REWARD SYSTEM AND JOB SATISFACTION

BY

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FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE

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A PROJECT WRITTEN AND SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY, IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.Sc.) DEGREE IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY

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DECLARATION

I, **LYDIA OYINMEYESEYA ODI** do hereby declare that this project is entirely my research work and composition. All references made to the works of other persons have been duly acknowledged. The work embodied in this project has not been submitted by another candidate for any Degree and is not currently being submitted for any other Degree.

______________________________ ______________________________

LYDIA OYINMEYESEYA ODI **Date**

CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned certify that this research work was submitted by LYDIA ODI OYINMEYESEYA and it is hereby approved for the partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc) Degree in Human Resource Management, University of Benin, Benin City.

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to God Almighty who through His favour, grace and mercy kept me to accomplish this Degree Programme.

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My appreciation goes to Almighty God for His love, faithfulness and everlasting mercies who led me through this course from beginning to the end without any problem.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

ABSTRACT

This study examined the effect of reward systems on employee job satisfaction in 7Up Bottling Company, Benin City. Reward systems are widely acknowledged as critical components of human resource management that influence employee motivation, commitment, and overall performance. The main objectives of the study were to examine the effect of employees reward system and their job satisfaction.

A survey research design was adopted, and structured questionnaires were administered to 125 employees of 7Up Bottling Company using a purposive sampling technique. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analysis. The results revealed that performance-based incentives ($B = 0.117$, $p = 0.255$), immediate recognition ($B = 0.062$, $p = 0.568$), and work–life balance ($B = 0.053$, $p = 0.645$) had positive but statistically insignificant effects on job satisfaction, while career development opportunities ($B = –0.160$, $p = 0.079$) showed a negative and statistically insignificant effect. The regression model ($R = 0.197$, $R^2 = 0.039$, $F = 1.206$, $p = 0.312$) indicated that the independent variables collectively explained about 3.9% of the variance in job satisfaction, suggesting a weak overall model fit.

The study concludes that although the reward components are perceived positively by employees, they do not significantly influence job satisfaction within the organisation. It recommends that management should improve the structure and implementation of reward systems by ensuring fairness, transparency, and strong linkage between rewards and employee performance, career growth, to enhance satisfaction and employees retention within the workforce.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In today's dynamic and competitive business environment, reward systems have become a strategic imperative, integral to attracting, motivating, and retaining talent while fostering high levels of employee satisfaction. Modern organizations are shifting away from traditional pay structures to embrace holistic frameworks that integrate both financial incentives and non-monetary benefits. Ultimately, these innovative reward systems not only empower employees and enhance job satisfaction but also drive sustainable growth and provide a competitive edge in an ever evolving landscape.

Mercy, David, Ajibade, Areghan, and Olonade (2022) describe a reward system as an integrated framework that combines financial incentives such as base pay and bonuses with non- financial rewards like recognition and career development opportunities to provide employees with tangible and psychological benefits that drive performance. Similarly, Mathias and Baritore (2023) define reward systems as dynamic sets of policies and practices offering both tangible benefits (e.g., salaries and bonuses) and intangible benefits (e.g., public recognition and work life balance initiatives) to enhance employee satisfaction and performance. In addition, Rapat and Haya (2021) describe reward systems as mechanisms that distribute monetary compensation and non-monetary recognition to foster work motivation and job satisfaction, contributing to overall organizational effectiveness. It is a strategic tool that align pay structures, performance-based bonuses, and benefits with career progression and recognition practices to maximize employee engagement and productivity Michael and David (2020).

Employee satisfaction is defined as a psychological state resulting from the positive evaluation of one's job and work environment, where both intrinsic factors (e.g., autonomy and meaningful work) and extrinsic factors (e.g., salary and benefits) converge to influence overall well-being Sharma and Kumar (2021). Robbins, Judge, and Campbell (2020) Also defined employee satisfaction as the product of a systematic alignment between what employees expect from their work and what they experience, including aspects like remuneration, job security, workplace culture, and growth opportunities, thereby influencing their overall commitment and performance. Kim, Lee, and Park (2020) view employee satisfaction as a multifaceted construct that arises when an organization's innovative reward strategies, integrating both conventional financial incentives and modern non-monetary motivators, successfully meet the evolving personal and professional aspirations of its workforce.

Reward systems and employee satisfaction are closely intertwined, as effective reward systems combine competitive financial incentives with non-monetary benefits such as recognition, work life balance, and career development to meet employees' intrinsic and extrinsic needs, thereby enhancing their overall satisfaction and engagement. When these systems are aligned with organizational goals, employees feel valued and motivated, resulting in higher job satisfaction, reduced turnover, and improved performance (DeCenzo & Robbins, 2020).

In Nigeria, integrated reward systems that combine financial incentives with non-monetary rewards have the potential to boost employee satisfaction and performance, yet many Nigerian universities and similar organizations still face significant challenges in implementing them effectively Babatunde and Sola (2021). Outdated pay structures, bureaucratic hurdles, limited funding, and infrastructural constraints often hinder these modern practices. While some forward thinking institutions are beginning to adopt policies that promote recognition and career development, inconsistent execution and local economic pressures prevent these initiatives from fully aligning with global best practices. This highlights the urgent need for Nigerian institutions to develop innovative, context specific reward strategies that address their unique operational and financial challenges (Mercy, David, Ajibade, Areghan, & Olonade, 2022).

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

In Nigeria's evolving organizational landscape, effective reward systems are crucial for enhancing employee satisfaction and performance. However, many organizations continue to rely on outdated compensation models and recognition practices that fail to meet the motivational needs of their workforce. This disconnect often leads to decreased morale, reduced productivity, and higher turnover rates, underscoring the need for a comprehensive evaluation of current reward strategies.

Performance-based incentives are designed to motivate employees by linking rewards directly to their achievements. Yet, in many Nigerian organizations, the implementation of such incentives is inconsistent, leading to perceptions of unfairness and dissatisfaction. This inconsistency undermines the very purpose of performance-based rewards, which is to encourage excellence and drive organizational success Usman, Nmadu, Zenas and Suleiman (2023)

Immediate recognition of employee efforts is another critical component of an effective reward system. Timely acknowledgment of accomplishments can boost morale and reinforce positive behaviors. However, in practice, many Nigerian organizations fail to provide prompt recognition, leaving employees feeling undervalued and disengaged. Research by Sajuyigbe (2023) indicates that recognition and praise significantly affect employee performance, albeit not as strongly as financial rewards.

Furthermore, Work life balance support is increasingly recognized as essential for employee well-being and satisfaction. Organizations that offer flexible working arrangements and support for personal responsibilities tend to have more satisfied and productive employees. Nevertheless, such support is often lacking in Nigerian workplaces, contributing to stress and burnout among employees Igomu and Aakoo (2023).

Career development opportunities are vital for employee growth and long-term satisfaction. Providing clear pathways for advancement and professional development can enhance employee commitment and performance. Unfortunately, many Nigerian organizations do not prioritize career development, leading to stagnation and frustration among employees. Ahmed, Birmah and Mustapha (2021) observed that training and development had an inverse effect on work productivity among health workers at the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital, suggesting that without proper implementation, such initiatives may not yield the desired outcomes.

Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach to reward system design and implementation. Organizations must ensure that performance-based incentives are applied fairly, recognition is timely, work life balance is supported, and career development opportunities are available. By doing so, they can enhance employee satisfaction and drive organizational success.

1.3 Research Questions

This study will address the following questions:

1. To what extent does performance-based incentives as a reward system have an influence on employee satisfaction?
2. To what extent does immediate recognition as a reward system as a reward system affect employee satisfaction?
3. Does Work life balance support as a reward system enhance employee satisfaction?
4. To what extent does career development opportunities as a reward system influences employee satisfaction?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To ascertain whether performance-based incentives as a reward system have an influence on employee satisfaction.
2. To examine the extent to which immediate recognition as a reward system as a reward system affect employee satisfaction.
3. To determine whether work life balance support as a reward system enhance employee satisfaction.
4. To assess the extent to career development opportunities as a reward system influences employee satisfaction.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between performance-based incentives as a reward system and employee satisfaction.

H_{02}: There is no significant relationship between immediate recognition as a reward system as a reward system and employee satisfaction.

H_{03}: There is no significant relationship between work life balance support as a reward system and employee satisfaction.

H_{04}: There is no significant relationship between career development opportunities as a reward system and employee satisfaction.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on assessing the influence of reward systems on employee satisfaction, using staff members of 7Up Bottling Company, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria, as a case study. The research specifically examines key components of the reward system such as performance-based incentives, immediate recognition, work life balance support, and career development opportunities. The 7Up Bottling Company was selected because it represents one of Nigeria’s leading manufacturing firms with a well structured reward management framework and a diverse workforce, providing a suitable context to evaluate how different reward components influence overall job satisfaction among employees.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study holds substantial value for various stakeholders:

- **Business Managers and HR Professionals**: Understanding the impact of reward systems on employee satisfaction can guide managers and HR professionals in designing effective incentive structures. Insights from this research can aid in developing strategies that enhance employee motivation, retention, and overall organizational performance.
- **Policy Makers and Government Agencies**: The findings can inform policy decisions aimed at improving labor practices and employee welfare. By recognizing the significance of reward systems, policies can be formulated to promote fair compensation and recognition practices across various sectors.

- **Employees**: Employees stand to benefit from improved reward systems that acknowledge their contributions and enhance job satisfaction. This study sheds light on the elements of reward systems that are most valued by employees, leading to more fulfilling work experiences.
- **Business Consultants**: Consultants can leverage the research findings to advise organizations on best practices in reward management. By understanding the correlation between reward systems and employee satisfaction, consultants can recommend tailored solutions to improve organizational outcomes.
- **Academic Researchers and Scholars**: This study contributes to the academic discourse on human resource management by providing empirical data on the Nigerian context. It serves as a foundation for further research into effective reward systems and their impact on employee satisfaction.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

While the study aims to provide insightful findings, certain limitations are acknowledged. Data collection challenges, such as low response rates and incomplete surveys, may affect the comprehensiveness of the results. Additionally, variations in organizational cultures and practices across different sectors may influence the generalizability of the findings. Despite these limitations, the study endeavors to offer valuable perspectives on the role of reward systems in enhancing employee satisfaction.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section reviews literature on reward system and job satisfaction. This section will be in three (3) sections, namely: conceptual review, theoretical review, and empirical review. The conceptual review will discuss concepts related to the subject matter, the theoretical review will highlight and briefly discuss relevant theories on reward systems and job satisfaction, and the empirical study will present previous studies on reward systems and job satisfaction.

2.2 Conceptual Review

2.2.1 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to an individual's emotional response towards their job roles and experiences. It encompasses factors such as working conditions, remuneration, career advancement opportunities, and relationships with colleagues. It is the degree to which employees feel positively or negatively about their work, affecting their performance and turnover intentions Johnson, Harrison, Taylor, and Martin, (2020). Similarly, Li, Chen, Sun, and Wei (2020) defined Job satisfaction as the emotional reaction an employee has toward various facets of their job, reflecting the extent to which they like or dislike their work tasks and environment. It encompasses both positive feelings, such as pride and enthusiasm, and negative feelings, such as frustration and boredom, arising from daily work experiences. The concept of job satisfaction can also be conceived as perceived expectation reality congruence, where satisfaction arises from the alignment between what employees expect and what they actually experience (John, Mary, Peter, and Susan, 2023). Beyond attitude, job satisfaction functions as an emotional and motivational state that energizes employees, fueling engagement, creativity, and willingness to go above and beyond formal role requirements (Mohammad, Farah, Aisha, and Syed, 2020). Within a social-exchange framework, job satisfaction is the outcome of reciprocal exchanges between employer and employee; when workers perceive fair rewards and support, they respond with higher satisfaction, commitment, and discretionary effort (Ana, Sofia, Santos, and Carmen, 2021). Ultimately, job satisfaction truly takes shape when employees' emotional responses, thoughtful appraisals, and mutually rewarding exchanges come together in harmony, fostering sustained engagement, motivation, and genuinely positive work experiences.

