LONG-TERM INCENTIVE PLAN AND EMPLOYEE RESILIENCE IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between long-term incentive plan and employee resilience in Federal Universities in South South Nigeria. The study employed a cross-sectional survey research design with a population of 4,998 respondents from the seven Federal Universities in the South-South region of Nigeria. The taro yamen formula was used to determine a sample size of 370 participants. Data for the study was collected through a structured questionnaire, and a five-point Likert scale was used to measure the responses from the respondents. Data was analyzed using mean and standard deviations with tables to display the study variables, while inferential statistics such as the Spearman's rank order correlation statistics technique was used to test the research hypotheses with the aid of the statistical package for social science version 26.0. the findings indicate there is a strong positive correlation between long-term incentive plan and employee agility of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria with rho=0.863, 0.711 and 0.618 at significant level $p=0.00<0.05$for employee agility, employee responsiveness, and employee resourcefulness respectively, in the Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria. The study therefore recommends that the reward and compensation of workers should be designed in such a way that it identifies and effectively addresses their motivational needs through a long-term plan.

Keywords: Employee agility, resourcefulness, responsiveness long-term incentives

INTRODUCTION

The need towards building a resilience workforce and a better work environment for increase cooperation and corporate goal of the institution to be met can be steered through proper incentive. For futuristic purposes, institutions make long-term plan to keep employees in stimuli and in the right mind on the job through the incentive management plan. Long-term incentive is a sure way institutions attain this goal.

Rewards, as a form of motivation for employees, are integral to any organization's strategic plan, boosting morale towards target goals. Management periodically and annually examines these incentives in detail. Compensation includes incentives, salary, bonuses, and other benefits that firms offer their employees. In the 21st century, work scenarios have evolved, with employees demanding not only monetary rewards but also additional benefits. Satisfied employees, content with their work and salary, are more motivated and work harder, knowing they will be rewarded upon achieving certain goals. Conversely, dissatisfaction with job incentives leads to increased absenteeism and job turnover (Decenzo & Robbins, 2006). Organizations today operate in dynamic, highly competitive environments and must respond quickly to changing customer demands (Najanja, Maina & Najagi, 2013).

Motivation begins with the realization that individuals have needs or expectations they seek to achieve, driving them towards desired goals. Fulfillment of these goals provides a sense of accomplishment or satisfaction, ultimately leading to performance and productivity. As such, company incentives are influenced by the need to achieve desired outcomes in employee satisfaction, motivation, and performance (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014).

Okeke et al. (2020) observed that various forms of incentives are used to inspire employees to achieve targeted performance and meet corporate goals. These incentives include internal and external incentives, performance-based rewards, membership-based recognition, and monetary and non-monetary rewards. In the absence of these incentive plans or rewards, non-academic senior staff may develop attitudes or behaviors that disrupt the smooth running of the academic calendar and other processes. Such disruptions could lead to delayed results, admission delays, poor attitudes toward duty discharge, and numerous other issues. If these negative behaviors persist, they could cause a gradual decay in the system and hinder the attainment of the institution's set goals and performance. The purpose of this study was therefore to examine the relationship between long-term incentive plan and employee resilience in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to:

i. Examine the relationship between long-term incentive plan and employee agility of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.
ii. Examine the relationship between long-term incentive plan and employee responsiveness of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.
iii. Examine the relationship between long-term incentive plan and employee resourcefulness of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

