EXTRINSIC REWARD SYSTEM AND EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT IN TELECOMMUNICATION FIRMS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examines the relationship between extrinsic reward system and employee commitment in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. An extant review of literature relevant to extrinsic reward system and employee commitment was ascertained. The study adopts a cross-sectional survey research design to obtained responses from the mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The population covered 198 employees from the respective state head offices of the four (4) telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria and a sample of 132 was determined using Taro Yamene's 1970 formula. After data cleaning, 129 copies of the questionnaire were finally used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics were used in assessing the distribution for both demographic and univariate analysis, while the Spearman's rank order correlation was adopted in the test for 6 hypotheses formulated for the study with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 26.0. The empirical findings revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between extrinsic reward system and employee commitment in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, the findings revealed that extrinsic reward system has a strong and positive significant relationship with the three measures of employee commitment (affective commitment, normative continuance commitment and continuance commitment). The study recommended that organizations should provide conducive workplace, create room for appropriate reward system such as compensation, allowance, promotion to employees in the organizations for them to be committed with their job.

Keywords: Extrinsic Reward System, Employee Commitment, Affective Commitment, Normative Continuance Commitment, Continuance Commitment

INTRODUCTION

Employee commitment has been a major discourse in the field of management and requires urgent attention on how best to make talented employees to remain as employees in a given organization. The super-ordinate goal of every business is to render service and make profit. This goal cannot be successfully achieved without the contributions and support of qualified talented employees. Without employees, organizations will not be able to produce business results, achieve organization goals, or meet its financial objectives (Johanim, Zurina, Khulida and Mohamad, 2012). Thus, employee commitment is very significant for the progress and success of the organization. From modern human resource perspective, human capital is the most valuable assets for the organizations. Thus, the managers need to recognize the value of their employees by encouraging them to remain for their resource talent to be used, and also discourage them from looking elsewhere for better opportunities (Mello, 2011).

Subsequently, empirical and theoretical studies have at different time and contexts affirmed the indispensability of employees' unflinching commitment and dedication in the pursuit and realization corporate goals. For instance, Farndale, Ruiten, Kelleher and Hailey. (2011) assert that employee commitment is an essential ingredient that promotes organizational goal attainment. Having the best strategy in place and appropriate organizational architecture is not a guarantee that an organization will be effective. This can only be complimented when organizational members are motivated to perform at a high level. However, when an organization undertakes to satisfy the needs of employees, it triggers a desire in the employee to return this favour with hard work and commitment. Thus, identifying the needs of the employees and answering it is the most basic approach of every organization to earn their commitment to organizational goals and objectives (Chughtai, 2008).

Owing to the significance attached to employee's commitment, several empirical studies have been using different predictor variables other than extrinsic reward to provide solution associated to the problem of employee commitment. For instance, Muhammad, Sobia, Annela and Tahira (2012) examined the role of organizational justice in organizational commitment with moderating effect of employee work attitudes. The findings revealed that, organizational justice have a significant relationship with employee work attitudes. Also, Don-Baridam (2017) examined emotional intelligence and commitment in three industrial sub-sectors in Rivers State and the results of our findings showed that there is positive and significant relationship between the two main variables of the study, namely; emotional intelligence and organizational commitment and some of the components of these variables. Onu, Akinlabi & Adegbola (2018) investigated a study on work life balance and normative commitments of employees in the selected Deposit Money Banks in Ogun State, Nigeria. The results revealed that leave policy had significant effect on normative commitment.

Inspite of all these Studies carried out, organizations are still challenged with the problems of low and absence of employee commitment which thus manifest in diverse ways. For instance, the problem of regular employee turnover experienced by organization is a manifestation low commitment to remain the organization which may be caused by several organizational factors like poor compensation, anti-employee policies, unhealthy work environment etc. Another manifestation of poor and absence of commitment is when employees engage deviant work behavior such as lateness to work, finding excuses to leave the work premises before official closing hour etc. These issues validate the view of Donwa, Mgbame and Ogbeide (2015) when the authors revealed that many Nigerian workers are engaged in unethical practices which are completely outside the terms of their employment contract.

It is however obvious that employee commitment is not only reliant on organizational justice, corporate ethical value, job satisfaction, work life balance and emotional intelligence (Muhammad, Sobia, Annela & Tahira, 2012; Hunt, Wood & Chonko, 1989; Don-Baridam, 2017; Onu, Akinlabi & Adegbola, 2018). Therefore, in contemporary organization management, extrinsic reward system is adjudged to be an effective tool used by human resource specialists and managers alike to enhance employee commitment. This is because such managerial action according to Thorsen (2006) helps to enhance employees' selfbelief; improve their confidence, financial standing, wellbeing and serve as enthusiasm for their job and effectiveness.