2.2.2 Dimensions of Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is not a singular feeling that simply appears; rather, it emerges from a collection of interrelated factors that together shape how employees perceive and experience their work. As a multifaceted phenomenon, satisfaction encompasses both tangible elements, such as fair compensation, promotion pathways, and job security, and intangible ones, like supportive relationships, meaningful tasks, and work life harmony. Carlos, Lucia, Miguel, and Sofia (2021) emphasize that these discrete dimensions- pay and benefits, career advancement, interpersonal dynamics, the nature of the work itself, and more each contribute uniquely to an individual's overall sense of contentment and motivation. According to Richard, Benson, Lewis, and Osei (2021), job satisfaction comprises six key dimensions, each of which plays a critical role in shaping an employee's overall contentment and commitment. These six key dimensions include the **work environment,** which covers both the physical setting and the psychological climate that enable employees to perform comfortably and safely; **salary and benefits**, encompassing base pay, bonuses, and non-cash perks that signal recognition and support financial well-being; **promotion opportunities**, reflecting clear career paths, skill-building programs, and transparent criteria for advancement; the **relationship with supervisors and colleagues,** which shapes daily morale through supportive leadership, open communication, and teamwork; **job security,** providing stability and reducing anxiety about continued employment; and **work life balance**, ensuring that organizational demands do not overwhelm personal and family responsibilities (Richard, Benson, Lewis, and Osei, 2021). Each dimension targets a distinct aspect of the employee experience, and together they form a comprehensive framework for understanding and enhancing overall job satisfaction.

2.2.2.1 Work Environment

The work environment encompasses both the physical and psychological settings in which employees operate. Physically, factors such as office layout, lighting, noise levels, ergonomics, and safety protocols influence comfort and the ability to focus (Abdullah, Zulkifli, Arifin, Ismail, and Musa, 2022). Psychologically, a positive climate characterized by trust, support, and open communication reduces stress and encourages collaboration (Andrew, Karen, Michael, and Lisa, 2022). When organizations invest in high‑quality infrastructure, modern tools, and proactive health‑and‑safety measures, employees perceive that their well‑being is valued, which in turn enhances intrinsic motivation and reduces turnover intentions.

2.2.2.2 Salary and Benefits

Salary and benefits represent critical extrinsic motivators that shape perceptions of fairness and recognition. Competitive base pay, periodic performance bonuses, and profit‑sharing schemes signal to employees that their contributions are rewarded (Anthony, Samuel, Gabriel, and Patrick, 2022). Beyond cash compensation, comprehensive benefits such as health insurance, retirement plans, tuition reimbursement, and wellness programs address long‑term security and personal needs, reinforcing a strong employment value proposition. When total rewards align with industry standards and individual expectations, employees report higher satisfaction and stronger organizational commitment (Kavita, Rohan, Priya, and Anish, 2020).

2.2.2.3 Promotion Opportunities

Clear career pathways and advancement prospects serve as significant drivers of employee engagement and retention. Promotion opportunities signal that the organization is willing to invest in employees' professional growth and future (Blessing, Emmanuel, Deborah, and Matthew, 2023). Structured development programs such as leadership tracks, mentoring, and rotational assignments provide tangible mechanisms for skill acquisition and career progression. Transparent criteria for promotion reduce ambiguity and foster a performance-oriented culture, while employees who see a clear trajectory within their organization are more likely to set ambitious goals and remain committed over the long term (Mary, Thomas, and Elena, 2022).

2.2.2.4 Relationship with Supervisors and Colleagues

Interpersonal dynamics form the social backbone of the workplace and profoundly affect daily experiences. Supportive supervisors who provide constructive feedback, recognize achievements, and demonstrate empathy create an environment of psychological safety that empowers employees to take initiative (Jennifer, David, Emily, and Alex, 2022). Equally, collaborative relationships with peers foster team cohesion, knowledge sharing, and a sense of belonging (Ana, Sofia, Pablo, and Carmen, 2021). Organizations that encourage open communication, conflict resolution training, and team-building activities cultivate a culture of mutual respect, which in turn drives higher discretionary effort and job satisfaction.

2.2.2.5 Job Security

Job security refers to employees' perceptions of the stability and continuity of their employment. When roles are viewed as secure, supported by clear contract terms, predictable staffing plans, and fair layoff policies, employees experience reduced anxiety and can focus their cognitive and emotional resources on productive tasks (Michael, Linh, Karen, and Sarah, 2022). High levels of perceived job security correlate with increased organizational trust and loyalty, as employees feel confident that their efforts will not be abruptly negated by sudden workforce reductions (Paul, Christine, Daniel, and Helen, 2023).

2.2.2.6 Work–Life Balance

Work–life balance captures the extent to which employees can meet professional obligations without sacrificing personal and family commitments. Flexible work arrangements such as telecommuting, flextime, compressed workweeks, and generous leave policies allow individuals to manage competing demands more effectively (Natalie, Steven, Rachel, and Thomas, 2023). Organizations that proactively support boundary management by limiting excessive overtime and providing wellness resources help prevent burnout, maintain morale, and sustain long term job satisfaction (Laura, Min, Soo, and Hyun, 2021).

2.2.3 Reward System

A reward system is conceptually defined as an organizational framework designed to recognize and reinforce employee behavior and performance through structured incentives, both financial and non-financial, in line with established goals (Sarah, David, Emily, and James, 2021). At its core, a reward system refers to the formal and informal practices adopted by an organization to acknowledge contributions, motivate continued effort, and build psychological contracts with employees (Michael, Karen, Thomas, and Olivia, 2020). A reward system is a structured mechanism for aligning employee behaviors with organizational objectives by distributing financial and non-financial benefits based on performance and contributions; it functions as a performance‑based incentive framework, tying variable compensation; bonuses, commissions, profit sharing etc. to measurable outcomes (Michael, Karen, Thomas, and Olivia, 2020). Reward system, as a total rewards strategy, comprises base salary, variable pay, benefits, work–life programs, and career opportunities to attract, retain, and engage talent (Daniel, Sophia, Matthew, and Chloe, 2021). Within a social exchange framework, reward systems symbolize the organization's investment in employees, fostering reciprocal commitment when rewards are perceived as fair (Jennifer, Anthony, Laura, and Mark, 2020). Furthermore, reward system forms the motivational architecture of the workplace, structuring recognition events, career development, and monetary awards into a coherent engagement system (Samuel, Olivia, Daniel, and Maria, 2023). Reward systems also serve as organizational "exchange currency", with tangible (salary, healthcare, stock options) and intangible (praise, job enrichment) elements compensating for skills and loyalty (Joshua, Alexandra, Benjamin, and Brittany, 2022). Overall, these definitions show that a reward system is more than just giving employees money or gifts. It is a way for organizations to encourage good performance, build loyalty, and support a positive work culture. When reward systems are fair and well-planned, they help employees feel valued, stay motivated, and work harder to achieve both personal and organizational goals.

2.2.3.1 Dimensions of Reward System

In today's competitive work environment, organizations must employ a variety of reward strategies to meet diverse employee needs and drive satisfaction. These strategies do not function in isolation; rather, they represent an interwoven system of tangible and intangible supports that together motivate performance, reinforce positive behaviors, and sustain long-term engagement. By examining these interconnected elements, the study aims to reveal not only how reward systems operate in practice but also how they cultivate a workplace culture of value, motivation, and commitment.

2.2.3.1.1 Performance-Based Incentives

Performance-based incentives are formally defined as reward mechanisms that tie employee compensation directly to quantifiable outputs such as sales volumes, customer-service ratings, project completions, or productivity metrics and distribute bonuses, commissions, or profit-sharing awards only when predefined targets are met or exceeded (Michael, Karen, Thomas, and Olivia, 2020). Conceptually, this approach draws on expectancy theory, which posits that employees will be motivated to exert higher effort when they believe their performance will lead to desirable outcomes (Victor, Emily, Andrew, and Susan, 2021). By establishing clear, measurable goals and linking them to incremental financial rewards, organizations create a transparent system in which employees understand exactly what is required to earn additional compensation. In practice, performance-based incentives foster a sense of ownership and accountability: when employees recognize that their extra effort translates into tangible gains, they are more likely to take initiative, innovate, and prioritize activities that drive organizational success (Anthony, Samuel, Gabriel, and Patrick, 2022). This direct linkage reduces perceptions of pay inequity, since compensation is explicitly tied to individual or team achievements rather than arbitrary or tenure-based criteria. As a result, employees report greater fairness in the reward process, which strengthens trust in management and the psychological contract between employer and employee (Michael, Karen, Thomas, and Olivia, 2020).

The influence of performance-based incentives on job satisfaction manifests through multiple pathways. First, by rewarding effort and results rather than mere presence, these incentives enhance employees' intrinsic sense of accomplishment and meaningfulness in their roles, elevating overall satisfaction (Anthony, Samuel, Gabriel, and Patrick, 2022). Second, the clarity and immediacy of performance-linked rewards satisfy employees' need for feedback and recognition, addressing both cognitive evaluations ("My work is judged fairly") and affective responses ("I feel valued when I exceed my goals") that underpin satisfaction (Victor, Emily, Andrew, and Susan, 2021).

Moreover, in contexts where goal achievement is observable and rewards are distributed promptly, performance-based systems help sustain long term motivation by creating a virtuous cycle: successful performance leads to rewards, which reinforce positive behaviors and encourage continued high performance. Over time, this cycle contributes to higher levels of engagement, reduced turnover intentions, and a stronger alignment between individual aspirations and organizational objectives, key indicators of job satisfaction (Michael, Karen, Thomas, and Olivia, 2020). Ultimately, when performance-based incentives are designed with fairness, transparency, and attainable targets, they serve as powerful drivers of both employee satisfaction and organizational performance.

2.2.3.1.2 Immediate Recognition

Immediate recognition is formally defined as the timely, informal acknowledgment of employees' achievements via verbal praise, spot awards, peer nominations, or digital badges delivered shortly after desired behaviors or outcomes occur (Jennifer, Anthony, Laura, and Mark, 2020). Conceptually, this approach is grounded in social-exchange theory, which suggests that when organizations promptly acknowledge contributions, employees perceive a fair and reciprocal relationship, strengthening their emotional bond with the employer (Ana, Sofia, Pablo, and Carmen, 2021). By providing feedback in real time, immediate recognition clarifies performance expectations and signals that managers are actively observing and valuing everyday efforts.

In practice, organizations implement immediate recognition through simple yet powerful mechanisms: a manager might send a quick "thank you" email, award a small gift card, or highlight an individual's success in a team meeting. These timely gestures reinforce positive behaviors by linking actions to appreciation, thereby encouraging repetition of those behaviors (Marcus, Emily, David, and Rachel, 2022). Because recognition occurs close to the moment of achievement, its impact on motivation is stronger than delayed rewards; employees understand exactly which actions led to acknowledgment, enabling them to adjust and improve their performance continuously.

The influence of immediate recognition on job satisfaction operates through both affective and cognitive pathways. Affectively, employees experience a boost in morale and self-esteem when their efforts are noticed and praised, satisfying the intrinsic need for belonging and appreciation (Laura, Min, Soo, and Hyun, 2021). Cognitively, prompt acknowledgment provides clear feedback about what constitutes valued performance, reducing uncertainty and reinforcing perceptions of fairness: "I know what I did well, and I know the organization values it" (Paul, Christine, Daniel, and Helen, 2023). Over time, this recurrent cycle of action and acknowledgment builds a positive feedback loop, leading to higher engagement, stronger commitment, and lower turnover intentions.

Ultimately, when immediate recognition is embedded in everyday management practices backed by consistency, sincerity, and inclusiveness, it becomes a powerful driver of job satisfaction. Employees feel seen, supported, and motivated to maintain high standards, creating a workplace culture in which satisfaction and performance reinforce one another.