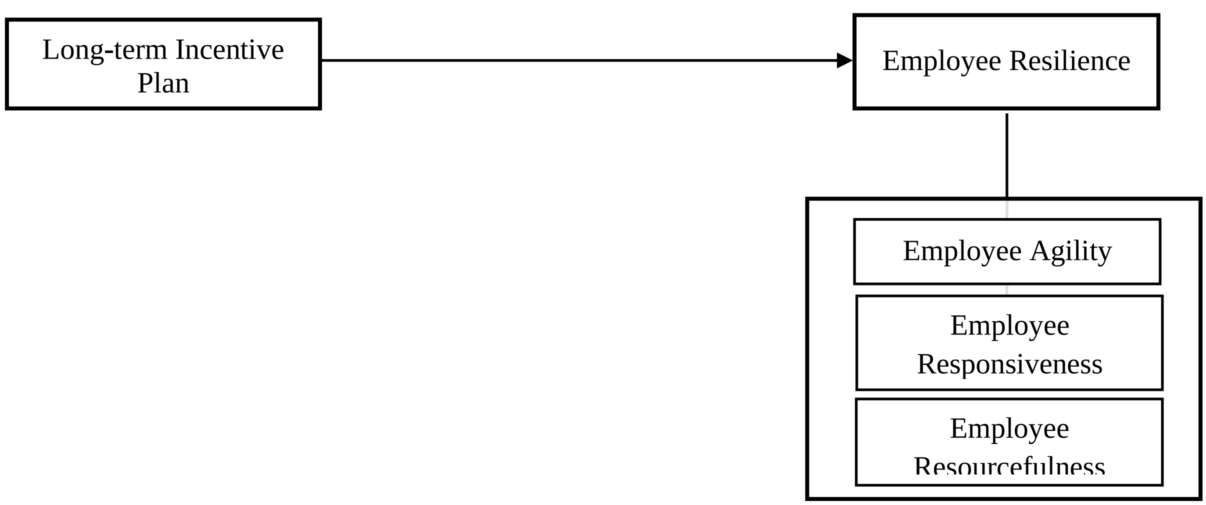

Figure 1: Long-term incentive plan and employee resilience

Source: Desk Research, 2024

Drawing from the objectves, the following research questions quided this study:

i. What is the relationship between long-term incentive plan and employee agility of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria?

ii. What is the relationship between long-term incentive plan and employee responsiveness of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria?

iii. What is the relationship between long-term incentive plan and employee resourcefulness of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

In carrying out this study, the Frederic Herzberg Two Factor Theory serves as the theoretical foundation of the study.

Frederic Herzberg Two Factor Theory

The two-factor theory, developed by Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman in 1959, investigates the sources of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. This theory emphasizes that these two sets of variables are closely related to the levels of job satisfaction, motivation, and performance. According to Herzberg, dissatisfaction arises from variables such as institutional policy and administration, working conditions, pay, quality of supervision, and fringe benefits. Herzberg argued that the factors contributing to job satisfaction are distinct from those causing job dissatisfaction. This means that high motivation does not come from addressing dissatisfiers.

Ugwuokwo (2015) observed that, from Herzberg's perspective, motivations enhance job satisfaction, high performance, and productivity, while dissatisfiers cause disappointment, frustration, and ineffectiveness in the workplace. According to Herzberg, extrinsic hygiene factors, which are external to the work itself, do not contribute to job satisfaction when present, but their absence leads to job dissatisfaction (Perrachioheet et al., 2008). This implies that removing dissatisfaction characteristics from a job does not necessarily make the job satisfying. Instead, the opposite of satisfaction is no satisfaction, and the opposite of dissatisfaction is no dissatisfaction.

Relating this theory to the socio-cultural scenario in Nigeria, particularly in tertiary institutions, it is evident that motivation serves as a catalyst, inducing workers to give their best, thereby improving performance and increasing productivity. Therefore, incentives for workers and a positive organizational culture are crucial measures to enhance work output through increased resilience of employees. This can be achieved through remuneration (bonuses or allowances), career advancement, recognition, and other motivational factors.

Conceptual Review

Concept of Long-term Incentive Plan

Offering stock options is another widely used tool for rewarding managers. Stock options allow an employee to purchase company stock at a predetermined price. As a company's stock increases in value, the stock option allows shares to be purchased at a lower price. This incentive can encourage managers to exceed performance goals with the expectation that this will positively impact the company's stock value, thereby increasing the value of the stock options. An employee stock purchase plan, or ESPP, is a benefit some organizations offer that allows employees who take part to purchase shares of organization stock at a discount. Employees who choose to participate generally make contributions to the plan via payroll deductions. The deductions are held in the plan until a specified purchase date, at which point they are invested in the organization's stock. Again, some of these products, like in the university scenario, are commodities produced in which employees are allowed to own stocks and become stakeholders. For example, an agro-product and so on. A long service award is a way of recognizing and rewarding employee loyalty to an organization for a certain length of time.

