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Financial incentives and their impact on the performance of employees in Yemeni Private Universities

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the impact of financial and non-financial incentives on the employee's performance at Yemeni private universities. The study used the descriptive analytical method in the study. The respondents of the study consisted of 138 employees from private universities in Sana'a. The questionnaire was used as the main instrument for data collection. The finding shows that improving performance was not correlated with financial incentives, while it was more correlated with non-financial incentives. The results revealed that financial incentives have no significant impact on improving employee performance, while non-financial incentives show a significant impact. The study recommends private universities to pay more attention to non-financial incentives.

Keywords: Incentives; Financial incentives; Employee's performance; Private universities; Yemen

1. Introduction

Private university education in the Republic of Yemen is relatively recent, as the emergence of private universities in the capital Sana'a dates back to after the establishment of Yemeni unity through Law No. (18) in Article 7, paragraph C, 1995, concerning Yemeni universities, which states that "the Supreme Council of Universities has the right to Licensing about non-governmental universities, approving their curricula and recognizing the certificates they grant" (ABU-ASBA', 2021).

The first beginnings of private universities were the founding of the National College of Science and Technology (Munir, 2017), although there was a significant delay in the establishment of private universities compared to other countries, the trend toward establishing private universities is a positive step in the path of higher education as it provides the opportunity for participation Societal investment in scientific investment, which helps build a solid building block for the desired future, the entry of the private sector was strong in this field, which led to the further strengthening of private universities as a result of the intensity of competition that exceeded private universities among themselves to competition between them and government universities (Al-Khatib, 2020).

2. Problem Statement

This study examines the impact of incentives on employee's performance. This study is trying to answer the following main research question: do incentives affect the employee's performance in Yemen private universities?

3. Research Questions

RQ1: What is the level of financial incentives in the Yemeni private universities?

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RQ2: What is the level of non-financial incentives in the Yemeni private universities?

RQ3: Do incentives affect the employee's performance of employees in private universities in Yemen?

4. Research Objectives

- RO1: Examining the level of employee's performance at the Yemeni Private Universities.
 - RO2: Examining the impact of financial incentives on employee's performance in Yemeni private universities.
 - RO3: Examining the impact of non-financial incentives on employee's performance in Yemeni private universities.
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5. Research Hypothesis

The study postulates the following two hypotheses:

H1: Financial incentives have a significant impact on employee's performance at Yemeni private universities.

H2: Non-Financial incentives have a significant impact on employee's performance at Yemeni private universities.

6. Theoretical literature for the study

Incentives: "The process of activating the reality of individuals (employees) in positive or negative ways to increase production rates and improve performance" (Chepkemoi, 2018).

Financial incentives: "The sums that are paid to employees, either in the form of a single payment or in installments in the form of monthly payments, it also includes everything that adds to the individual additional income, and financial incentives are considered" (Farwana & Madi, 2019).

Non-financial incentives: include recognition, learning opportunities, demanding work, and career progression, which are useful strategies in motivating people and thereby increasing their performance (Muhammad, 2021).

Employee Performance: "The degree of achievement and completion of the tasks that make up the job. Often there is confusion or overlap between performance and effort, effort refers to energy as performance, which is measured based on the Internet (Arrahtu, 2018).

7. Employee's Performance

Samwel pointed out that employee's performance is about the effort of the employees to achieve a task according to the organization's principles. So, it could be defined as the number of efforts done by employees to produce outcomes with a certain level of quality in an organization to accomplish the predefined task. This effort should follow the norms and procedures of the organization. To measure employee's performance a scoring system is used to measure different aspects of employee's performance. The benefit of the employee's performance could be extended beyond his or her organization. Employee's performance could improve the standards of the employee's life, increase their income, and improve the economy by stimulating a higher level of consumption (Samwel, 2019).