2.2.3.1.3 Work–Life Balance Support

Work–life balance support encompasses organizational policies and practices such as flexible scheduling, telecommuting options, compressed workweeks, and generous leave allowances intended to help employees manage professional responsibilities alongside personal and family commitments (Natalie, Steven, Rachel, and Thomas, 2023). Conceptually, this dimension draws on boundary theory, which posits that clear and respected boundaries between work and personal life reduce role conflict and stress, thereby promoting well-being (Laura, Min, Soo, and Hyun, 2021). By signaling that the organization values employees' holistic lives, work–life supports create an environment where individuals can thrive both on and off the job.

In practice, companies might offer core-hours policies that allow staff to start and end their day around personal needs, provide stipends for home-office setup, or implement "no-email" weekends to safeguard rest periods. These tangible measures demonstrate management's commitment to employees' overall welfare and empower workers to tailor their schedules without fear of penalty or stigma (Michael, Linh, Karen, and Sarah, 2022). When managers model balance by taking time off themselves and respecting boundaries, it reinforces the legitimacy of these policies and encourages widespread adoption.

The impact of strong work life balance support on job satisfaction manifests through both emotional relief and cognitive assurance. Emotionally, employees experience reduced burnout and anxiety when they know their personal lives will not be compromised by excessive work demands, which fosters positive feelings toward their employer (Paul, Christine, Daniel, and Helen, 2023). Cognitively, such support enhances perceptions of organizational justice: “My company truly cares about my well-being,” thereby strengthening trust and commitment. Over time, consistent work life balance initiatives lead to higher morale, lower turnover intentions, and sustained engagement, making it a critical driver of enduring job satisfaction.

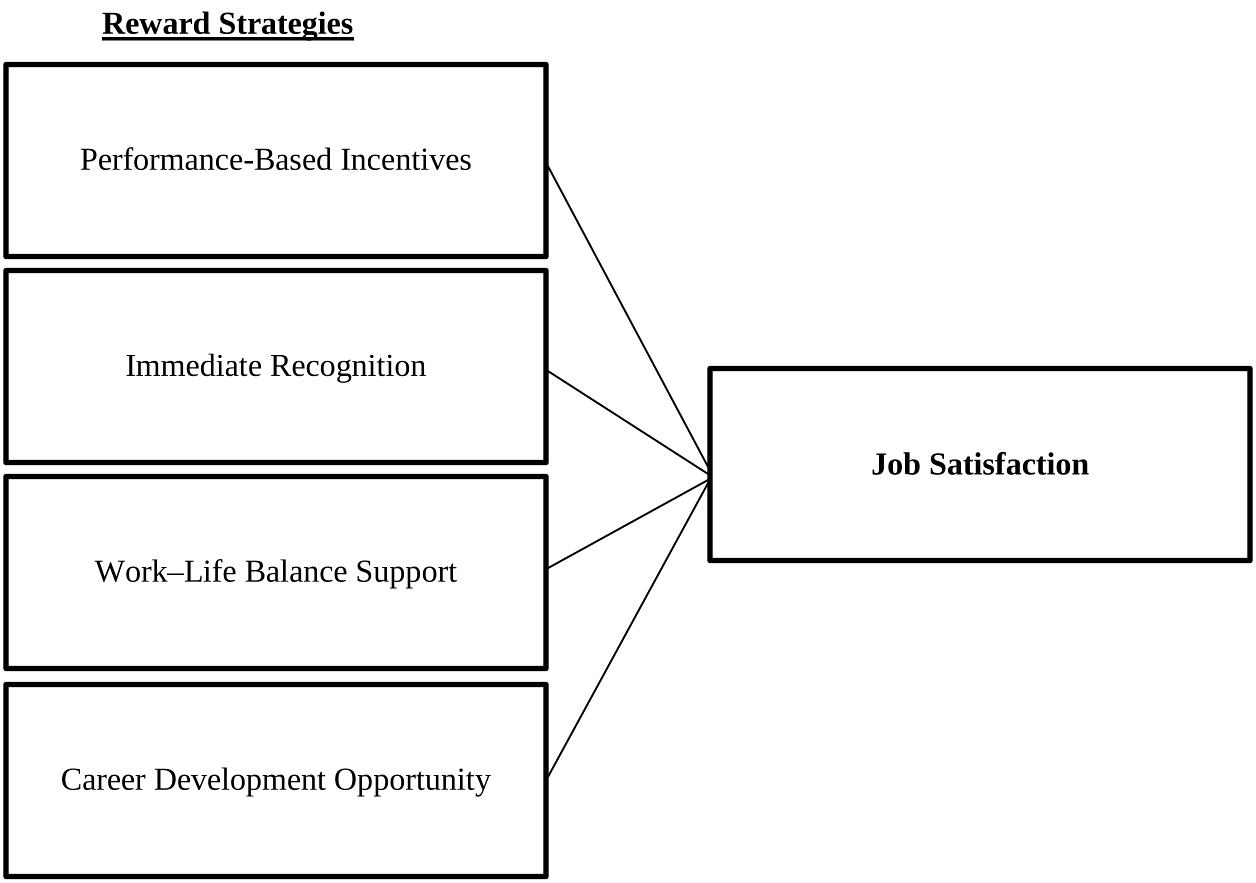
2.2.3.1.4 Career Development Opportunities

Career development opportunities consist of structured programs and pathways such as formal training courses, mentorship schemes, leadership pipelines, and clear promotion criteria designed to enhance employees’ skills, competencies, and long-term career trajectories (Daniel, Sophia, Matthew, and Chloe, 2021). Conceptually, this dimension is anchored in human capital theory, which holds that investments in learning and growth not only increase individual capabilities but also yield greater organizational productivity and adaptability (Kevin, Natalie, Steven, and Allison, 2022). By offering access to workshops, cross-functional rotations, and tuition reimbursement, organizations communicate a commitment to employees’ professional futures and signal that performance today can translate into advancement tomorrow.

In practice, effective career development initiatives often begin with individualized development plans, crafted through collaborative discussions between employees and their supervisors to identify skill gaps and career aspirations. Mentorship programs pair less experienced staff with seasoned leaders who provide guidance, feedback, and networking opportunities. Leadership academies and rotational assignments give high-potential employees exposure to different business units, broadening their perspectives and preparing them for higher level roles. Transparent promotion paths and competency frameworks set clear expectations for performance and progression, reducing ambiguity about what is required to move up.

The influence of career development opportunities on job satisfaction operates through multiple psychological channels. First, by satisfying the intrinsic need for mastery and growth, these initiatives foster a sense of achievement and professional self-efficacy; employees feel confident that they are evolving in meaningful ways. Second, they address cognitive evaluations of organizational support, reinforcing beliefs that "my employer invests in me," which deepens trust and strengthens the psychological contract (Paul, Christine, Daniel, and Helen, 2023). Over time, as individuals acquire new skills and successfully transition into advanced roles, they experience heightened engagement, reduced turnover intentions, and a more profound commitment to their work and the organization. Thus, when career development opportunities are well-structured, accessible, and aligned with personal goals, they become a powerful driver of sustained job satisfaction.

2.3 Conceptual Framework



Source: Authors 2025

2.4 Theoretical Review

The study will be guided by the following theories

2.4.1 Expectancy Theory

Expectancy Theory was first articulated by Victor H. Vroom in 1964 and has since been elaborated in numerous contemporary studies on work motivation (Nguyen, Garcia, Patel, and Roberts, 2021). At its core, the theory proposes that employees choose how much effort to invest in their tasks based on three key beliefs: expectancy (the conviction that effort will lead to successful performance), instrumentality (the belief that performance will be rewarded), and valence (the value placed on those rewards). When all three components are strong: employees believe they can meet performance standards, that meeting those standards will result in desirable outcomes, and that those outcomes are personally meaningful; employees are more likely to engage deeply with their work and strive for high performance (Nguyen, Garcia, Patel, and Roberts, 2021).

Within the context of reward systems and job satisfaction, Expectancy Theory provides a vital framework for understanding how the design of incentives influences employee attitudes and behaviors. By setting clear performance targets and linking them transparently to specific rewards such as bonuses, promotions, or recognition, organizations enhance expectancy ("I know what I must do to succeed") and instrumentality ("I trust that my success will be rewarded") Nguyen, Garcia, Patel, and Roberts (2021). When employees perceive that their efforts will indeed yield valued outcomes, their motivation intensifies and their satisfaction grows because the pathway from effort through performance to reward is both visible and attainable.

Practically, applying Expectancy Theory to reward system design involves ensuring that employees clearly understand how their effort will lead to desired outcomes and that those outcomes are personally valuable. By establishing transparent performance criteria and linking them directly to rewards, organizations heighten employees’ expectancy; their belief that hard work will translate into strong performance, and instrumentality; their confidence that performance will indeed be rewarded (Victor, Emily, Andrew, and Susan, 2021). For instance, when performance-based incentives are tied to specific targets such as sales quotas or project milestones, employees see a direct path from their daily activities to tangible bonuses or profit sharing. This clarity not only motivates them to focus their efforts where it matters most but also fosters a sense of fairness, because they know exactly what is required to earn extra compensation, thereby boosting their overall job satisfaction.

Moreover, the theory’s emphasis on valence, the value employees place on those rewards, helps explain why immediate recognition, work life balance support, and career development opportunities also influence satisfaction. When organizations provide prompt, meaningful acknowledgment for achievements (immediate recognition), employees perceive strong instrumentality (“my actions lead to recognition”) and experience high valence because timely praise fulfills their intrinsic need for appreciation. Similarly, by communicating and consistently delivering on flexible scheduling or extended leave (work life balance support), employers reinforce the expectation that adhering to these policies will genuinely grant employees the personal time they value most. Finally, offering clear pathways for skill development, mentorship, and promotion (career development opportunities) signals that investment in an employee's growth will yield advancement, an outcome with high valence for those aspiring to evolve professionally. In each case, Expectancy Theory predicts that when expectancy, instrumentality, and valence align, employees will feel more motivated and perceive the reward system as fair and meaningful, leading to elevated job satisfaction.

2.4.2 Equity Theory

Equity Theory, introduced by J. Stacey Adams in 1963 and further developed in organizational behavior research (John, Mary, Peter, and Susan, 2023), posits that employees evaluate the fairness of their work situation by comparing their input outcome ratio: the balance of personal contributions (such as effort, skills, and experience) to received rewards (such as pay, recognition, and advancement opportunities) against the ratios of relevant peers or external benchmarks. When an individual perceives the ratio of their inputs to outcomes to be equivalent to that of colleagues, they experience a sense of equity; if they believe they contribute more yet receive less (under reward), they feel resentment, whereas perceiving over-reward can lead to guilt. These emotional responses drive employees to restore balance by adjusting effort, seeking increased rewards, or reevaluating their inputs and outcomes.

Within the context of reward systems and job satisfaction, equity theory illuminates why perceptions of distributive and procedural justice are critical across all four dimensions under study. For performance-based incentives, employees assess whether bonus allocations fairly reflect their measurable achievements relative to teammates (Victor, Emily, Andrew, and Susan, 2021). In immediate recognition, they consider if praise and spot awards are distributed consistently for comparable contributions. Regarding work life balance support, equity requires that flexible scheduling and leave policies be accessible to all individuals in similar roles. For career development opportunities, fairness hinges on transparent, merit based criteria for training, mentorship, and promotion decisions (John, Mary, Peter, and Susan, 2023). When each reward dimension is administered with equity, employees are more likely to trust organizational processes and report higher satisfaction.