Traditionally, Long Service Awards are presented to an employee for 5, 10, 15, 20, and 25 years of employment. Financial incentives mean the amounts paid to employees, either in the form of a lump sum or in the form of monthly payments, including all additional income for the individual. They are considered the oldest forms of incentives that are characterized by quick and immediate forms that make individuals feel immediate feedback on their effort. Money, whether it is in the form of wages, piecework or any other incentive pay, bonuses, stock options, company-paid insurance, or any other things that may be given to people for performance, is important. The way to ensure that money has meaning as a reward for accomplishment and as a way of giving people pleasure from accomplishment is to base compensation as much as possible on performance (Pamela, 2015). The following are the most popular financial incentive schemes: Bonus Incentive, Staff Mortgage Loan, Emergency Staff Loan (ESL), Cash Incentives, Piece Rate, Commission, Profit Sharing, Gain-sharing, Recognition, Career Development (Promotion), Working Conditions and Special Opportunities.

Concept of Employee Resilience

Resilient employees are in absolute control of situations. Resilience has been described as a positive response to stress (Luthar, 1993), which at the workplace helps employees to stay immune to the ill effects of stress and other difficult situations. They do not react strongly to adverse situations; they would instead respond calmly and with positive emotions. They can derive meaning from their work, perceive the intensity of the situation, and handle it steadily. Consequently, they complete their tasks according to expectations and avoid creating problems for others while displaying citizenship behaviours such as helping co-workers and actively participating in an organization's politics. Ryff and Singer (2003) argued that "resilience stimulated flourishing under hardship". Resilient people can pursue new knowledge and experiences and get into deeper relationships with others (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007).

The sense of exploring new experiences (Tugade, Fredrickson & Barrett, 2014) motivates employees to build social relationships at the workplace and engage in activities that are beyond their defined job roles. Further, resilient individuals are more likely to experience positive emotions even amid difficult situations. Literature suggests that positive emotions are linked to positive outcomes at the workplace (Fredrickson, 2001). This may also help employees to maintain the positive emotions that can further be translated into an affective attachment to the organization. King (2007) defined resilience as the magnitude to which an individual resisted disruptions affecting his or her work. Another essential characteristic of resilience is a meaningful life that includes meaningful work-life also. Resilient individuals can find meaning in what they do. Hence, resilience employees possess agility, responsiveness and are resourceful serves as the measures of employee resilience.

Measures of Employee Resilience

Employee Agility

According to Cambridge University, the meaning of agility is the ability to think quickly and clearly. Now when you relate the same with a workplace, the importance of the word “workplace agility” becomes much more straightforward. Workplace agility defines an organization’s ability to work swiftly, seamlessly, and cohesively to generate increased productivity and engagement levels.. Agility is a movement that took off in 2001 as a set of values and principles articulated by the Agile Manifesto. In due course, the Manifesto spawned various management methodologies including Scrum, Devops, Lean, and Kanban. Over time, it evolved into a movement of people with a specific mindset (Denning, 2018), and the term ‘agility’ has become a commonly cited business imperative and has spread to various sectors (Gallup, 2018). “Employee agility refers to the capability of employees to immediately and appropriately respond to external market exchanges” (Sherehiy, 2008; Alavi *et al*., 2014; Alavi, 2016).

The agility trait also helps an organization adapt and blend in well with the developments and changes that occur with time across the firm. This scenario of workplace has its share of benefits that help in the organization’s growth and progress. This include: scope of flexibility, flattens the hierarchy tree, promotes diversity andimproved well-being and satisfaction in an agile environment, the employees need not practice presenters where you have to turn up to work just to mark your presence and merely be seen at your desk from 8-4pm. An agile workplace opens up the opportunity to implement a much more flexible schedule for the employees. If employees feel that they cannot achieve productivity after 3 or 4 pm, they can switch up the work environment and renew the energy to work more. That ultimately results in increased productivity and enthusiasm. This flexibility has made some organization allow some of their employee work from home as witness in COVID-19 pandemic which are still applied to date in some organisation.