Moreover, Baqir, Hussain, Waseem & Islam (2020) describe employee engagement as the phase at which employees think and behave in ways that appear to correlate to a high degree of engagement by their business. According to studies, stronger employee job performance and improved job satisfaction engagement contribute to better customer satisfaction engagement (Baqir, 2020). Where Arrahtu (2018) described job satisfaction as the fulfillment (or lack thereof) resulting from the interaction of an employee's good and negative sentiments about his or her employment. Those with lower expectations or job satisfaction can be anticipated to be matched by employees with higher engagement (Al-Hussein, 2019).

8. Incentives

Incentives have a significant impact on increasing and improving productivity quantitatively and qualitatively, as well as encouraging innovation among distinguished employees and achieving psychological and emotional satisfaction among employees.

According to the study of Chepkemoi Judith (2018), following the incentive system gives employees and employees their rights and makes them feel satisfied with their work, which in turn leads to a reduction in the rate of labor turnover, which is one of the weaknesses that many companies suffer from (Ghazal,2022).

Ermias (2017) found that the presence of a flaw in the incentive system will lead to a flaw in the training system, on the other hand, as confirmed by this study, indicates that employees participate in decision-making processes. The incentive policies implemented by Ahli Bank will increase employee job loyalty, which will contribute to improved performance.

9. Purpose of Incentive

The purpose of incentives to both an employee and an organization is to

- Increase motivation.
 - Distinguish differences in employee's performance.
 - Increased competition among employees.
 - Attract and preserve competent employees.
 - Decrease absence.
 - Decrease idle time.
 - Operate equipment more efficiently.
 - Relate increases in compensation to increases in productivity.
 - Avoid additions to employees.
 - Generate uniform processing costs.
 - Maximize efforts to accomplish organizational objectives and so on. (Abayneh, 2020)
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10. Effect of Incentives

The effects of incentives can be classified into the following categories:

10.1. Sociological Effects

Employees are divided into several social groups by incentives, which act as motivators for the entire group. Employees are encouraged to be recognized as valuable team members through group reward systems. Teamwork inclines to discourage subpar performance from any employee who might be tempted to go against the grain.

Individual animosity is lessened as well (Ibrahim, 2022).

10.2. Economic Effects

Incentives serve as motivators for employees and organize them into distinct social groups and. Cluster incentive plans motivate employees to be recognized as valuable team members. Teamwork inclines to discourage employee's marginal performance who might be tempted to go against the grain. Individual animosity is also lessened (Achie, 2016).

10.3. Effect on Employees

Employees who are part of incentive programs will be more aware of interruptions or stoppages brought on by faulty machinery, financial constraints, or a lack of production standards, and they will report issues that result in bad labor relations (Alnaimi, 2021).

10.4. Effect on Cost Reduction

Incentives must be designed to accommodate new technologies and must consider all aspects of productivity, not only labor. It should not overlook the cost cutting potential in ranges like finance, supply, and cycle time optimization. (Baqir, 2020)

11. Types of Incentives

In general, incentive schemes are divided into two categories: financial incentives and non-financial incentives, also recognized as well as financial or nonfinancial incentives. Financial incentives are those which are given to a particular group of employees to encourage them perform a certain job task. On the other hand, non-financial (non-financial) incentives are meant to create a Morale drive to help the community. However, incentives were divided into individual and group incentive schemes. For this study, it is crucial for organizations to incentivize staff to concentrate on specific incentive plans.: (Farwana, 2019)

12. Non-Financial Incentives and Employee Performance

It is one of the types of incentives whose main goal is to improve the worker's psychology and Morale e in the workplace, such as promoting the distinguished worker with higher effort or even granting him some of the highest functional powers, such as following up on others or directing them, where the return of this type of work is higher. It is very good for the worker who has come to believe that the institution trusts him and relies on him to achieve its goals, or for the employees (Lucas, 2016).

Measuring performance is critical to the incentive strategy since it communicates the importance of initiated organizational objectives. "What is measured and rewarded receives attention" (Al-Harazi, 2019).