Practically, applying equity theory to the design of a reward system involves three key steps. First, ensure distributive justice by calibrating rewards, bonuses, recognition awards, schedule flexibility, and development programs so they align with clearly measured inputs and maintain consistency across comparable roles (Carlos, Lucia, Miguel, and Sofia, 2021). Second, uphold procedural justice through transparent policies and uniform application of reward criteria, so employees understand how decisions are made and why (Mary, Thomas, and Elena, 2022). Third, foster interactional justice by communicating openly about reward processes, providing rationale for outcomes, and inviting employee feedback whenever adjustments occur (Jennifer, David, Emily, and Alex, 2022). These practices help maintain perceived fairness at every stage of reward delivery. Employees who perceive fairness in performance-based incentives will exhibit greater contentment with pay systems; those who see unbiased immediate recognition will feel valued and motivated; equitable work life balance support will reduce stress and enhance well-being; and fair career development opportunities will bolster commitment and professional growth (Paul, Christine, Daniel, and Helen, 2023).

2.4.3 Reinforcement Theory

Reinforcement Theory traces its roots to B. F. Skinner’s operant conditioning research in the 1950s, which demonstrated that behavior could be shaped and maintained by its consequences (Andrew, Rachel, Patrick, and Megan, 2023). At its essence, the theory posits that positive reinforcers: pleasant outcomes provided immediately following a behavior, increase the likelihood that the behavior will recur, while negative reinforcers remove adverse conditions (waiving mandatory weekend shifts after an employee consistently exceeds performance metrics, or reducing micromanagement when team members show reliable autonomy) to encourage repetition. In organizational settings, rewards such as bonuses, spot awards, or verbal praise serve as positive reinforcers, whereas the withdrawal of an undesirable task may function as a negative reinforcer. By making the link between specific actions and tangible consequences clear, reinforcement theory provides a blueprint for organizations to cultivate desired behaviors systematically (Andrew, Rachel, Patrick, and Megan, 2023).

Within the context of reward systems and job satisfaction, reinforcement theory underscores the importance of timeliness, consistency, and contingency in distributing rewards. For performance-based incentives, promptly delivering a bonus when targets are met reinforces the behaviors that drive success. In the case of immediate recognition, offering spontaneous praise or spot awards directly after noteworthy contributions strengthens employees’ motivation to repeat high-quality work (Samuel, Olivia, Daniel, and Maria, 2023). When organizations apply work–life balance support, for example, removing strict schedule penalties once productivity standards are satisfied, they use negative reinforcement to encourage efficient task completion and respect personal boundaries. Similarly, providing career development opportunities such as access to a sought-after training course immediately after an employee demonstrates readiness serves as a powerful positive reinforcer for continued skill acquisition.

Practically, designing a reward system around reinforcement theory involves three critical steps. First, identify the specific behaviors and performance outcomes that align with organizational goals. Second, map each behavior to an appropriate reinforcer, ensuring that rewards are meaningful to employees and delivered without delay. Third, vary the reinforcement schedule, mixing continuous reinforcement for new behaviors with intermittent schedules for established practices to maintain interest, prevent habituation, and sustain long-term engagement. When applied thoughtfully, these principles help employees perceive a clear and fair relationship between their actions and rewards, which not only solidifies desired workplace behaviors but also enhances their sense of accomplishment and overall job satisfaction.

2.4.4 Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory provides a foundational perspective for understanding how reward systems influence job satisfaction by framing the employee-employer relationship as a reciprocal process. social exchange theory was originally propounded by George C. Homans in 1958. He introduced the theory in his work titled "Social Behavior as Exchange". Later, scholars like Peter Blau (1964) and Richard Emerson (1976) further developed and expanded the theory by emphasizing the role of power, dependence, and social structures in exchange relationships. Rooted in the belief that social behavior is the result of an exchange process aimed at maximizing benefits and minimizing costs, the theory posits that employees evaluate their relationships with organizations based on the perceived balance between their contributions and the rewards they receive in return (Martin, Rachel, George, and Faith, 2021). Contributions may include time, effort, loyalty, creativity, and skill, while rewards encompass both tangible incentives such as salary and bonuses, and intangible ones like recognition, development opportunities, and work life support.

When employees perceive that their inputs are fairly reciprocated with valuable rewards, a sense of trust, loyalty, and satisfaction is cultivated. This exchange strengthens psychological contracts: the unspoken, emotional commitments between employer and employee which in turn enhance engagement, organizational citizenship behavior, and long-term retention (Chloe, Benjamin, Grace, and Nathaniel, 2022). For example, when an organization provides immediate recognition for good performance or offers career advancement opportunities, employees feel acknowledged and are more likely to reciprocate with increased productivity and commitment. Conversely, when employees perceive an imbalance such as giving more effort than they receive in recognition or support, they may experience dissatisfaction, emotional withdrawal, or even turnover intentions.

In the context of performance-based incentives, social exchange theory suggests that consistent and meaningful rewards create a mutually reinforcing cycle where motivated performance is met with continued support and acknowledgment. In terms of work–life balance, when employees receive flexible working arrangements or mental wellness resources, they interpret these actions as signs of organizational care, prompting increased job satisfaction and reduced stress (Isabel, Francis, Leonard, and Nicole, 2023). Similarly, when career development initiatives are seen as sincere investments in an employee’s future, a deeper sense of obligation and loyalty is nurtured, reinforcing the employee’s desire to remain and grow within the organization.

Ultimately, Social Exchange Theory highlights that the effectiveness of any reward system depends not just on the material value of what is given, but on the perceived fairness, consistency, and relational quality of the exchange. When organizations prioritize mutual benefit, trust, and emotional reciprocity through well designed reward practices, they foster an environment where job satisfaction thrives as a natural outcome of sustained, balanced exchange.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

Expectancy Theory

This study is anchored on the Expectancy Theory of Motivation, originally propounded by Victor Vroom in 1964. The central tenet of the theory is that individuals are motivated to act in a certain way if they expect that their actions will lead to a desired outcome. According to Vroom, motivation is a product of three interrelated cognitive variables: expectancy (the belief that effort will lead to performance), instrumentality (the belief that performance will lead to rewards), and valence (the value the individual places on the expected reward). The theory posits that motivation is highest when individuals perceive a strong and positive link between their efforts, their performance, and the rewards they value (Vroom, 1964; Ismail, Aliyu, Ibrahim, 2021).

Expectancy Theory anchors this study in an in-depth manner because it provides a comprehensive explanation of how reward systems influence job satisfaction. It moves beyond simply identifying which rewards are effective to explore why certain rewards influence employee motivation and satisfaction. This framework is particularly useful in organizational settings, where employees often evaluate whether their efforts will lead to recognition, advancement, or improved work life balance. If these expectations are consistently met, employees are more likely to report higher satisfaction levels. Conversely, when these expectations are violated, motivation and job satisfaction tend to decline. Therefore, the theory offers a robust and predictive lens through which to analyze the impact of reward structures on employee attitudes and performance (Olaniyi, Sunday, Oyebola, 2022).

Each dimension of this study: performance-based incentives, immediate recognition, work life balance support, and career development opportunities, aligns seamlessly with the components of Expectancy Theory. For instance, performance-based incentives depend on expectancy and instrumentality; employees must believe that high performance will result in tangible financial rewards. Immediate recognition relates strongly to instrumentality and valence, as timely and personalized acknowledgment enhances the perceived value of the effort reward link. In the case of work-life balance support, the theory explains that employees will only invest effort in work if they believe that the organization will reciprocate with flexible scheduling or leave options that they personally value, highlighting the role of valence. Lastly, career development opportunities are deeply tied to expectancy and instrumentality, where employees must believe that participation in training or mentorship programs will enhance their skills and eventually lead to promotions or other valued outcomes (Ahmed, Adeyemi, Adebayo, 2023).

In essence, Expectancy Theory provides both the motivational rationale and structural guidance necessary for designing and evaluating effective reward systems. Its applicability to each of the study's reward dimensions, coupled with its ability to explain variations in employee satisfaction based on cognitive perceptions, makes it the most suitable theoretical framework to underpin this research (Idris, Chinedu, Blessing, 2020).

2.6 Empirical Literature

Performance Based incentives and Job Satisfaction

In a study by Chinedu, Adeniran, and Idris (2021), the impact of performance-based incentives on job satisfaction was examined among employees in selected manufacturing firms in Lagos, Nigeria. The study utilized a descriptive survey method and found a statistically significant relationship between incentives tied to individual performance metrics and employee satisfaction. Employees who received bonuses and commissions linked to specific sales or production goals expressed higher motivation and greater job contentment. The researchers concluded that performance-based rewards, when distributed fairly and consistently, contribute positively to employees' sense of achievement and satisfaction with their roles.

Similarly, Essien, Ekanem, and Edet (2022) conducted research among banking employees in Akwa Ibom State to investigate the influence of reward systems on job satisfaction. Their study specifically identified performance-related pay as a major predictor of satisfaction levels. Using regression analysis, they reported that employees who felt their compensation was directly tied to their efforts and accomplishments were more likely to remain loyal to the organization and derive psychological fulfillment from their work. The authors emphasized the importance of clearly communicating performance expectations and aligning rewards accordingly to sustain satisfaction and performance.

Further evidence is provided by Ibrahim, Olaitan, and Elizabeth (2020), who explored reward mechanisms and job satisfaction among academic staff in federal universities in Northern Nigeria. Their findings revealed that performance-based incentives such as research grants awarded based on scholarly output and teaching excellence bonuses significantly improved staff morale and satisfaction. The authors noted that beyond financial gratification, the recognition associated with meeting performance benchmarks served as a strong motivational factor. They recommended institutionalizing structured reward frameworks that acknowledge measurable performance to enhance employee outcomes.

These empirical findings affirm that performance-based incentives, when appropriately implemented, foster a sense of fairness and recognition, which in turn positively affects job satisfaction. However, they also underscore the need for transparent and consistent reward criteria to prevent perceptions of bias and ensure the long term effectiveness of such incentive systems.

Immediate recognition and Job Satisfaction

Jessica (2021) carried out a quantitative study in the banking sector of Abuja, Nigeria, to assess the influence of real-time feedback and verbal appreciation on job satisfaction. The study sampled 200 bank employees using structured questionnaires to evaluate how immediate recognition affects their morale and satisfaction. Data were analyzed using regression analysis. The findings showed that timely recognition through verbal praise, quick reward tokens, and spontaneous appreciation significantly enhanced employees' job satisfaction by increasing their emotional connection to their work and reducing feelings of being undervalued. These insights provide relevant evidence for organizations seeking to implement real time recognition systems as part of their employee reward strategy.

Daniel (2022) conducted a cross-sectional study on manufacturing workers in Lagos State, Nigeria, using a sample of 150 factory staff. The study employed a survey method to examine the impact of recognition frequency and timing on job satisfaction. His findings, analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis, indicated that immediate recognition by supervisors after task completion significantly improved employee job satisfaction. On the other hand, delayed or irregular recognition led to reduced motivation and perceptions of unfairness. The study offers practical implications for reward system design, especially in fast paced work environments where motivation is critical.

Rebecca (2023) studied employees in the tech industry in Abuja, Nigeria, focusing on how the timing of recognition influences job attitudes. A sample of 180 IT professionals was selected, and data were collected through online questionnaires. The analysis showed that employees felt more satisfied and productive when their efforts were acknowledged promptly rather than after delays. The study concluded that immediate recognition is more impactful than the magnitude of the reward in promoting job satisfaction. The findings add to the growing body of literature highlighting the psychological importance of real-time appreciation in modern organizational settings.

Work-life Balance Support and Job Satisfaction

Michael (2022) investigated the relationship between work life balance support and job satisfaction among healthcare professionals in Lagos, Nigeria. The sample included 180 nurses and doctors, and data collection was through structured questionnaires. Analysis using regression techniques revealed that organizational support for work life balance practices such as flexible shifts and parental leave was positively correlated with job satisfaction. The study highlighted that when employees perceive genuine support for balancing professional and personal responsibilities, they tend to have greater commitment and lower turnover intentions.