Employee Responsiveness

Responsiveness is an approach you can intentionally cultivate, by paying attention to what the other person says, and responding directly to it before shifting the focus of the conversation to yourself. Give up some control and let the other person play. You will find that the results can be rather amazing. There is so little responsiveness going on in most organization that when you are responsive, you separate yourself as being somewhat special and interpersonally valuable. Managers who cultivate appropriate responsive measures tailored toward employee not only is he/she building responsiveness in the employee but as well increasing productive time and resources of the organization. For example, employee who pays attention to details of communication when with the supervisor in workplace will hardly want the supervisor repeating his/her self thereby wasting productive time.

Employee with high level responsiveness outperforms its competitors in terms of deliverables (Inmam, *et al*, 2011). This responsiveness reflects "the efficiency and effectiveness with which employees' sense, interpret, and act on organization stimuli (Garrette, *et al*, 2009). Organizational responsiveness refers to the capacity to reconfigure or modify systems and processes to suits and effectively addressing the gaps or needs of the particular context of the organization (Butler & Riveria, 2020). This implies the organization managers' set prioritized goals tailored towards meeting organizational needs through its employee responsiveness in achieving these needs. This proactive measure of responsiveness abounds out of innovative culture of the employee in attainment of set goals. Employees' become driver of processes through their responsiveness. Strategies that engender responsiveness to team is as follows: Listen and empathize, prioritize and delegate, learn and improve, act and follow up, balance and refill and set clear expectation.

Employee Resourcefulness

Resourcefulness is defined as the ability and creativity to cope with difficult situations, or unusual problems. It is about problem-solving and getting things done in the face of obstacles and constraints. This means approaching what's in front of you and optimizing what you have, whether you're producing something new or just thinking about how to do something better. It takes imagination and persistence. Employee resourcefulness alludes to physical, social, or essential leadership components of work which are utilitarian in achieving authoritative destinations, limit grievances, and the related costs, and sustain personal growth and advancement (Bakker& Demerouti, 2007). Competencies can be considered as the basic components of a manager’s resourcefulness while dealing with leader-ship tasks. Although technical and routine task-related skills are often necessary for successful execution of managerial tasks, such skills will remain dormant and non-functional without the meditational cognitive competencies.

It is through these competencies that managers decide what, when and how to utilize the skills. The components of resourcefulness can be categorized under three generic types. These are related to self-management of affective arousal and expression (affective competence), of thought processes, beliefs and expectations (intellectual competence), and of intentions and action orientations (action-oriented competence). Employee that has work creativity has the general ability to work applying their energies into finding better methodologies for serving customers and meeting their wants. Ingenious laborers are required to defeat issues in the workplace by gathering and using the assets. The research presents proof that activity cleverness has a favorable result on CO [Licata JW, Mowen JC, et al, 2008]. Prior investigations demonstrate that accessibility of occupation assets, e.g., prizes, preparing and advancement openings, the executives and supervisory help and strengthening lead to an increment in the activity fulfillment of workers and OC, and decline the aims of the representatives to consider business somewhere else.

Empirical Review

Daniel (2019), investigates the effects of incentives on employee’s productivity. The study was limited to a selected bank in Nigeria with a focus on Guaranty Trust Bank in Abuja. The study targeted Senior Management, Middle Level Management in Abuja branches. The study had the following objectives: The relationship between incentive and productivity of employee’s in organisations, to determine the influence of employee’s productivity incentives on employee productivity in the organization, to analyze the link between incentive and employee productivity in organizations in Nigeria. From a total of one hundred and fifty eight (158) copies of the questionnaire distributed to the respondents, one hundred and eight (108) copies representing 68.2% were duly completed and returned while fifty (50) copies representing 31.8% were not returned. The questionnaire was designed in Likert scale format. The researchers conducted a pre-test on the questionnaire to ensure the validity of the instrument. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient was used to test the hypotheses. The findings of this study revealed that there was a positive relationship between incentives and productivity, alongside monetary incentives, another key factor in motivating employees is to involve them in the process aimed at attaining organizational effectiveness because without their co-operation the organization cannot perform. The study recommends the establishment of a unit to look at issues of incentives that will enhance productivity.

