff participation in the Programme
Mann-Whitney U	69.000	97.500	140.000	131.000
Wilcoxon W	279.000	307.500	350.000	341.000
Z	-3.826	-3.430	-1.865	-2.009
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.062	.044
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.000[a]	.005[a]	.108[a]	.063[a]

a. Not corrected for ties.

b. Grouping Variable: Group

The following inferences are drawn from the above said statistical test result:

a) **Awareness about the Programme-**

Since the p value (0.000) is less than the level of significance, $\alpha = 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is difference in the opinion of two groups on the awareness about the R&R Programme.

b) **Communication to staff about the Programme –**

Since the p value (0.001) is less than the level of significance, $\alpha = 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is difference in the opinion of two groups on the communication about the R&R Programme to the staff.

c) **Knowledge of the Customer Rating Factors-**

Since the p value (.062) is greater than the level of significance, $\alpha = 0.05$, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. Hence there is no difference in the opinion of two groups on the knowledge of the customer rating factors

d) **Staff participation in Programme-**

Since the p value (0.044) is less than the level of significance, $\alpha = 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is a difference in the opinion of two groups about the participation of the staff in the Programme.

SPEARMAN CORRELATION

To check whether there is a correlation between awareness about the R&R Programme and the communication about the R&R Programme to the staff.

Table 3. Spearman Correlation

			Awareness about the Programme	Communication to staff about the Programme
Spearman's rho	Awareness about the Programme	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.673**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	40	40
	Communication to staff about the Programme	Correlation Coefficient	.673**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	40	40

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

The p value, 0.000 is less than the level of significance, α = 0.05. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is correlation between awareness about the R&R Programme and the communication about the R&R Programme to the staff

Ordinal Regression
To check whether there is a relationship between awareness about the R&R Programme and the communication about the R&R Programme to the staff.

Table 4. Model Fitting Information for Ordinal Regression

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Intercept Only	57.306			
Final	.000	57.306	5	.000

Link function: Logit.

Since the p value, 0.000 is less than the level of significance, α = 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is a relationship between the awareness about the R&R Programme and the communication about the R&R Programme to the staff.

Table 5 Pseudo R-Square with no Covariant

Cox and Snell	.708
Nagelkerke	.842
McFadden	.669

Link function: Logit.

The Nagelkerke Pseudo R- Square value is .842 in the absence of the covariant "Years of Experience of the Respondent". This implies that the independent variable "Awareness about the R&R Programme" explains 84% variation in the dependent variable, "Communication about the R&R Programme to the staff" when the years of experience of the respondent are not considered.

Table 6. Pseudo R-Square with Covariant

Cox and Snell	.761
Nagelkerke	.905
McFadden	.779

The Nagelkerke Pseudo R- Square value is .905 in the presence of the covariant, "Years of Experience" of the respondent. This implies that the independent variable, "Awareness about the R&R Programme⬚ explains 90% variation in the dependent variable "Communication about the R&R Programme to the staff" when covariant "Years of Experience of the Respondent⬚ is considered.

4. Findings & Discussion

It is observed that the level of Awareness of the project heads and supervisors about the R&R Programme has an influence on the generation of R&R numbers from the project. The effectiveness of communication about the R&R Programme to the staff by the project heads and supervisors does have influence on the generation of R&R numbers from the project. The active participation of the staff members of the project in the R&R Programme is necessary to increase the R&R numbers generated from the projects. There is a relationship between the level of Awareness of the project heads and supervisors about the R&R Programme and the effectiveness of communication about the R&R Programme to the staff by them. Those who are much aware of the R&R Programme are successful in effectively communicating about the Programme to the staff. This higher level of awareness facilitates effective communication when the project head and supervisors have more years of experience in the company.

Through the scheduled interview by the author it was explored that the Projects with higher attrition rate and absenteeism face difficulty in generating suggestions from their employees and the communication flow on the updates of the R&R Programme from the Head office is slow. There is an ambiguity in the awarding of reward money. It was found that the spot cards which was valued less and supplied for Rs. 50 did not reach the projects because of which they were not issued now. An increasing number of research studies indicate that enterprise employees consider annual increments less rewarding. Rewards, lately, have come to indicate much more than monetary increment in salary. Great Places to Work® published a research among Indian companies indicating that successful rewards and recognition (R&R) programs are predicated on aspects of fairness, besides frequent, inclusive and heartfelt appreciation. The days of the annual increments to engage and retain employees are over.

Big-bang payouts. Big-bang, sensational payouts are valued more by Indian employees than an annual increment of the same value. The market is seeing new benchmarks set in India every month. Very recently, Infosys sent its top performers an iPhone 6 each with a letter personally signed by the CEO, Vishal Sikka. A diamond merchant in Surat, Gujarat made news a few months back by handing out 500 cars and two-bedroom flats to his key employees. Medical benefits matter. Surprisingly, the enterprise of today looks at medical payouts as an important part of feeling rewarded. Accordingly, companies are taking the topic of overall health and wellness much more seriously. Walkathons and workplace redesigns are becoming increasingly main stream. The enterprise of today is looking for recognition in real-time. Recognition of long tenure, which was earlier an insignificant measure, has suddenly become a very important factor for driving engagement. Another significant factor that the modern day enterprise, values are 360-degree recognition other than just recognition from a manager or superior. Companies are, thus, putting together practices to recognize vendor, client and peer appreciations. The space of R&R has changed, and changed drastically within a short time. Traditional models are no longer effective as the demographic composition of the workforce continues to change. Rewards range from simple spoken or written thank-you notes and "spot" bonuses of cash or gift cards to catalog merchandise and gift certificates for retailers or restaurants. Organizations provide vacation packages for employees' special achievements. The author has explored that the Department heads are essential for employee recognition efforts, for example, to making time in staff meetings to thank employees for outstanding efforts. The point is to say "thank you" frequently to employees who deserve it. The effectiveness of Communication about the R&R Programme to the staff can be improved by conducting Programmes and events exclusively for this purpose.

The involvement of staff in the R&R Programme can be improved by introducing special rewards every month. It is inferred from the article that necessary actions need to be taken to decrease the attrition rate and absenteeism in the projects. Details about the R&R achievements in all the projects and the suggestions that received rewards can be sent to the project heads of the entire projects so that they are informed about the activities in other projects.

5. Conclusion

Individual Performance ☐ **Rewards & Recognition** ☐ **Increased productivity and Improved efficiency** ☐ **Increased value to your organization**

Rewards and Recognition, these days, is a familiar concept and is being used by most organizations as a tool for employee motivation. Understanding what motivates an employee has always been a key challenge for managers, but considering the importance of it for an organization's success, one has to continuously attempt to understand it better. With human capital gaining prominence over financial capital in the recent times, it becomes all the more important. Today, the competitive advantage of a business is determined by its people. Hence, the use of Rewards and Recognition is becoming more and more decisive. An increase in R&R numbers indicates the prevalence of a motivated workforce whose suggestions relating to work process and practices can be practically implemented. This would lead to improved efficiency of the services rendered by the company. All effective programmes of rewards and recognition will seek to positively reinforce and sustain desirable actions and behaviors among employees, which in turn lead to sustained excellence in performance. The cost of a recognition system is quite small and the benefits are large when implemented effectively. Meta-analysis conducted by the Gallup Organization 10,000 business units in 30 industries found Increased Individual productivity which in turn leads to improved efficiency .The reinforced behavior supports the organization's mission and key performance indicators. The R & R Programme helps to retain best talent that the organization requires for its growth and continued success.

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