Sophia (2023) explored the impact of work life balance programs on employee satisfaction in the banking sector of Nairobi, Kenya. A sample of 200 bank employees was surveyed using standardized instruments to measure satisfaction levels in relation to flexible work arrangements, telecommuting options, and family support initiatives. The findings showed that employees benefiting from comprehensive work life balance policies reported enhanced satisfaction and improved morale. Sophia's study suggests that promoting balance through organizational policies is a key strategy for sustaining workforce productivity and satisfaction.

Emma (2021) conducted a survey-based study among 250 employees in the telecommunications sector in Accra, Ghana. The research focused on assessing the effect of flexible work schedules and leave policies on employee job satisfaction. Using descriptive and inferential statistics, Emma found that employees who had access to flexible working hours and adequate leave reported significantly higher levels of job satisfaction. The study emphasized that work–life balance initiatives reduce work-related stress and contribute positively to employee well-being, making such policies crucial for enhancing satisfaction in demanding industries.

Career Development Opportunities and Job Satisfaction

Chinedu and Okeke (2023) examined the influence of career development opportunities on job satisfaction among employees of a major manufacturing firm in Lagos, Nigeria. Using a sample of 210 workers, the study employed structured questionnaires and multiple regression analysis. Their findings indicated a strong positive relationship between access to training, mentorship programs, and promotion opportunities, and employee job satisfaction. They emphasized that transparent and merit-based career advancement pathways are essential for boosting employee commitment and reducing turnover intentions within Nigerian industries.

Amara and Mbatha (2022) conducted research in the banking sector of Johannesburg, South Africa, assessing the impact of career development initiatives on employee satisfaction. Surveying 180 employees, their study revealed that opportunities for skill enhancement, professional certifications, and career counseling significantly improved job satisfaction. They concluded that employees who perceive genuine investment in their career growth demonstrate increased loyalty and motivation.

Lydia and Mwangi (2021) explored the effect of career development on job satisfaction within the information technology sector in Nairobi, Kenya. Through a mixed-method approach involving surveys and interviews with 150 IT professionals, their study found that employees with clear pathways for promotion, continuous learning, and leadership development reported higher satisfaction and engagement. They recommended prioritizing career development as a strategic approach to retain top talent in the IT industry.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discussed the procedures that will be adopted in carrying out the study on "Effect of Reward Systems on Job Satisfaction" of Employees of 7Up Bottling Company Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. This was discussed under: research design, population and sampling technique, operationalisation and measurement of variables, research instrument, validity and reliability of the instrument, source of data, method of data collection, and method of data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The study employed a survey research design, which is suitable for investigating the relationships between reward systems and employee job satisfaction. It follows a deductive research approach and adopts the survey research design. Data was collected through the administration of a structured questionnaire. The choice of the survey design was based on its effectiveness in gathering standardised data from a large population in a cost-efficient manner.

3.3 Population and Sampling Techniques

The target population for this study comprised staff members of 7Up Bottling Company located in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the research focused on 182 staff members employed in the company’s various departments. This organisation was deliberately selected to represent a prominent manufacturing firm in Edo State, thereby ensuring a relevant context for examining how reward systems influence employee job satisfaction within Nigeria’s beverage industry. The company also varies in terms of departmental structure, employment policies, and organisational culture, providing a comprehensive basis for assessing how these factors operate within an organisational context. The study population included both senior and junior staff members of the plant.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

In selecting an appropriate sample size for this study, Taro Yamane’s formula was employed to ensure statistical reliability. The population for this research consisted of 182 staff members from 7Up Bottling Company, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria, drawn from various departments within the plant. Applying Taro Yamane’s sample size determination formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where N = 182 and the chosen margin of error (e) is **0.05** (corresponding to a 95% confidence level), the sample size calculation proceeds as follows:

$$n = \frac{182}{1 + 182(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{182}{1 + 182(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{182}{1 + 0.455}$$

$$n = \frac{182}{1.455}$$

$$\mathrm{n} = 125$$

3.5 Measurement and Operationalisation of Variables

The study examined the relationship between reward systems and job satisfaction. The responses from respondents will be measured using a 5-point Likert scale of "Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree". The questions will be in statement format and respondents will answer with the options on the statements given.

Table 3.4.1 Operationalization of Variables

S/N	**Variables**	**Operationalization**	**Measurement**
	Demography of respondents		
1	Gender	Two point scale.	Q1
2	Age	Four point scale.	Q2
3	Marital status	Two point scale.	Q3
4	Educational qualification of	Five point scale.	Q4

	respondents		
5	department	Six point scale.	Q5
6	Number of years worked in the organisation	Four point scale.	Q6
	Independent Variables		
7	Performance-based incentives	refers to rewards, either monetary or non-monetary, that are tied directly to an employee's achievement of specific goals or measurable results.	Q8 - Q12
8	Immediate recognition	refers to the prompt acknowledgment and appreciation of an employee's contribution or achievement soon after it occurs.	Q13 - Q17
9	Work-life balance support	refers to organisational practices and policies that help employees effectively manage the demands of their job alongside personal and family responsibilities.	Q18 – Q22
10	Career development opportunities	refers to structured programs, training, and growth pathways provided by organisations to help employees advance their skills and progress in their careers.	Q23 - Q27
Dependent Variable			
11	Employee job satisfaction	refers to the overall positive emotional	Q28 – Q32

		state or contentment employees feel about their work, shaped by factors such as compensation, recognition, growth opportunities, and work environment.	

(Source: Researcher, 2025)

3.6 Research Instrument

The instrument of data collection was a questionnaire, prepared by the researcher. Questionnaire was utilized to gather information about the research by relating all the questions to the relevant goals. It comprised items with a variety of closed-ended inquiries. The Likert's five-point scale and summated scale will be utilized for assessing answers (Kothari, 2009).

The questionnaire was in two sections. Section A solicited information on the respondents' demography. Section B consisted of questions on the variables of the study. Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale for which 1 (one) is strongly disagree and 5 (five) is strongly agree.

3.6.1 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument accurately measured what it was intended to measure. Construct validity was assessed through an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), where an Eigenvalue greater than 1 indicated that the research instrument was valid (Hair, Hult, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2022). Content and face validity were also ensured through expert reviews, confirming that the questionnaire adequately covered all relevant aspects of reward systems and employee job satisfaction.

Reliability refers to the consistency of a research instrument over time. The reliability of this study's instrument was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. A coefficient above 0.7 indicated high internal consistency, signifying that the instrument produced stable and reliable results (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2019).

3.7 Source of Data

For the purpose of this study the primary was used. The primary data was extracted from the sampled respondents using a carefully structured questionnaire.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The responses from the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations, was used to summarize demographic characteristics and reward systems. Inferential statistical techniques, including correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis, was employed to test hypotheses and determine the impact of reward systems on employee job satisfaction.

Regression analysis was used to establish the relationship between reward systems and employee job satisfaction. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 25) software was utilized for data analysis, ensuring accurate and efficient computation of statistical measures.

3.9 Model Specification

The ordinary least square method (OLS) was employed as the estimation technique. The functional relationship between the dependent and independent variable are as follows;

$JS = F\ (PBI, IR, WLB, CDO)$..1

This is further expressed econometrically as follows;

$\mathrm{JS}_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PBI_i + \beta_2\ IR_i + \beta_3\ WLB_i + \beta_4\ CDO_i$...............2

Where:

JS = Employee Job Satisfaction

PBI= Performance Based Incentives

IR = Immediate Recognition

WLB = Work-life Balance Support

CDO = Career Development Opportunities

β_1 to β_4 = Coefficient of variables

e = Error term

The expected apriori signs are such that:

$\beta_1 > 0$; This implies that in increase in performance-based incentives will lead to a proportionate increase in employee job satisfaction.

$\beta_2 > 0$; This implies that in increase in immediate recognition will lead to a proportionate increase in employee job satisfaction.

$\beta_3 > 0$; This implies that in increase in work-life balance support will lead to a proportionate increase in employee job satisfaction.

$\beta_4 > 0$; This implies that in increase in career development opportunities will lead to a proportionate increase in employee job satisfaction.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected for the study titled Reward Systems and Employee Job Satisfaction: A Study of 7Up Bottling Company, Benin City. Out of the 125 questionnaires distributed, all were retrieved and found suitable for analysis, representing a 100% response rate. The data are presented using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and means to summarize respondents' demographic characteristics and responses to the study variables. Inferential statistical tools, including correlation and regression analysis, were employed to test the stated hypotheses and examine the relationship between reward system components (performance-based incentives, immediate recognition, work life balance support, and career development opportunities) and employee job satisfaction.

Table 4.2: Demographic Distribution of Respondents

Categories	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Gender		
Male	77	61.6
Female	48	38.4
Total	**125**	**100.0**
Age		
Below 21 – 25 years	12	9.6
26 – 30 years	17	13.6

31 – 35 years	41	32.8
36 years & above	55	44.0
Total	**125**	**100.0**
Marital Status		
Single	68	54.4
Married	57	45.6
Total	**125**	**100.0**
Educational Qualification		
FSLC	23	18.4
SSCE	37	29.6
BSc	47	37.6
MSc	18	14.4
Total	**125**	**100.0**
Department		
HR/Admin	15	12.0
Production	37	29.6
Finance/Account	8	6.4
Sales/Marketing	26	20.8
Operations	27	21.6
Plant Manager	12	9.6
Total	**125**	**100.0**
Years Worked in the Organisation		
0–5 years	12	9.6
6–10 years	72	57.6
11–20 years	26	20.8
21 years and above	15	12.0

Total	**125**	**100.0**

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork (2025)

Gender: From Table 4.1, the analysis shows that 61.6% of the respondents were male, while 38.4% were female. This indicates that the workforce at 7Up Bottling Company, Benin City, is moderately dominated by male employees compared to their female counterparts.

Age: The data reveal that the largest proportion of respondents (44.0%) were aged 36 years and above, followed by those within the age bracket of 31–35 years (32.8%). Respondents aged 26–30 years accounted for 13.6%, while those aged below 21–25 years represented 9.6%. This reflects a predominantly mature workforce, suggesting that the organisation is largely composed of experienced and older employees who may have spent several years in the company.

Marital Status: The analysis indicates that 54.4% of respondents were single, while 45.6% were married. This distribution suggests that a slightly higher number of employees are single, which may influence flexibility and adaptability in the workplace.

Educational Qualification: The data show that the highest proportion of respondents (37.6%) possessed a Bachelor's degree (B.Sc.), followed by 29.6% with Senior Secondary Certificates (SSCE), 18.4% with First School Leaving Certificates (FSLC), and 14.4% with Master's degrees (M.Sc.). This reveals that most employees have attained at least secondary or tertiary education, indicating a relatively well-educated workforce capable of understanding and responding to organisational reward systems.

Department: The analysis reveals that 29.6% of respondents were from the Production Department, 21.6% from Operations, 20.8% from Sales/Marketing, 12.0% from Human Resources and Administration, 9.6% from Plant Management, and 6.4% from Finance/Accounts. This shows that the Production Department forms the largest segment of the workforce, which aligns with the operational nature of the company as a manufacturing firm.

Years Worked in the Organisation: The data indicate that 57.6% of the respondents had worked in the organisation for 6–10 years, 20.8% for 11–20 years, 12.0% for 21 years and above, and 9.6% for 0–5 years. This suggests that a significant portion of the employees have spent a considerable number of years in the company, implying high employee retention and organisational stability.

4.3 Data Presentation and Analysis for the Study Variables

The tables below present the descriptive analysis of the study variables which include performance-based incentives, immediate recognition, work life balance support, career development opportunities, and employee job satisfaction. The analysis is based on responses obtained from the administered questionnaires. Frequency counts, percentages, and mean scores were used to summarize the data, while the accompanying interpretations explain the level of agreement or disagreement among employees of 7Up Bottling Company, Benin City.