Extrinsic reward system is born as a means to help businesses to satisfy their most important needs which are to attract, retain, motivate and engage staff, not just by means of salary increases, golden handcuffs and the like, but in a more effective way capable of producing long-lasting results. However, plethora of studies have been conducted by researchers regarding employee commitment, Sadly, to the best of our knowledge, we have not spotted any theoretical concern that specifically examined the relationship between extrinsic reward system and employee commitment. Therefore, in tandem with the identified literature gap, this study examined the relationship between extrinsic reward system and employee commitment in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

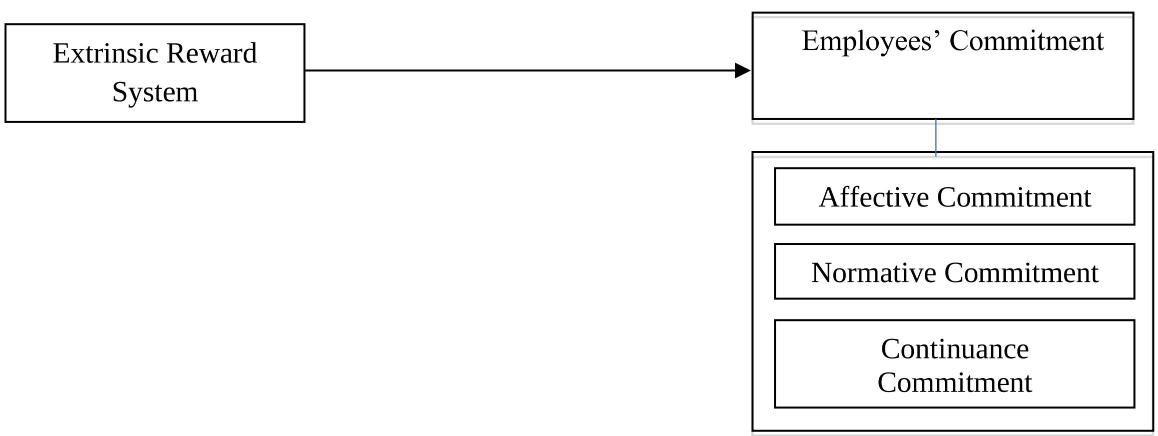

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Relationship between extrinsic reward and employee Commitment in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria
Source: Author's Research Work 2023.

To achieve the purpose of this study, the following research questions was put forward:

i. What is the relationship between extrinsic reward and affective commitment of mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria?

ii. What is the relationship between extrinsic reward system and normative commitment of mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria?

iii. What is the relationship between extrinsic reward system and Continuance commitment of mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Foundation

The underpinning theory for this study will be anchored on the Equity Theory**.**

Equity Theory

In this study, equity theory is the baseline theory that underpins this study. Equity theory was proposed by John Stacey Adams in 1963 and has a one major proposition which is the comparison of one's inputs and outcomes to others inputs and outcomes and as a result of this comparison one might experience equity or inequity. This proposition is very clear and parsimonious unlike many theories in the social science. Ever one can understand this theory since it has to deal with our feelings toward equity and justice (Eisenhardt, 2009). These are very important issues to humans and that is why people will be inclined to understand this theory more clearly (Rice, 1993). Equity theory centers on the principle of equity and justice with regards to employees' rewards as practiced by management in the work place.

It shows efforts taken by management to offset negative feelings of inequity and uphold the principle of fairness by treating all employees, especially as regards rewarding their efforts fairly (Mokhtar & Nasser 2015). Thus, employees tend to be more satisfied, happier and more motivated if rewards such as pay, fringe benefits, recognition promotion and job security are equitably and fairly distributed in the work place, but dissatisfied when these rewards are not commensurate with their efforts and in comparison to what their counterparts receive in other organizations. Hence, the greater the fairness perceived by employees with rewards, the higher the satisfaction and vice versa. Therefore, Akuoko and Donkor (2012) suggest some practical implications of equity theory which include; providing managers with a better explanation on how beliefs and attitudes affect employees' job satisfaction and performance, emphasizes the need for managers to pay attention to employee's perceptions of what is fair and equitable, providing employees with the opportunity to appeal against decisions that affects their welfare, helping managers to promote co-operation and team work among group members by treating them equally.