Overall, the literature suggests that long-term incentive plans can positively influence employee agility by fostering a sense of stability, commitment, and ownership among employees, aligning their interests with the organization's long-term goals and vision. By incentivizing employees to invest in their long-term development, embrace change and uncertainty, and adapt quickly to new challenges, organizations can build a workforce that is agile, resilient, and capable of thriving in a dynamic and rapidly changing business environment. Leveraging long-term incentives to support and reinforce employee agility can help organizations build a culture of innovation, flexibility, and adaptability, positioning them for sustained success and growth in the long-term.

Dulebohn and Hochwarter (2017) explored the relationship between long-term incentive plans and employee responsiveness. The study found that long-term incentives can enhance employee responsiveness by promoting a sense of accountability, ownership, and commitment among employees. When employees are rewarded for sustained performance and achievement of long-term objectives, they are more likely to demonstrate a heightened sense of responsibility, proactively seek out solutions to emerging issues, and communicate effectively to address changing needs and priorities.Furthermore, a study by DeSimone et al. (2017) examined the impact of incentive structures on employee engagement and found that long-term incentive plans can support employee responsiveness by fostering a culture of continuous improvement, innovation, and adaptability. When employees have a stake in the organization's long-term success through incentives, they are motivated to stay informed about industry trends, customer preferences, and internal developments, enabling them to respond promptly and effectively to changing conditions and emerging opportunities.

Bergiel et al. (2008) explored the relationship between long-term incentive plans and employee resourcefulness. The study found that long-term incentives can enhance employee resourcefulness by fostering a sense of ownership, commitment, and empowerment among employees. When employees are rewarded for sustained performance and the achievement of long-term objectives, they are more likely to take initiative, think creatively, and explore innovative solutions to challenges, demonstrating a high level of resourcefulness in their work. Furthermore, a study by Grant (2008) examined the impact of incentives on employee motivation and creativity and found that long-term incentive plans can support employee resourcefulness by providing a sense of stability, security, and recognition for long-term contributions. When employees have a stake in the organization's long-term success through incentives, they are motivated to think strategically, seek out growth opportunities, and leverage their skills and talents effectively to drive innovation and problem-solving. The following hypothesized relationship was emerging from the extant literature reviewed to guide the study. Based on the empirical findings, we hypothesized as follows:

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between long-term incentive plan and employee agility of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between long-term incentive plan and employee responsiveness of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between long-term incentive plan and employee resourcefulness of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a cross-sectional research design. McNabb (2008) defined cross-sectional research design as a more flexible and versatile design given its broad application within most social research-based studies. The study population was 4,998 employees from the respective universities of the seven (7) federal universities in South-South, Nigeria. The number of workforces of the university was obtained through discussion with the respective university. The sampling technique adopted was used for the study to ensure an equal chance of being selected. This study involved a finite population, so a sample size that could possibly be reached was obtained. The sample size of the study was determined using Taro Yamene's 1970 formula. The sample size for the study was 370.

The instruments for the study were a self-structured questionnaire and an interview. The questionnaire was founded on the 5-point Likert scale of strongly agreed (SA) (5 points), agreed (A) (4 points), undecided (U) (3 points), agreed (A) (2 points), and strongly disagreed (SD) (1 point), respectively. The adopted benchmark for the study's reliability was based on Nunally's 1971 criterion of 0.70 for the social sciences (Baridam, 2001), where coefficients ($a > 0.70$) are considered adequate and reliable while coefficients ($a < 0.70$) are considered inadequate and therefore unreliable. The analytical tool employed was the Spearman Rank Order Correlation in other to test the stated hypotheses formulated for the study with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Bivariate Analysis

The bivariate hypothetical statements for the study are tested using the Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient. The Spearman is adopted as the correlation tool as a result of its non-parametric features (normality of distribution) and its suitability for data which is on the ordinal level of scaling. The Spearman's rank order correlation also allows for the assessment of the assumptions of ranking in the effect and associations between the variables. The study adopts a criterion and significance value of 0.05, based on its level of confidence (95%). **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. The extent of influence is on this basis assessed using the rho interpretations provided by Bryman and Bell (2003) as shown in table 1:

Table 1: Description on Range of correlation (rho) values and the corresponding level of association

Range of r with positive and negative sign values	Strength of Association
± 0.80 – 0.99	very strong
± 0.60 – 0.79	Strong
± 0.40 – 0.59	Moderate
± 0.20 – 0.39	Weak
± 0.00 – 0.19	Very weak

Source: Adopted from Ahaiauzu&Asawo, 2016, *Advance Social Research Methods*

The positive (+) sign in the values of (*rho*) indicates a positive relationship, while the negative (-) sign in the value of (*rho*) indicates an indirect/negative or inverse relationship. Thus, the sign of the *rho* explains the direction of association between the two variables.

Long-term Incentives Plan and Measures of Employee Productivity

Table 2 shows the result of correlation matrix obtained for long-term incentives plan and measures of employee resilience. Also displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes us able to answer our research question and generalize our findings to the study population.

Table 2: Correlations for Long-term Incentives Plan and Measures of Employee Resilience

			Long-term Incentive Plan	Employee Agility	Employee Responsiveness	Employee Resourcefulness
Spearman's rho	Long-term Incentive Plan	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.863**	.711**	.618**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
		N	339	339	339	339
	Employee Agility	Correlation Coefficient	.863**	1.000	.752**	.706**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
		N	339	339	339	339
	Employee Responsiveness	Correlation Coefficient	.711**	.752**	1.000	.828**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
		N	339	339	339	339
	Employee Resourcefulness	Correlation Coefficient	.618**	.706**	.828**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
		N	339	339	339	339

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Source: SPSS Output version 26.0, 2024

RQ 1: What is the relationship between long-term incentive and employee resilience of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria?

The correlation coefficient (rho) result in table 6 was used to answer research question 1. Table 2 shows a Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient (rho) of 0.868 on the relationship between long-term incentive and employee agility. This value implies that a very strong relationship between long-term incentive planand employee agility. The direction of the relationship indicates that the relationship is positive, implying that an increase in the employee agility was as a result of the presence of long-term incentive plan. Therefore, there is a very strong positive correlation between long-term incentive and employee agility of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

H_{O1}: There is no significant relationship between long-term incentive and employee agility of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Similarly displayed in the table 6 is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. From the result obtain from table 2, the test of significance shows that the relationship between long-term incentive and employee agility of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria is significant ($p=0.000<0.05$). Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between long-term incentive and employee agility of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Table 6 also shows a Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient (rho) of 0.711 on the relationship between long-term incentive and employee responsiveness. This value implies that a strong relationship between long-term incentive and employee responsiveness. The direction of the relationship indicates that the relationship is positive, implying that an increase in the employee responsiveness was as a result of the presence of long-term incentive plan. Therefore, there is a strong positive correlation between long-term incentive and employee responsiveness of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

H_{O2}: There is no significant relationship between long-term incentive and employee responsiveness of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Similarly displayed in the table 6 is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. From the result obtain from table 2, the test of significance shows that the relationship between long-term incentive and employee responsiveness of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria is significant ($p=0.000<0.05$). Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld.

Thus, there is a significant relationship between long-term incentive and employee responsiveness of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Table 6 also shows a Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient (rho) of 0.618 on the relationship between long-term incentive and employee resourcefulness. This value implies that a strong relationship between long-term incentive and employee resourcefulness. The direction of the relationship indicates that the relationship is positive, implying that an increase in the employee resourcefulness was as a result of the presence of long-term incentive plan. Therefore, there is a strong positive correlation between long-term incentive and employee resourcefulnessof non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

H_{O3}: There is no significant relationship between long-term incentive and employee resourcefulness of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Similarly displayed in the table 6 is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. From the result obtain from table 2, the test of significance shows that the relationship between long-term incentive and employee resourcefulness of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria is significant ($p=0.000<0.05$). Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between long-term incentive and employee resourcefulness of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The outcomes of the analysis on how long-term incentive plan relates with the measures of employee resilience of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria revealed that there is a strong and very strong relationship between long-term incentive plan and the measures of employee resilience (employee agility, employee responsiveness and employee resourcefulness) of non-teaching staff in Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria. The results resonate with other similar scholarly works. For instance, a study by Wang and Camm (2020) on the relationship between long-term incentive plans and employee agility.