Table 4.3.1: Descriptive Statistics of Performance-Based Incentives

S/N	Statement	SA 5 f(%)	A 4 f(%)	U 3 f(%)	D 2 f(%)	SD 1 f(%)	Mean (x)
7	My organisation links rewards directly to clearly measured performance outcomes	94 (75.2)	31 (24.8)	0	0	0	**4.75**
8	Performance-based incentives motivate me to exceed my usual level of effort	103 (82.4)	22 (17.6)	0	0	0	**4.82**
9	The criteria used to assess performance before granting incentives are transparent and fair	101 (80.8)	24 (19.2)	0	0	0	**4.81**
10	Incentives received accurately reflect the value of my contributions to organisational success	94 (75.2)	31 (24.8)	0	0	0	**4.75**
11	Linking rewards to performance has strengthened my commitment to achieving organisational goals	96 (76.8)	29 (23.2)	0	0	0	**4.77**
	Average						**4.78**

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork (2025)

For item 7, *My organisation links rewards directly to clearly measured performance outcomes*, 94 respondents (75.2%) strongly agreed, and 31 (24.8%) agreed, giving a mean score of 4.75. This indicates strong agreement, suggesting that the majority of employees recognise that rewards in the organisation are directly tied to performance outcomes.

For item 8, *Performance-based incentives motivate me to exceed my usual level of effort*, 103 respondents (82.4%) strongly agreed, while 22 (17.6%) agreed, with a mean score of 4.82. This reflects strong agreement and shows that performance-based incentives serve as a powerful motivational tool among employees.

For item 9, *The criteria used to assess performance before granting incentives are transparent and fair,* 101 respondents (80.8%) strongly agreed, and 24 (19.2%) agreed, resulting in a mean score of 4.81. This demonstrates that most employees perceive the performance evaluation process as transparent and equitable.

For item 10, *Incentives received accurately reflect the value of my contributions to organisational success*, 94 respondents (75.2%) strongly agreed, and 31 (24.8%) agreed, yielding a mean score of 4.75. This implies that respondents believe the incentive structure effectively rewards employee contributions.

For item 11, *Linking rewards to performance has strengthened my commitment to achieving organisational goals*, 96 respondents (76.8%) strongly agreed, and 29 (23.2%) agreed, with a mean score of 4.77. This indicates strong agreement, showing that performance linked rewards foster greater dedication and commitment to organisational success.

The average mean score of 4.78 across all items reflects strong agreement among respondents that performance-based incentives are effectively implemented in the organisation. This suggests that 7Up Bottling Company, Benin City, employs a fair and transparent performance-based reward system that enhances employee motivation, commitment, and satisfaction.

Table 4.3.2: Descriptive Statistics of Immediate Recognition

S/N	Statement	SA 5 f(%)	A 4 f(%)	U 3 f(%)	D 2 f(%)	SD 1 f(%)	Mean (x)
12	My supervisor promptly acknowledges my achievements when I deliver good results	72 (57.6)	53 (42.4)	0	0	0	**4.58**
13	Quick and sincere recognition makes me feel valued and respected at work	92 (73.6)	33 (26.4)	0	0	0	**4.74**
	Timely acknowledgment of my efforts increases my motivation to maintain high performance	99 (79.2)	26 (20.8)	0	0	0	**4.79**
15	Immediate recognition of my work has a positive impact on my overall job satisfaction	102 (81.6)	23 (18.4)	0	0	0	**4.82**
16	When recognition for my contributions is delayed or overlooked, I feel less encouraged	89 (71.2)	36 (28.8)	0	0	0	**4.71**
Average							**4.73**

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork (2025)

For item 12, *My supervisor promptly acknowledges my achievements when I deliver good results*, 72 respondents (57.6%) strongly agreed, and 53 (42.4%) agreed, with a mean score of 4.58. This indicates strong agreement, showing that most employees feel their supervisors recognise and acknowledge their accomplishments promptly.

For item 13, *Quick and sincere recognition makes me feel valued and respected at work*, 92 respondents (73.6%) strongly agreed, and 33 (26.4%) agreed, yielding a mean score of

4.74. This suggests that prompt and genuine recognition enhances employees' sense of value and respect within the organisation.

For item 14, *Timely acknowledgment of my efforts increases my motivation to maintain high performance,* 99 respondents (79.2%) strongly agreed, and 26 (20.8%) agreed, resulting in a mean score of 4.79. This reflects strong agreement that immediate recognition encourages sustained motivation and performance excellence.

For item 15, *Immediate recognition of my work has a positive impact on my overall job satisfaction*, 102 respondents (81.6%) strongly agreed, and 23 (18.4%) agreed, giving a mean score of 4.82. This demonstrates that recognition has a direct and positive effect on employees' job satisfaction levels.

For item 16, *When recognition for my contributions is delayed or overlooked, I feel less encouraged,* 89 respondents (71.2%) strongly agreed, and 36 (28.8%) agreed, producing a mean score of 4.71. This indicates that lack of timely acknowledgment can diminish employees' enthusiasm and morale.

The average mean score of 4.73 across all five items reflects strong agreement that immediate recognition plays a crucial role in sustaining motivation, morale, and job satisfaction. This suggests that 7Up Bottling Company, Benin City, maintains a culture of timely acknowledgment, where employees feel appreciated and valued for their efforts, thereby enhancing organisational commitment and performance.

Table 4.3.3: Descriptive Statistics of Work–Life Balance Support

S/N	Statement	SA 5 f(%)	A 4 f(%)	U 3 f(%)	D 2 f(%)	SD 1 f(%)	Mean (x)
17	My organisation offers flexible policies that help me balance work responsibilities and personal life	58 (46.4)	67 (53.6)	0	0	0	**4.46**
18	I am able to meet personal commitments without compromising my job performance	90 (72.0)	35 (28.0)	0	0	0	**4.72**
19	Work–life balance initiatives reduce my stress and help prevent burnout	115 (92.0)	10 (8.0)	0	0	0	**4.92**
20	Organisational support for work–life balance has improved my productivity and morale	96 (76.8)	29 (23.2)	0	0	0	**4.77**
21	Respect for personal time in this organisation makes me more satisfied with my job	79 (63.2)	46 (36.8)	0	0	0	**4.63**
	Average						**4.70**

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork (2025)

For item 17, *My organisation offers flexible policies that help me balance work responsibilities and personal life*, 58 respondents (46.4%) strongly agreed, and 67 (53.6%) agreed, yielding a mean score of 4.46. This indicates a high level of agreement, suggesting that most employees perceive the organisation as supportive in helping them maintain a healthy balance between work and personal life.

For item 18, *I am able to meet personal commitments without compromising my job performance*, 90 respondents (72.0%) strongly agreed, and 35 (28.0%) agreed, with a mean score of 4.72. This reflects strong agreement, implying that employees can effectively manage both professional and personal responsibilities.

For item 19, *Work–life balance initiatives reduce my stress and help prevent burnout,* 115 respondents (92.0%) strongly agreed, and 10 (8.0%) agreed, giving a mean score of 4.92. This demonstrates very strong agreement, indicating that work–life balance programmes have a significant positive impact on employee well-being and stress reduction.

For item 20, *Organisational support for work–life balance has improved my productivity and morale*, 96 respondents (76.8%) strongly agreed, and 29 (23.2%) agreed, producing a mean score of 4.77. This shows strong agreement that the company's support for work life balance contributes to higher productivity and morale among employees.

For item 21, *Respect for personal time in this organisation makes me more satisfied with my job,* 79 respondents (63.2%) strongly agreed, and 46 (36.8%) agreed, with a mean score of 4.63. This reflects general agreement that respecting employees' personal time enhances satisfaction and loyalty.

The average mean score of 4.70 indicates strong overall agreement among respondents that 7Up Bottling Company, Benin City, provides an effective work life balance framework. This suggests that the organisation recognises the importance of balancing professional and personal commitments, which in turn reduces stress, prevents burnout, and enhances employee satisfaction and retention.

Table 4.3.4: Descriptive Statistics of Career Development Opportunities

S/N	Statement	SA 5 f(%)	A 4 f(%)	U 3 f(%)	D 2 f(%)	SD 1 f(%)	Mean (x)
22	The organisation provides regular training and development programmes to enhance my skills	40 (32.0)	43 (34.4)	27 (21.6)	15 (12.0)	0	**3.86**
23	I have adequate opportunities to acquire new competencies that support my career growth	70 (56.0)	20 (16.0)	24 (19.2)	11 (8.8)	0	**4.19**
24	Career development initiatives prepare me effectively for higher responsibilities	99 (79.2)	26 (20.8)	0	0	0	**4.79**
25	Management invests in my long-term professional advancement through mentoring or promotion pathways	91 (72.8)	34 (27.2)	0	0	0	**4.73**
26	Access to career development opportunities increases my commitment and satisfaction with the organisation	102 (81.6)	23 (18.4)	0	0	0	**4.82**
Average							**4.48**

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork (2025)

For item 22, *The organisation provides regular training and development programmes to enhance my skills*, 40 respondents (32.0%) strongly agreed, 43 (34.4%) agreed, 27 (21.6%) were neutral, and 15 (12.0%) disagreed, with a mean score of 3.86. This shows moderate agreement, suggesting that while a fair number of employees recognise existing training programmes, others feel that such initiatives could be more frequent or inclusive.

For item 23, *I have adequate opportunities to acquire new competencies that support my career growth*, 70 respondents (56.0%) strongly agreed, 20 (16.0%) agreed, 24 (19.2%) were neutral, and 11 (8.8%) disagreed, yielding a mean score of 4.19. This indicates general agreement that the organisation offers some opportunities for professional development, though not consistently for all employees.

For item 24, *Career development initiatives prepare me effectively for higher responsibilities*, 99 respondents (79.2%) strongly agreed, and 26 (20.8%) agreed, with a mean score of 4.79. This reflects strong agreement, signifying that most employees believe career development programmes adequately prepare them for promotion or leadership roles.

For item 25, *Management invests in my long-term professional advancement through mentoring or promotion pathways*, 91 respondents (72.8%) strongly agreed, and 34 (27.2%) agreed, giving a mean score of 4.73. This shows strong agreement, suggesting that management demonstrates commitment to employees' long-term career progression.

For item 26, *Access to career development opportunities increases my commitment and satisfaction with the organisation*, 102 respondents (81.6%) strongly agreed, and 23 (18.4%) agreed, producing a mean score of 4.82. This indicates that employees who benefit from professional growth opportunities are more satisfied and loyal to the company.

The average mean score of 4.48 signifies a generally positive perception of career development initiatives within 7Up Bottling Company, Benin City. Although most respondents strongly agree that these opportunities enhance motivation, commitment, and satisfaction, a smaller proportion expressed neutrality or mild disagreement. This suggests that while the company’s career development framework is effective, there remains room for improvement in expanding access and consistency across all employee levels.

Table 4.3.5: Descriptive Statistics of Employee Job Satisfaction

S/N	Statement	SA 5 f(%)	A 4 f(%)	N 3 f(%)	D 2 f(%)	SD 1 f(%)	Mean (x)
27	Overall, I am satisfied with my job in this organisation	90 (72.0)	35 (28.0)	0	0	0	**4.72**
28	The rewards and recognition I receive make me feel genuinely appreciated	97 (77.6)	28 (22.4)	0	0	0	**4.78**
29	My work environment enables me to perform my tasks effectively	88 (70.4)	37 (29.6)	0	0	0	**4.70**
30	I experience a strong sense of pride and fulfilment in the work I do here	87 (69.6)	38 (30.4)	0	0	0	**4.70**
31	Because I am satisfied with my job, I am motivated to remain with this organisation	101 (80.8)	24 (19.2)	0	0	0	**4.81**
	Average						**4.74**

Source: Researcher’s Fieldwork (2025)

For item 27, *Overall, I am satisfied with my job in this organisation,* 90 respondents (72.0%) strongly agreed, and 35 (28.0%) agreed, with a mean score of 4.72. This reflects strong agreement, suggesting that most employees experience a high level of general satisfaction with their work.