Conceptual Review

Extrinsic Reward System

Extrinsic rewards system fulfills employees' monetary factors or hygiene factors and thus do not let him start thinking about leaving the company. Examples include; pay rise, bonuses, paid leaves, annual recreational plans etc. Ahmed (2009) confirms that there is a statistically significant relationship between reward and recognition respectively, also motivation and satisfaction. Carraher (2006) advocate that there should be an effective extrinsic reward system to retain the high performers in the organization and reward should be related with their productivity. All incentive inclinations cause people to behave in certain patterns, this means that in every organization the employees behaviour determines the level of the incentives been given to them by the employer or the management. This seriously makes relationship between the employees and the employer to be threatened, unless the organizational incentives are understood and used properly. Conrad (2006) posits that financial incentives as the term is used in this work can be described as the influence that payment to organization and individuals have on the consumers. In this work, financial incentives are directed towards improving inequality of work in the oil and gas industry in Port-Harcourt. Robinson (1999) posits that financial incentives can be manipulated to affect employee's decisions. The challenge to funders or payers is to assemble the mix or blend of financial incentive rules and monitoring efforts that result in the employee productivity. The greater the costs of these activities, the less likely that financial incentive are used. The effectiveness of any financial incentive scheme in eliciting changes in employee's productivity depends not only on the amount and type of payment, e.g. staff preference for monetary versus other incentives such as autonomy, security, and conducive working environment and self-development opportunities.

Concept of Employee Commitment

Employee's commitment refers to an employee's belief in the organization's goals, values and desire to remain a member of the organization and loyalty to the organization (Mowday, 1979). According to Khan, Tarig, Hamayoun and Bhutta (2014) employee's commitment is an attitude that reflects an employee's loyalty to the organization and this is an ongoing process through which members of organization can express their concern for the organization and its continued success and well-being. Agada and Zeb-Obipi (2018), defined organizational commitment as a sustainable binding force or mind-set that propels an individual to stay and work dedicatedly and whole-heartedly to achieve organizational goals. They argued that employee commitment is of a critical importance for the success of the organization. Employee commitment is the emotional bond or attachment between the employees and their organization (Don-Baridam, 2017).

Affective Commitment

Affective commitment can be explained as a problem sense of identification with or involving in organization (Yousef, 2000). Mayer and Allen (1991) stated that such characteristics as personal, structural, occupational and experimental ones are preliminary conditions of affective commitment. The affective components refer to the employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in, the organization (Mayer and Allen, 2006). Affective commitment may be a measure of the relative strength of an individual's involvement with the organization. Affective commitment shows the extent to which the individual identifies with the organization, (identification, involvement and emotional attachment). Affective commitment suggests that, a committed employee is generally described as one who stays with an organization, attends work regularly, puts in a full day and more, protects corporate assets, and believes in organizational goals. A committed employee should, in theory, contribute to a competitive edge for the organization in the competitive business environment.

Normative Commitment

Normative commitment is referred to as obligatory commitment to the organization (Setti, 2014). Normative commitment focuses on the individual's sense of obligation to stay with the organization. This commitment stems from an individual's moral obligation to stay with the organization regardless of the benefit he or she might receive by leaving (Radosavljevic, Cilerdzic & Dragic, 2017). Setti, (2014) define normative commitment simply as a feeling of obligation to remain with the organization. With this concept, employees retain membership because they feel they ought to do so. Radosavljevic, Cilerdzic & Dragic, (2017) further suggested that normative commitment might result from pressures exerted either prior to, or after, organizational entry. Normative commitment is heavily grounded upon values and personal norms; therefore, attempting to measure it presents unique challenges. Researchers have discovered that measuring normative commitment usually focuses on the extent to which a person believes he or she should be loyal and make sacrifices on behalf of the organization (Weiner, 1982).

Continuance Commitment

This aspect of commitment refers to an awareness of the costs associated with learning the organization. Employees with strong continuance commitment will remain in organization because they need organization. The continuance components refer to commitment based on the cost that the employees associate with learning the organization. It may be primarily affected by perceptions of external considerations for "side bets" such as retirement benefits and pension plans. It is akin to calculative commitment, built on side bet theory. Committed employees are more likely to remain with the organization, work toward the attainment of organizational goals, exert high levels of effort on behalf of the organization and show acceptance of the organization's major goals and values. Continuance commitment describes an individual's need to continue working for the organization based on the perceived costs associated with leaving (Allen and Mayer, 1997).