The study found that long-term incentives can enhance employee agility by creating a sense of stability and commitment among employees, encouraging them to invest in their long-term development and stay committed to the organization's strategic goals. When employees are rewarded for sustained performance and achievement of long-term objectives, they are more likely to demonstrate resilience, adaptability, and a willingness to embrace change and uncertainty in the workplace. The findings corroborate with the study by Farndale et al. (2014) on the impact of incentive structures on employee engagement and found that long-term incentive plans can support employee agility by fostering a sense of ownership, autonomy, and alignment with the organization's long-term vision. When employees have a stake in the organization's future success through long-term incentives, they are motivated to invest in their continuous learning and development, seek out new challenges, and adapt effectively to changing business conditions.

The research also brought to the limelight the findings of Dulebohn and Hochwarter (2017) on the relationship between long-term incentive plans and employee responsiveness. The study found that long-term incentives can enhance employee responsiveness by promoting a sense of accountability, ownership, and commitment among employees. When employees are rewarded for sustained performance and achievement of long-term objectives, they are more likely to demonstrate a heightened sense of responsibility, proactively seek out solutions to emerging issues, and communicate effectively to address changing needs and priorities. Furthermore, a study by DeSimone et al. (2017) examined the impact of incentive structures on employee engagement and found that long-term incentive plans can support employee responsiveness by fostering a culture of continuous improvement, innovation, and adaptability. When employees have a stake in the organization's long-term success through incentives, they are motivated to stay informed about industry trends, customer preferences, and internal developments, enabling them to respond promptly and effectively to changing conditions and emerging opportunities.

Buttressing this, research carried out by Bergiel et al. (2008) on the relationship between long-term incentive plans and employee resourcefulness. The study found that long-term incentives can enhance employee resourcefulness by fostering a sense of ownership, commitment, and empowerment among employees. When employees are rewarded for sustained performance and the achievement of long-term objectives, they are more likely to take initiative, think creatively, and explore innovative solutions to challenges, demonstrating a high level of resourcefulness in their work. Furthermore, a study by Grant (2008) examined the impact of incentives on employee motivation and creativity and found that long-term incentive plans can support employee resourcefulness by providing a sense of stability, security, and recognition for long-term contributions. When employees have a stake in the organization's long-term success through incentives, they are motivated to think strategically, seek out growth opportunities, and leverage their skills and talents effectively to drive innovation and problem-solving. This study’s outcomes aligns with the afore-cited studies on the association between long-term incentive plan and employee resilience.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONNS

The university in her wisdom is poised with the sustainability of the employee through effective planning of long time incentive to strengthened her worker assurance and resilience. Long-term incentive plans extend beyond three years and are tied to long-term institutional goals and strategic achievements. The study shows that long-term incentive plans foster a long-term commitment to the institution and its evolving needs, encouraging employees to remain adaptable and forward-thinking. The influence of LTIPs on responsiveness is less direct but still significant, as they promote alignment with long-term objectives and strategic planning. Long-term incentive plans greatly enhance resourcefulness by allowing for thorough planning, experimentation, and innovation in resource management over an extended period.

The findings emphasize the importance of a diversified incentive management approach that leverages the strengths of LTIPs to enhance different dimensions of employee resilience. By aligning these plans with the culture of the organization, universities can foster a more adaptable, proactive, and resourceful workforce. Incentive plans that align with the cultural values and practices of the institution are more effective in promoting resilience.

Following the conclusions, the following recommendation is made:

i. The reward and compensation of workers should be designed in such a way that it identifies and effectively addresses their motivational needs through a long-term plan. When employees are rewarded for sustained performance and achievement of long-term objectives, they are more likely to demonstrate resilience, adaptability, and a willingness to embrace change and uncertainty in the workplace.

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