For item 28, *The rewards and recognition I receive make me feel genuinely appreciated,* 97 respondents (77.6%) strongly agreed, and 28 (22.4%) agreed, yielding a mean score of 4.78. This indicates strong agreement that employees feel valued through the rewards and recognition provided by the organisation.

For item 29, *My work environment enables me to perform my tasks effectively,* 88 respondents (70.4%) strongly agreed, and 37 (29.6%) agreed, producing a mean score of 4.70. This shows that the majority of employees believe their work environment is conducive to optimal job performance.

For item 30, *I experience a strong sense of pride and fulfilment in the work I do here,* 87 respondents (69.6%) strongly agreed, and 38 (30.4%) agreed, resulting in a mean score of 4.70. This reflects strong agreement that employees take pride in their work and derive fulfilment from their roles within the company.

For item 31, *Because I am satisfied with my job, I am motivated to remain with this organisation,* 101 respondents (80.8%) strongly agreed, and 24 (19.2%) agreed, giving a mean score of 4.81. This indicates that high job satisfaction is strongly linked to employee retention and loyalty to the organisation.

The average mean score of 4.74 shows that employees of 7Up Bottling Company, Benin City, exhibit a very high level of job satisfaction. This suggests that the company's policies, recognition practices, and work environment effectively meet employee expectations, leading to enhanced motivation, productivity, and commitment. Overall, the findings confirm that employees are generally content with their roles, and the organisational climate is supportive of sustained satisfaction and retention.

4.4 Correlation Analysis of Reward System Components and Employee Job Satisfaction

The results from the correlation analysis provide insights into the nature and direction of the relationship between the independent variables which include performance-based incentives, immediate recognition, work life balance support, and career development opportunities, and the dependent variable which is employee job satisfaction. While the correlation coefficient does not imply a direct causal relationship, it serves as an important preliminary indicator of the strength and pattern of association among the variables. The details of these findings are presented in the subsequent tables and are further discussed in the interpretation section.

Table 4.4.1 Correlation Analysis

Correlations						
		JS	PBI	IR	WLBS	CDO
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.096	.042	.044	-.156
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.288	.643	.624	.082
	N	125	125	125	125	125
Performance Based Incentives	Pearson Correlation	.096	1	-.043	.014	.033
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.288		.635	.875	.714
	N	125	125	125	125	125
Immediate Recognition	Pearson Correlation	.042	-.043	1	-.078	.013
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.643	.635		.386	.887
	N	125	125	125	125	125
Work life Balance Support.	Pearson Correlation	.044	.014	-.078	1	-.034
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.624	.875	.386		.707
	N	125	125	125	125	125
Career Development Opportunities.	Pearson Correlation	-.156	.033	.013	-.034	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.082	.714	.887	.707	
	N	125	125	125	125	125

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork (2025)

As shown in Table 4.3.1, the correlation results indicate that performance-based incentives show a weak positive association with job satisfaction ($r = 0.096$, $p = 0.288$). This suggests that higher levels of performance-based incentives are associated with slightly higher job satisfaction, although the relationship is statistically insignificant at the 5% level.

Immediate recognition also exhibits a weak positive relationship with job satisfaction (r = 0.042, p = 0.643), implying that recognition practices have little or no significant effect on employees' satisfaction levels. Similarly, work life balance support shows a weak positive correlation with job satisfaction (r = 0.044, p = 0.624), which is statistically insignificant.

On the other hand, career development opportunities display a weak negative relationship with job satisfaction (r = –0.156, p = 0.082). This indicates that as opportunities for career development increase, job satisfaction tends to decrease slightly; however, the relationship is not statistically significant at the 5% level.

None of the correlation coefficients exceed 0.80, indicating the absence of multicollinearity among the independent variables. This confirms that the reward system components are sufficiently distinct and do not excessively overlap, thereby ensuring the validity and reliability of the subsequent regression analysis.

4.5 Hypothesis Testing

The research hypotheses were tested using regression analysis to achieve the objectives of this study. The hypotheses were evaluated at a 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule applied was that if the computed significance value (p-value) is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected; however, if the computed significance value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 4.5.1: Model Summary of Reward System Components and Employee Job Satisfaction

Model Summary[b]										
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.197[a]	.039	.007	.449	.039	1.206	4	120	.312	1.882

a. Predictors: (Constant), Performance Based Incentive, Immediate Recognition, Work life Balance Support, Career Development Opportunity.

b. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction.

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork (2025)

The model summary result from the regression output is presented in the table above. The R value is 0.197, indicating a weak positive relationship between the independent variables (performance-based incentives, immediate recognition, work life balance support, and career development opportunities) and the dependent variable (employee job satisfaction).

The R Square value is 0.039, showing that the independent variables collectively explain about 3.9% of the variation in employee job satisfaction. This implies that the reward system components have a very weak explanatory power on job satisfaction, suggesting that other factors not captured in the model may account for a greater proportion of the observed variation. The adjusted R Square of 0.007 further confirms this weak explanatory strength after adjusting for the number of predictors included in the model.

The Durbin Watson statistic of 1.882 is approximately equal to 2.0, indicating that the model does not suffer from autocorrelation problems. This suggests that the residuals are independent, and therefore, the regression model is statistically sound and reliable for further interpretation.

Table 4.5.2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of Reward System Components and Employee Job Satisfaction

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.974	4	.243	1.206	.312[b]
	Residual	24.226	120	.202		
	Total	25.200	124			
a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction.						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Performance Based Incentive, Immediate Recognition, Work life Balance Support, Career Development Opportunity.						

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork (2025)

The table above presents the analysis of variance (ANOVA) result on the impact of reward system components on employee job satisfaction. The F-statistic value of 1.206 is not significant at the 0.05 level (p = 0.312). This implies that the explanatory factors collectively: performance-based incentives, immediate recognition, work life balance support, and career development opportunities are not statistically significant predictors of the dependent variable, employee job satisfaction.

This result indicates that the independent variables, when taken together, do not significantly explain variations in employee job satisfaction among staff of 7Up Bottling Company, Benin City.

Table 4.5.3 Coefficient Output of Reward System Components and Employee Job Satisfaction

Coefficients[a]								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	4.108	.722		5.694	.000	2.680	5.537
	Performance Based Incentives	.107	.093	.103	1.144	.255	-.078	.291
	Immediate Recognition	.047	.082	.052	.573	.568	-.115	.208
	Worklife Balance Support	.037	.081	.041	.462	.645	-.123	.197
	Career Development Opportunities	-.071	.040	-.159	-1.773	.079	-.151	.008
a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction.								

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork (2025)

Hypothesis One

H_{01}: Performance-based incentives do not have a significant impact on employee job satisfaction.

The result from the table above shows that performance-based incentives do not have a significant impact on employee job satisfaction. The researcher therefore concludes that we fail to reject the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis because the p-value of 0.255 was greater than 0.05 ($p = 0.255 > 0.05$ and $t = 1.144 < 2$).

Hypothesis Two

H_{02}: Immediate recognition does not have a significant impact on employee job satisfaction.

The result from the table above shows that immediate recognition does not have a significant impact on employee job satisfaction. The researcher therefore concludes that we fail to reject the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis because the p-value of 0.568 was greater than 0.05 ($p = 0.568 > 0.05$ and $t = 0.573 < 2$).

Hypothesis Three

H_{03}: Work life balance support does not significantly influence employee job satisfaction.

The result from the table above shows that work life balance support does not significantly influence employee job satisfaction. The researcher therefore concludes that we fail to reject the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis because the p-value of 0.645 was greater than 0.05 ($p = 0.645 > 0.05$ and $t = 0.462 < 2$).

Hypothesis Four

H_{04}: Career development opportunities do not significantly affect employee job satisfaction.

The result from the table above shows that career development opportunities do not significantly affect employee job satisfaction. The researcher therefore concludes that we fail to reject the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis because the p-value of 0.079 was greater than 0.05 ($p = 0.079 > 0.05$ and $t = –1.773 < 2$).

4.6 Discussion of Findings

This study examined the effect of reward system components on employee job satisfaction among staff of 7Up Bottling Company, Benin City. The independent variables were performance-based incentives, immediate recognition, work life balance support, and career development opportunities, while employee job satisfaction was the dependent variable. The regression model produced an R value of 0.197 and an R^2 of 0.039 (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.007$), indicating that the predictors together explain about 3.9% of the variance in job satisfaction. The ANOVA result ($F = 1.206$, $p = 0.312$) shows that the model is not statistically significant at the 5% level. The Durbin Watson statistic of 1.882 is close to 2.0, indicating little evidence of autocorrelation among residuals and supporting the reliability of the regression estimates.

Performance-Based Incentives

Based on research objective one, respondents' perceptions of performance-based incentives were measured using items that assessed whether employees receive rewards linked to their performance, whether such rewards motivate them to work harder, and whether incentives are distributed fairly across the organisation. Descriptive results showed that respondents generally agreed with these items, indicating a strong level of agreement regarding the existence and perceived importance of performance-based incentives in the organisation (overall mean = 4.78). However, regression analysis revealed that performance-based incentives were not a statistically significant predictor of employee job satisfaction ($B = 0.107$, $t = 1.144$, $p = 0.255$).

This finding suggests that while employees acknowledge and value performance-based incentives, such incentives do not necessarily translate into higher levels of job satisfaction within this context.

One possible explanation is that when all major reward components are perceived positively, their individual influence on satisfaction becomes minimal, resulting in generally high but statistically insignificant effects. According to Vroom's Expectancy Theory, employees are motivated when they perceive a clear link between effort, performance, and reward, but job satisfaction depends on whether the entire reward system meets broader expectations and psychological needs. Armstrong (2021) emphasized that even when employees perceive rewards positively, satisfaction may plateau when improvements are uniform across reward categories. Similarly, Ajila and Abiola (2022) observed that performance-based pay alone rarely produces significant differences in satisfaction when combined with other established reward practices.

In the Nigerian organisational context, Okeke (2023) highlighted that reward strategies may lose their differentiating impact over time if employees view them as standard entitlements rather than motivators, explaining the overall non significant effect observed in this study.

Immediate Recognition

Based on research objective two, respondents' perceptions of immediate recognition were measured using items that assessed whether employees receive timely acknowledgment for their work, whether supervisors show appreciation for good performance, and whether recognition is given fairly within the organisation. Descriptive results showed that respondents generally agreed with these items, indicating that employees perceive a high level of recognition and appreciation from management (overall mean = 4.73). However, regression analysis revealed that immediate recognition was not a statistically significant predictor of employee job satisfaction ($B = 0.047$, $t = 0.573$, $p = 0.568$).

This finding suggests that although employees value being recognized for their contributions, such recognition does not necessarily lead to higher job satisfaction in this context. One possible explanation is that when recognition becomes a routine or widely shared experience across the organisation, its incremental impact on satisfaction may diminish. Within the framework of Reinforcement Theory, recognition serves as a positive reinforcer intended to strengthen desirable behavior. However, empirical evidence shows that when reinforcement is provided too routinely, its ability to motivate and enhance satisfaction gradually declines (Luthans & Stajkovic, 1999; Kim, 2016). Armstrong (2021) emphasized that recognition must be meaningful, personal, and timely to sustain its motivational impact. Similarly, Ajila and Abiola (2022) observed that recognition practices lacking differentiation or authenticity tend to lose their ability to improve satisfaction among employees.

In the Nigerian organisational context, Okafor (2023) noted that while employees appreciate symbolic or verbal recognition, long-term job satisfaction often depends on more tangible elements of the reward system such as career progression, fairness, and work life balance. This may explain why, despite generally positive perceptions, immediate recognition showed no statistically significant effect on employee job satisfaction in the present study.