When a trained employee has a Morale e incentive to act in a particular way, it will be the right, proper, or admirable performance. If he acts like other employees, he can expect the approval or even admiration of the other members of the organization, as well as an increased sense of self-esteem. If he acts inappropriately, he can expect verbal criticism, scorn, derision, or even ostracism from the organization, as well as unpleasant feelings of guiltiness, shame, or self-blame" (Al-Hadhaa, 2018).

Morale motivation can cause an employee to act in a certain way if he has been trained that it is the right, proper, or admirable performance. If he acts in the way that others expect him to, he can expect the approval or even admiration of the other members of the collectivity, as well as an increased sense of approval or self-esteem. When an employee acts inappropriately, he may be criticized, disrespected, ridiculed, or even ostracized from the organization, and he may experience unpleasant feelings of guiltiness, disgarce, or self-balme (Ghawanmeh, 2021).

Morale incentives are associated with employee's psychological needs, and there has been a surge of interests in this area since the occurrence of human relations theories. Morale incentives are based on employers respecting their employee's feelings, hopes, and aspirations. Morale incentives be a form of participation in decision-making, certificates of appreciation, training courses, and parties for outstanding employees, among other things. (Chepkemioi, 2018).

13. Research methodology

13.1. Population and Sampling

The population of this study consist of all administrative employees at four private universities which are the, queen Arwa University, Emirates International University, Alyemenia University, and National University.

Table 1 The Study Sample's Distribution

No.	University Name	number of employees	Percentage
1.	Alyemenia university	94	%8
2.	Emirates international university	90	%8
3.	Queen Arwa University	65	%5
4.	National University	95	%8
	Total	344	%100

According to Table 1, the study total population will be the total number of the seven universities under study, which consists of (344) explained in detail according to each university separately, with the percentage of each university out of the total percentage 100%.

This study attempts to select a representative sample using the Krejcie and Morgan Sample Size. This study employed a population size of (344) resulting in a sample size of 150 employees.

The researcher used the convenience sample approach by distributing the survey online and in handwriting. Despite several attempts to distribute the questionnaire, only 138 people responded.

13.2. Sample Description

The results show that the greatest numbers of the participants were males 80 (58.0%) while 58 (42%) were females as shown in the table below.

Table 2 Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	80	58.0%
Female	58	42.0%
Total	138	100.0%

The results of the age distribution in Table 3 illustrated that the group of 21 to 30 years old was the greatest number of respondents with No. (58) and (42%). Then the group aged from 31 to 40 years old was next with a total number of (47) and (34.1%), whereas the group aged Less than 20 years old came last with No. (3) and (2.2%) of the respondents.

Table 3 Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percent
Less than 20 years	3	2.2%
From 21 to 30 years	58	42.0%
From 31 to 40 years	47	34.1%
From 41 to 50 years	25	18.1%
Above 50 years	5	3.6%
Total	138	100%

The results of the marital variable in Table 4 illustrated that the greatest number of the respondents were (Married) with No. (87) and (63%). Then followed by the group who were (Single) with No. (47) and (34.1%). The group (Others) came last with No. (4) and (2.9%) of the respondents.

Table 4 Marital Distribution of Respondents

Marital	Frequency	Percent
Single	47	34.1%
Married	87	63.0%
Others	4	2.9%
Total	138	100%

The frequency distribution results of this variable show that the greatest number of respondents have a (Bachelor's degree) educational degree with No. 80 and 58.0%.

28.3% of the total respondents have (Master’s Degree) and this educational degree represents the second major among respondents with No. 39. A total number of 17.

(12.3%) have (A Ph.D.), whereas, 2 (1.4%) of the respondents have (Secondary school).

Table 5 Qualification Distribution of the Respondents

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Secondary school	2	1.4%
Bachelor's degree	80	58.0%
Master’s Degree	39	28.3%
PhD	17	12.3%
Total	138	100%

The results of the occupational category distribution in table 6 showed that the greatest number of respondents No. (55) and (39.9%) were (Examinations Officer / Student Affairs / Secretarial). Then several (48) and (34.8%) of respondents were (Department head/department head/warehouse), while (4) and (2.9%) of the respondents were (Representative / Supervisor), whereas other groups were in between.