Empirical Review

Mugizi, Katuramu, Dafiewhare, Kanyesigye, (2020) conducted a study on rewards and work engagement of Non-Academic Staff: A Case of a Public University in Uganda. Specifically, the study analyzed relationship between intrinsic rewards and extrinsic rewards with work engagement of the support staff. Using a quantitative approach, the study adopted the correlational research design. Data were collected using a questionnaire survey. Data analysis involved descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive results revealed that while the respondents rated intrinsic rewards, vigour and dedication high, absorption and extrinsic rewards were moderate. Inferential analyses revealed that both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards had a positive and significant relationship with work engagement. It was concluded that both intrinsic and intrinsic rewards are essential for work engagement of employees.

Hussain (2019) aimed to examine the role of rewards, appreciation and work related stress on employee performance, taking into account the mediating function of perceived organizational support in call centres in Lahore, Pakistan. The basis of this research is quantitative design. The information was collected by questionnaire technique using a 5-point Likert Scale where 200 questionnaires was distributed to employees in 3 call centres in Pakistan and 180 respondents were noted. This research uses a straightforward random sampling technique. Results showed that benefits and appreciation for employees have a substantial and beneficial impact on employee performance, while stress at work has a substantial and negative impact on employee performance. Findings also disclosed that perceived organisational assistance substantially and fully mediates the connection between rewards, recognition, workstress and performance of employees.

Ngwa, Adeleke, Agbaeze, Ghasi, Imhanrenialena, (2019) conducted a study on the effect of reward system on employee performance among selected manufacturing firms in the Litoral Region of Cameroon. This research work is a survey which makes use of a sample of 538 employees drawn from a population of 5146 employees of ten selected manufacturing firms within the Cameroon Littoral Region. The sample was selected by the use of the Cochran's formula for finite population sample at a 95% confidence level. The major source of data used for the study was primary data and the instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. The findings revealed that, profit sharing had a significantly positive effect on employee commitment in manufacturing firms; flat rate systems had a significantly negative effect on employee work values in manufacturing firms; and collective bargaining reward systems had a significantly positive impact on employee cohesiveness in manufacturing firms.

Don-Baridam (2017) examined emotional intelligence and organizational commitment in three industrial sub-sectors in Rivers State. Using data from 65 entrepreneurs, randomly drawn from three industrial sectors - tailoring, furniture and water bottling, in Rivers State, the Spearman‘s rank order correlation was used to measure the relationship between the components or proxies of the independent variable and the measures of the dependent variable. The results of our findings showed that there is positive and significant relationship between the two main variables of the study, namely; emotional intelligence and organizational commitment and some of the components of these variables. Based on the empirical findings, we hypothesized as follows:

Ho$_1$: There is no significant relationship between extrinsic reward system and affective commitment of mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho$_2$: There is no significant relationship between extrinsic reward system and normative commitment of mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho$_3$: There is no significant relationship between extrinsic reward system and continuance commitment of mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a cross-sectional survey research design to obtained responses from the mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The population covered 198 employees from the respective state head offices of the four (4) telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria and a sample of 132 was determined using Taro Yamene's 1970 formula. After data cleaning, 129 copies of the questionnaire were finally used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics were used in assessing the distribution for both demographic and univariate analysis, while the Spearman's rank order correlation was adopted in the test for 6 hypotheses formulated for the study with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 26.0.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alphas of Study Variable

No. of items	Variables	Alpha (α)
3	Extrinsic Reward System	0.855
9	Employee Commitment	0.866

Source: Research Data, 2023.

The adopted benchmark for the study reliability was based on Nunally's 1971 criterion of 0.70 for the social sciences (Baridam, 2001) where coefficients (a > 0.70) are considered as adequate and reliable while coefficients (a < 0.70) is considered as inadequate and therefore unreliable. Table1 shows that all variables surpass the minimum bench mark set by Nunally's 1971 criterion of 0.70

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Bivariate Analysis (Test of Research Hypotheses)

The bivariate level of analysis for this study is concerned with the presentation of the results for the tests of the hypothetical statements of null significant association between Extrinsic Reward System and the measures of employee commitment, the associations in this section are tested using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient at a 95% confidence interval. The study adopts a criterion and significance value of 0.05, based on its level of confidence (95%).

Extrinsic Reward System and Measures of Employee Commitment

Table 2: Association of Extrinsic Reward Systems and Affective Commitment

			Extrinsic Reward System	Affective Commitment	Normative Commitment	Continuance Commitment
Spearman's rho	Extrinsic Reward System	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.644**	.641**	.789**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	129	129	129	129
	Affective Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.644**	1.000	.825**	.669**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	129	129	129	129
	Normative Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.641**	.825**	1.000	.613**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	129	129	129	129
	Continuance Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.789**	.669**	.613**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	129	129	129	129

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

Source: SPSS Output, 2023

Table 2 illustrates the result for the test on the relationship between extrinsic reward system and Measures of Employee commitment.