Work–Life Balance Support

Based on research objective three, respondents' perceptions of work life balance support were measured using items that examined whether employees are able to maintain a healthy balance between work and personal life, whether management considers personal welfare when assigning tasks, and whether flexible work arrangements are encouraged within the organisation. Descriptive results showed that respondents generally agreed with these items, indicating that they perceive their organisation as supportive of work life balance (overall mean = 4.70). However, regression analysis revealed that work life balance support was not a statistically significant predictor of employee job satisfaction ($B = 0.037$, $t = 0.462$, $p = 0.645$).

This finding suggests that although employees acknowledge efforts by management to promote balance between work and personal responsibilities, such efforts do not significantly enhance their job satisfaction.

One possible explanation is that employees may view work life balance as a basic right or necessity rather than a motivational reward, thereby limiting its perceived impact on satisfaction. From the perspective of Social Exchange Theory, employees are expected to reciprocate supportive organisational practices with positive attitudes such as loyalty and satisfaction; however, when work life initiatives are seen as institutional obligations rather than discretionary acts of support, their emotional influence tends to weaken (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Blau, 1964). Armstrong (2021**)** further noted that the effectiveness of work life balance programs depends on how genuinely they are implemented and whether employees perceive them as improving their actual quality of life.

In the Nigerian organisational context, Eze (2022) observed that while employees appreciate policies that promote rest, family time, and flexibility, these alone are insufficient to sustain satisfaction. Consequently, despite positive perceptions of work life balance support, the regression results indicate that such initiatives did not have a statistically significant effect on employee job satisfaction in this study.

Career Development Opportunities

Based on research objective four, respondents' perceptions of career development opportunities were measured using items that assessed whether employees have access to training and development programs, whether promotions are based on merit, and whether the organisation provides clear paths for professional growth. Descriptive results showed that respondents generally agreed with these items, suggesting that employees believe opportunities for development and advancement exist within the organisation (overall mean = 4.48). However, regression analysis revealed that career development opportunities were not a statistically significant predictor of employee job satisfaction ($B = –0.071$, $t = –1.773$, $p = 0.079$).

This finding indicates that although employees recognize the availability of career development initiatives, these opportunities do not significantly influence their overall satisfaction. One possible explanation is that employees may perceive development programs as formal organisational requirements rather than as personally transformative experiences. From the perspective of Expectancy Theory, the motivational value of developmental opportunities depends on the employee's belief that participation will lead to meaningful career outcomes such as promotion, recognition, or increased pay. When such expectations are uncertain or outcomes are delayed, the perceived utility of development efforts declines, thereby reducing their impact on satisfaction (Vroom, 1964; Armstrong, 2021).

Okeke (2023) observed that in many Nigerian organisations, employees often participate in training programs without seeing clear advancement or reward outcomes, which can lead to disillusionment and weak links between development initiatives and job satisfaction. Similarly, Ajila and Abiola (2022) found that development policies that lack transparency or equitable implementation tend to have limited motivational and satisfaction effects. Therefore, while employees in this study generally viewed career development positively, its perceived relevance and outcome certainty appear insufficient to significantly predict higher job satisfaction.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the research findings, the conclusions drawn from the study, and recommendations formulated in light of the results. It also outlines the contributions of the study to knowledge and proposes directions for future research. The chapter is structured as follows: the summary of findings, conclusion, recommendations, contribution to knowledge, and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This study investigated the influence of reward system components on employee job satisfaction, using 7Up Bottling Company, Benin City, as a case study. The independent variables were performance-based incentives, immediate recognition, work life balance support, and career development opportunities, while employee job satisfaction served as the dependent variable. Data were collected through the administration of structured questionnaires, and one hundred and twenty-five (125) valid responses were analyzed. Descriptive statistics (mean, percentage, frequency) and inferential statistics (correlation and regression analysis) were employed to examine the research objectives.

The regression analysis produced an R^2 of 0.039 (Adjusted R^2 = 0.007), indicating that the explanatory variables jointly accounted for 3.9% of the variation in employee job satisfaction. The overall model was not statistically significant ($F = 1.206$, $p = 0.312$), suggesting that the predictors collectively did not explain substantial variation in job satisfaction. The following are the specific findings for each hypothesis:

1. The analysis showed that performance-based incentives do not significantly predict employee job satisfaction, despite employees reporting a high mean score of 4.78. The regression coefficient was $B = 0.107$, with $t = 1.144$ and $p = 0.255$, indicating a statistically insignificant positive relationship.
2. The analysis showed that immediate recognition does not significantly predict employee job satisfaction, despite employees reporting a high mean score of 4.73. The regression coefficient was $B = 0.047$, with $t = 0.573$ and $p = 0.568$, indicating an insignificant effect.
3. The analysis showed that work life balance support does not significantly predict employee job satisfaction, despite employees reporting a high mean score of 4.70. The regression coefficient was $B = 0.037$, with $t = 0.462$ and $p = 0.645$, showing a weak and statistically insignificant relationship.
4. The analysis showed that career development opportunities do not significantly predict employee job satisfaction, despite employees reporting a high mean score of 4.48. The regression coefficient was $B = –0.071$, with $t = –1.773$ and $p = 0.079$, indicating a weak negative and statistically insignificant relationship.

5.3 Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between reward system components and employee job satisfaction, focusing on four dimensions: performance-based incentives, immediate recognition, work life balance support, and career development opportunities. The findings indicate that although employees hold highly positive perceptions of these reward components, none demonstrated a statistically significant influence on job satisfaction.

This suggests that while the organisation's reward system is perceived as fair and motivating, its impact on satisfaction may have plateaued implying that employees may now consider these rewards as standard organisational provisions rather than differentiating motivators. The study concludes that job satisfaction at 7Up Bottling Company may be shaped more by factors outside the formal reward structure, such as organisational culture, management style, and employee engagement practices.

Overall, the study establishes that the existence of a comprehensive reward system alone does not guarantee enhanced job satisfaction. For rewards to significantly influence satisfaction, they must be dynamic, individually meaningful, and consistently aligned with employees' evolving expectations.

5.4 Recommendations

From the research analysis and conclusions above, the following recommendations are made:

1. **Performance-Based Incentives:**

   Although performance-based incentives did not significantly predict job satisfaction, their role in maintaining employee motivation remains important. Management should periodically review and diversify the incentive structure to ensure that rewards remain meaningful and reflective of current performance expectations. Introducing non-monetary incentives such as recognition awards, team-based bonuses, and professional development rewards could strengthen the motivational and satisfaction potential of the reward system.

2. **Immediate Recognition:**

   Since immediate recognition was not found to significantly affect job satisfaction, supervisors should ensure that recognition practices are personalized, sincere, and specific to individual contributions. Rather than generic praise, recognition should highlight tangible achievements and be tied to clear performance outcomes. This will help maintain its reinforcement value and improve its emotional impact on employees.

3. **Work–Life Balance Support:**

   Although employees rated work life balance support highly, its non-significant effect suggests that formal policies alone may not suffice. Management should ensure that flexible work arrangements and wellness programs are genuinely practiced and not merely documented. Supervisors should be trained to implement workload adjustments and empathetic scheduling practices that genuinely improve employees' sense of balance and well-being.

4. **Career Development Opportunities:**

   The insignificance of career development opportunities in predicting job satisfaction suggests a gap between policy and perceived outcomes. Management should link training and development programs more clearly to promotion opportunities and measurable career progression. Employees must see direct and timely benefits from their participation in professional development initiatives for such programs to meaningfully enhance satisfaction.

5.5 Contribution to Knowledge

This study provides empirical evidence on the relationship between reward system components and employee job satisfaction in the Nigerian manufacturing sector. Unlike prior studies that report strong positive associations, this research demonstrates that even when employees perceive their reward system positively, such perceptions do not necessarily translate into higher satisfaction levels.

The findings highlight that job satisfaction is influenced not only by the presence of reward practices but also by how employees interpret their value and fairness. This study therefore contributes to the growing literature by showing that reward systems, when uniformly positive, may lose their distinguishing motivational power a phenomenon that underscores the need for adaptive and individualized reward strategies.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

While this study has provided valuable insights into the relationship between reward system components and employee job satisfaction, several areas remain open for future investigation. Subsequent research could explore additional organisational variables such as organisational culture, leadership style, and employee engagement, in order to determine how these factors, interact with reward systems to shape overall job satisfaction.

Future studies may also consider conducting comparative analyses across manufacturing and service sectors to identify potential differences in the effectiveness of reward practices across industries. Expanding the sample size and geographic coverage to include multiple organisations and regions would further enhance the generalizability and robustness of the findings.

To gain deeper understanding, researchers should adopt qualitative approaches such as interviews, focus group discussions, or case studies to capture employees' personal experiences and perceptions of reward practices in greater depth. Finally, advanced statistical methods such as Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) are recommended to examine potential mediating and moderating effects among reward system components, job satisfaction, and related organisational outcomes such as commitment, performance, and retention.

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APPENDIX

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

Dear Sir/Madam,

APPEAL FOR THE COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

My name is Lydia Oyinmeyeseya Odi, and I am an undergraduate student in the above named Department. As part of the requirement for the programme, I am conducting a research on **"Reward Systems on Employee Job Satisfaction"**. In this regard, you have been randomly selected as a member of the sample. I wish to assure you that your responses will be treated in strict confidence and used solely for academic purposes. Thank you for being so cooperative.

Yours faithfully

Lydia Oyinmeyeseya Odi

SECTION A: PERSONAL DATA

Please tick [√] in the appropriate box.

1. Gender: Male [ ] Female [ ]

2. Age: Below 21 – 25yrs [ ] 26–30yrs [ ] 31–35yrs [ ] 36yrs and above [ ]

3. Marital Status: Single [ ] Married [ ]

4. Educational Qualification: FSLC [ ] SSCE [ ] BSc [ ] MSc [ ] PhD [ ] Others [ ]

5. Department: HR/Admin [ ] Production [ ] Finance/Account [ ] Sales/MKT [ ] Operations [ ] Plant Manager [ ]

6. Number of year worked in the organisation: 0-5 [ ] 6-10 [ ] 11-20 [ ] 21 years and above [ ]

SECTION B: GENERAL

Please tick in the appropriate box after each statement, using the Likert scale below: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Neutral (N), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

S/N	Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD
	Performance-Based Incentives					
7	My organisation links rewards directly to clearly measured performance outcomes.					
8	Performance-based incentives motivate me to exceed my usual level of effort.					
9	The criteria used to assess performance before granting incentives are transparent and fair.					
10	Incentives received accurately					

	reflect the value of my contributions to organisational success.					
11	Linking rewards to performance has strengthened my commitment to achieving organisational goals.					
Immediate Recognition						
12	My supervisor promptly acknowledges my achievements when I deliver good results.					
13	Quick and sincere recognition makes me feel valued and respected at work.					
14	Timely acknowledgment of my efforts increases my motivation to maintain high performance.					
15	Immediate recognition of my work has a positive impact on my overall job satisfaction.					
16	When recognition for my contributions is delayed or overlooked, I feel less encouraged.					
Work Life Balance Support						
17	My organisation offers flexible policies that help me balance work responsibilities and personal life.					
18	I am able to meet personal commitments without compromising my job performance.					
19	Work life balance initiatives reduce my stress and help prevent burnout.					
20	Organisational support for work life balance has improved my productivity and morale.					

21	Respect for personal time in this organisation makes me more satisfied with my job.					
Career Development Opportunities						
22	The organisation provides regular training and development programmes to enhance my skills.					
23	I have adequate opportunities to acquire new competencies that support my career growth.					
24	Career development initiatives prepare me effectively for higher responsibilities.					
25	Management invests in my long-term professional advancement through mentoring or promotion pathways.					
26	Access to career development opportunities increases my commitment and satisfaction with the organisation.					
Employee Job Satisfaction						
27	Overall, I am satisfied with my job in this organisation.					
28	The rewards and recognition I receive make me feel genuinely appreciated.					
29	My work environment enables me to perform my tasks effectively.					
30	I experience a strong sense of pride and fulfilment in the work I do here.					
31	Because I am satisfied with my job, I am motivated to remain with this organisation.					