Table 6 Occupation Distribution of Respondents

Occupational category	Frequency	Percent
Department head / department head / warehouse	48	34.8%
Examinations Officer / Student Affairs / Secretarial	55	39.9%
Secretarial Coordinating Officer / Technical Support	25	18.1%
Officer / Treasurer / Purchasing Representative / Supervisor	4	2.9%
Reporter / Driver / Cleaner / Cafeteria	6	4.3%
Total	138	100%

The results in table 7 of the Average monthly wage distribution illustrated that the greatest number 41) and (29.7%) of the respondents had (101000 – 150000 Y.R). Then the group with the average monthly wage (40) and (29%) had (50000 – 100000 Y.R). The group with (Less than 50000 Y.R of average monthly wage came last, (5) and (3.6%).

Table 7 Average Monthly Wage Distribution of Respondents

Average monthly wage	Frequency	Percent
Less than 50000 Y. R	5	3.6%
50000 – 100000 Y. R	40	29.0%
101000 – 150000 Y. R	41	29.7%
160000 - 200000 Y. R	21	15.2%
Above 200000 Y. R	31	22.5%
Total	138	100%

The results of the Experience illustrated that the greatest number of the respondents had (from 6-10 years) with No. (41) and (29.7%). Then the group who had (more than 10 years) came next with No. (38) and (27.5%). A total number

of 30 (21.7%) had (from 1-2 years), whereas the group with the experience (from 3-5 years) with (29) and (21%) came last.

Table 8 Experience Distribution of Respondents

Experience	Frequency	Percent
1-2 years	30	21.7%
3-5 years	29	21.0%
6-10 years	41	29.7%
More than 10 years	38	27.5%
Total	138	100%

13.3. Employee Performance

This variable was measured by 15 items. The results in table 9 show that the (PAS1) item (I strive to perform perfectly my work) came at first with a mean of (4.69), the standard deviation of (0.646), and the highest percentage of (91.4%) of respondents who strongly agreed. The (PAS12) item2 (colleagues in enrolling in training courses and seminars in appreciation for my efficiency at work) came the last with a mean of (4.06) and a standard deviation of (1.174) with a percentage of 81.2%. The overall level of employee's performance of this variable is high as respondents (Strongly Agreed) with the percentage of 87.2%. Table 9. Descriptive Statistics of the level of performance of the administrative staff at the university.

Table 9 Descriptive Statistics of Employee's Performance

Rank	N	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Percent	Verbal Result
1	1	I strive to perform perfectly my work.	4.69	0.511	93.8%	Strongly Agree
2	3	I make sure to quickly complete the tasks assigned to me.	4.67	0.544	93.4%	Strongly Agree
3	2	I am keen to raise the level of work quality.	4.64	0.541	92.8%	Strongly Agree
4	11	I respond to orders and instructions issued regarding work.	4.61	0.598	92.2%	Strongly Agree
5	4	I organize my duties at work.	4.54	0.630	90.8%	Strongly Agree
6	7	I complete the tasks assigned to me on time without delay.	4.50	0.677	90.0%	Strongly Agree
7	10	I am ready to take on greater responsibilities.	4.48	0.708	89.6%	Strongly Agree
8	5	I have practical planning ability.	4.42	0.639	88.4%	Strongly Agree
9	14	I have enough inclination to adapt to new changes and circumstances.	4.39	0.740	87.8%	Strongly Agree
10	6	I coordinate with others in my work performance.	4.38	0.687	87.6%	Strongly Agree
11	8	I implement the plans and programs drawn for my work.	4.38	0.719	87.6%	Strongly Agree
12	9	I am late in leaving work to complete some transactions when it's necessary.	4.17	0.026	83.4%	Agree