Decision rule: The decision rule which applies for all bivariate test outcomes is stated as follows: where P < 0.05, reject hypothesis on the basis or evidence significant relationship; and where P > 0.05, accept hypothesis on the basis of insignificant relationship between the variables.

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between extrinsic reward system and affective commitment in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 2 showed the relationship between extrinsic Reward System and Affective Commitment using Spearman's Rank-order Correlation Coefficients techniques. From the analysis the result showed the correlation coefficient of rho =0.644 which show the direction and strength of this relationship. The coefficient represents a strong positive correlation between extrinsic Reward Systems and Affective Commitment in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The test of significance shows that this relationship is significant at p 0.000<0.05 which makes possible to the generalization of our findings to the study population. Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between extrinsic reward systems and Affective commitment in deposit money banks in Rivers State.

Ho$_2$: There is no significant relationship between extrinsic reward systems and normative commitment in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 2 showed the relationship between extrinsic Reward Systems and normative Commitment using Spearman's Rank-order Correlation Coefficients techniques. From the analysis the result showed the correlation coefficient of rho =0.641 which shows the direction and strength of this relationship. The coefficient represents a strong positive correlation between extrinsic Reward System and normative Commitment in deposit money banks in Rivers State. The test of significance shows that this relationship is significant at p 0.000<0.05 which makes possible to the generalization of our findings to the study population. Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between extrinsic reward systems and normative commitment in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Ho$_3$: There is no significant relationship between extrinsic reward systems and continuance commitment in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 2 showed the relationship between extrinsic Reward Systems and continuance Commitment using Spearman's Rank-order Correlation Coefficients techniques. From the analysis the result showed the correlation coefficient of rho =0.789 which shows the direction and strength of this relationship. The coefficient represents a strong positive correlation between extrinsic Reward System and continuance Commitment in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The test of significance shows that this relationship is significant at p 0.000<0.05 which makes possible to the generalization of our findings to the study population. Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between extrinsic reward system and continuance commitment in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In view of the results generated from the study, it was established that organizational reward system significantly correlates with employee commitment in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The outcome of the analysis on how extrinsic reward system relates with employee commitment in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria revealed that there is a significant relationship between extrinsic reward system and employee commitment of mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria, given the p-value of 0.000 which is less than the level of significant of 0.05 ($p=0.000<0.05$). the hypothesis which was given in null form was thus rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted.

The findings of this study support the findings of Mugizi, Katuramu, Dafiewhare, Kanyesigye, (2020) that while the respondents rated intrinsic rewards, vigour and dedication high, absorption and extrinsic rewards were moderate. Inferential analyses revealed that both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards had a positive and significant relationship with work engagement. It was concluded that both intrinsic and intrinsic rewards are essential for work engagement of employees. It implies that it is in the interest of deposit money banks and the entire employees, managers should implore extrinsic rewards measure to enhance affective commitment of employees during work hours.

This finding also agrees with previous finding by Taufek, (2015) that, there is a relationship between reward system and work engagement. Four of the dimensions for Reward system are significant towards work engagement. The finding also supports the study by Koskey, & Sakataka, (2015) on the effect of reward on employee engagement and commitment at rift valley bottlers company. The proposition that financial incentives improve performance has both its proponents and opponents. To begin with, proponents consider financial incentives to be a potent influence, arguably the most potent influence, on employee performance and other desired behaviors (Skaggs, Dickinson, & O'Connor, 1992).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The workplace of every person can be considered as their second home. This environment must meet the psychological and mental needs of individuals in order to expect better results of their work. If the basic needs of employees are not met, they would find fewer opportunities for addressing the needs of the higher levels and consequently they will be less able to do their duties fully and properly and eventually their innovation and productivity will reduce and it leads to labour turnover. This is because every employee wants to rewarded. Experiencing a balanced work is considered a product of effective reward system and through effective reward system within the purview of extrinsic, employees are motivated to be committed to organizational attainment which in turn translates to corporate performance outcome. Therefore, in tandem with the findings of this study, we conclude that extrinsic reward system is a precursor of employee commitment in mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study recommends that Managers of mobile telecommunication firms in Rivers State, Nigeria should ensure to incorporate every aspect of extrinsic reward system laid down by the institutions as a sure means of gaining employee commitment which greatly ensure that all employees are part of the organizations entire goal. This can increase the variety of skills that every employee possesses which is a form of motivation.

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