13	15	I am satisfied with the results of my performance evaluation for the past and current years.	4.12	0.916	82.4%	Agree
14	13	My performance at work is described by the line manager as efficient.	4.04	0.996	80.8%	Agree
15	12	My superiors give me priority over my colleagues in enrolling in training courses and seminars in appreciation for my efficiency at work	3.42	0.136	68.4%	Agree
						Strongly
		Overall	4.36	0.438	87.2%	Agree

13.4. Financial Incentives

This variable was measured by 13 items. The results as shown in table 10 show that the (UPE11) item 11 (There is additional paid work) came first with a mean of 3.36, the standard deviation of (1.340), and a percentage (67.2%) of respondents who strongly agreed. The (UPE1) item1 (Housing allowance is available) came last with a mean of (2.14) and standard deviation of (1.250) with a percentage of 42.8% of agreement. The overall average of the respondents' perception of this variable is (Neutral) with a mean (2.69) and standard deviation (0.992) and 53.8%.

Table 10 Descriptive Statistics of Financial Incentives

Rank	N	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Percent	Verbal Result
1	11	There is additional paid work.	3.36	1.340	67.2%	Neutral
2	9	End of service compensation.	3.15	1.370	63.0%	Neutral
3	10	There is an appointment allowance.	2.93	1.281	58.6%	Neutral
4	4	There is a nature of work allowance.	2.87	1.316	57.4%	Neutral
5	13	There is a committee membership allowance	2.83	1.272	56.6%	Neutral
6	2	There are incentive financial rewards.	2.77	1.260	55.4%	Neutral
7	12	There is a liability allowance.	2.71	1.179	54.2%	Neutral
8	6	There are additional bonuses.	2.66	1.302	53.2%	Neutral
9	5	There are fair regular and exceptional promotions.	2.61	1.209	52.2%	Neutral
10	7	Financial compensation is given for the accumulated vacations that were not taken.	2.49	1.415	49.8%	Disagree
11	3	A transportation allowance or suitable means of transportation is available.	2.36	1.332	47.2%	Disagree
12	8	Giving exceptional salaries.	2.27	1.204	45.4%	Disagree
13	1	Housing allowance is available.	2.14	1.250	42.8%	Disagree
		Overall	2.69	0.992	53.8%	Neutral

13.5. Non-Financial Incentives

This variable was measured by 12 items. The descriptive results in Table 11 show that the (UW6) item6 (Assignment to committees) came first with the highest rank with a mean of 3.31, standard deviation (1.162), and (66.2%) of respondents who strongly agreed. The (UW3) item3 (Souvenirs and medals are awarded) came last with a mean of (2.51) standard deviation (1.112) and a percentage of 50.2%. The overall average perception of the respondents on this variable is (Neutral) with a mean (2.92) and standard deviation (0.941) and a percentage of 59.6%.

Table 11 Descriptive Statistics of Non-Financial Incentives

Rank	N	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Percent	Verbal Result
1	6	Assignment to committees.	3.31	1.162	66.2%	Neutral
2	11	Granting exceptional leave.	3.29	1.189	65.8%	Neutral
3	7	Invitation to attend regular meetings.	3.16	1.279	63.2%	Neutral
4	10	Invitation to attend seminars specialized in my work.	3.15	1.260	63.0%	Neutral
5	1	Offering expressions of thanks and praise while working.	3.11	1.258	62.2%	Neutral
6	8	Invitation to attend conferences and exhibitions related to the nature of work at the university.	3.08	1.329	61.6%	Neutral
7	2	Submit letters of thanks.	3.04	2.045	60.8%	Neutral
8	9	Invitation to attend public seminars on an ongoing basis.	2.88	1.189	57.6%	Neutral
9	5	Nomination for training courses on an ongoing basis.	2.85	1.185	57.0%	Neutral
10	12	Appointment to chair the committees.	2.82	1.220	56.4%	Neutral
11	4	Honouring in formal and informal occasions.	2.55	1.169	51.0%	Disagree
12	3	Souvenirs and medals are awarded.	2.51	1.112	50.2%	Disagree
		Overall	2.98	0.941	59.6%	Neutral

14. Hypotheses Testing

H1: Financial incentives have a significant impact on employee's performance at Yemeni private universities.

Table 12 Regression Analysis Results of H1

R	R Square	F	Sig.	B
0.127	0.16	2.218	0.139	0.56

The results from the regression analysis in the above table showed that financial incentives have no significant impact on employee's performance at Yemeni private universities. The correlation result was according to the value of $B = (0.056, p\text{-value} > 0.05)$ and R Square (0.016), which indicates that there is no significant effect between financial incentives and employee's performance at Yemeni private universities.

As the value of the Pearson correlation coefficient (R) is 0.127, the correlation between the financial incentives and employee's performance at Yemeni private universities is not positive and this does not support the research hypothesis which assumes that the financial incentives may have a significant impact on the employee's performance at Yemeni private universities. Hence hypothesis H1 is unsupported.

H2: Non-Financial incentives have a significant impact on employee's performance at Yemeni private universities.

Table 13 Regression Analysis Results of H2

R	R Square	F	Sig.	B
0.187	0.035	4.875	0.029	0.084

The results of the regression analysis in the above table showed a significant impact between non-financial incentives and employee's performance at Yemeni private universities. The correlation result was according to the value of $B =$

(0.084, p value < 0.05) and R Square (0.035), which indicates that there is a positive correlation between non-financial incentives and employee's performance at Yemeni private universities as the value of Pearson correlation coefficient (R) is 0.187. This result supports the second hypothesis which assumes that the non-financial incentives may have a significant impact on the employee's performance at Yemeni private universities. Hence hypothesis H2 is supported.

15. Discussion

- That the participants at the Yemeni private universities under this study expressed their strong neutral agreement on those incentives having an impact on improving their performance. Improving performance was not correlated with financial incentives, while it was more correlated with non-financial incentives.
- Incentives could have positive impacts on different organizations, the kinds of literature remain unclear on the relationship between incentives and performance in private universities' operations.
- That the incentives and rewards for employees increase productivity and performance of employees and thus organization profitability.
- Found both financial and nonfinancial, are used to improve their performance and have a significant impact on performance improvement.
- Hypothesized that financial managerial incentives have a significant influence on employee productivity. Therefore, financial incentives such as salaries, bonuses, and allowances increase employee motivation and facilitate effective performance
- That fair rewards and incentives had a significant influence on employee job performance.

Recommendations

Depending on the findings, the study recommends the private universities and others practitioners to:

- Pay more attention to non-financial incentives as they lead to a high level of performance.
- Give more focus on the level of their employee's performance that achieve their strategic objectives through making use of all their resources and incentives, including financial and non-financial as this has a positive impact on increasing their work efficiency.
- As the morale incentives had a greater impact on improving employee's performance than financial incentives in this study, the universities are advised to revise their policies and regulations on their financial incentive mechanism including compensations, additional salaries or bonuses for any additional functions for increasing the efficiency and performance of their employees at work.
- Encourage and reward the staff as a recognition for their efficiency at work and give them priority over other colleagues based on the staff evaluation performance.
- Develop a visible and efficient mechanism for their employee's performance evaluation and information database that can help making decisions on the incentives for employees.
- Work on diversifying the non-financial incentives such as souvenirs, honoring and nominations beside financial incentives will result in increasing employee's performance at work.

16. Conclusion

This study has been conducted to examine the correlation between incentives and employee's performance in universities, especially in private ones. As most universities work on achieving a high level of quality and performance, it has been concluded that incentives have a great impact on improving the performance of employees, especially non-financial incentives. Moreover, the targeted private universities have to pay more attention to giving Morale incentives to their employees. Furthermore, the results of this study proved that non-financial incentives have a greater impact on improving employee's performance than financial incentives.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest.

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