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# THE INFLUENCE OF MONETARY REWARDS ON EMPLOYEE WORK ATTITUDES IN TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES IN KABALE, UGANDA

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**ABSTRACT**
*The telecommunication industry in Uganda, particularly in Kabale, plays a crucial role in regional development. However, challenges related to employee behavior and reward structures hinder sustainable growth and organizational effectiveness. Existing research indicates a disconnect between reward policies and employee expectations, potentially leading to dissatisfaction and high turnover rates. This study therefore examined the influence of monetary rewards on employee work attitudes in telecommunication companies in Kabale, Uganda. The study utilized the descriptive survey design and the census sampling method. The target population comprised of employees in the telecommunications industry in Kabale, Uganda, with a sample size of 63 respondents. The study was guided by Expectancy theory and Social Exchange theory respectively. Data collection was achieved through a structured questionnaire whereas data analysis was done using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 28 through which descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized. In addition, linear regression was used in hypothesis testing. The findings reveal that monetary rewards ($\beta$ = .174, p = .013) have a significant positive effect on employee attitudes. The study therefore concludes that monetary rewards positively affects employee work attitudes in the telecommunications industry in Kabale, Uganda. The study recommends the implementation of recognition programs such performance awards, inclusion in high effect projects and implementation of employee of the month initiatives to enhance employee attitudes, boost productivity and organizational effectiveness.*
**KEY WORDS:** *Telecommunication Industry, Monetary Rewards, Salary Increments, Overtime Payouts.*

## INTRODUCTION
The concept of organizational rewards has evolved significantly from the industrial revolution to the modern era. Early management theorists, such as Taylor (1911), emphasized financial incentives and efficiency-based pay systems, arguing that monetary rewards were the primary drivers of employee motivation. Over time, research began to highlight the importance of non-monetary rewards, including job enrichment, career advancement, and work-life balance, which contribute to employees' intrinsic motivation (Herzberg, 1959; Vroom, 1964). In contemporary organizations, a combination of financial and non-financial rewards is widely recognized as a key strategy for enhancing employee engagement and work attitude (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020).

The relationship between organizational rewards and employee work attitudes has been extensively explored in management and human resource literature. Work attitudes encompass employees' perceptions, feelings, and behavioral inclinations toward their jobs, colleagues, and the organization as a whole (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Historically, employee attitudes have been linked to organizational success, with research indicating that satisfied and motivated employees contribute significantly to work attitude and overall business performance (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). The development of human capital theories emphasized the importance of incentives in shaping work behaviors, as rewards play a crucial role in fostering commitment, engagement, and retention (Becker, 1964).

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At a global level, organizations employ various reward systems to shape employee work attitudes. Rewards encompass both financial and non-financial incentives, including salaries, bonuses, promotions, career development opportunities, and work-life balance initiatives (WorldatWork, 2007). Scholars argue that rewards influence employee satisfaction, which in turn affects commitment and performance (Dinc, Zaim, Hassanin, & Alzoubi, 2022). In the United States, the emphasis on performance-based pay has demonstrated positive outcomes in shaping employees' engagement and retention rates (Prasetio, Indiyati, & Madiawati, 2021). European organizations, on the other hand, focus on holistic reward structures that integrate job security, work-life balance, and career growth opportunities as determinants of employee satisfaction (Rehman, Mohamed, & Ayoup, 2019).

In Africa, employee work attitudes are influenced by economic conditions, cultural values, and organizational reward policies. Many organizations face challenges in structuring competitive reward systems due to economic constraints (Koo, Chua, Lee, & Han, 2020). Research by Awino and Kipsang (2020) found that in Kenya, financial incentives such as bonuses and wage increments significantly affect employee motivation, whereas in South Africa, non-monetary rewards, such as workplace recognition and flexible work arrangements, have been associated with increased job satisfaction and reduced turnover rates (Nurhasanah et al., 2023). In Africa, the telecommunications industry has grown rapidly, driven by economic liberalization, digital transformation, and increased mobile phone penetration. However, managing human capital remains a significant challenge due to high employee turnover, poor reward structures, and job dissatisfaction (Njuguna & Moronge, 2020). Many African countries have attempted to implement comprehensive reward systems, yet issues such as inadequate salaries, limited career growth opportunities, and poor work-life balance persist, affecting employee motivation and overall work attitude (Kigotho & Wainaina, 2022).

In Uganda's telecommunication industry, the role of organizational rewards in shaping employee work attitudes remains critical. The sector, which plays a pivotal role in economic development, has experienced significant challenges related to employee retention and engagement (Kabugo-Musoke & Isabirye, 2018). Studies suggest that reward systems in Uganda are not always aligned with employee expectations, leading to dissatisfaction and high turnover rates (Wanjiku & Karanja, 2019). Moreover, research highlights that when employees perceive fairness in rewards and recognition, they exhibit higher levels of commitment and job satisfaction (Ssekiziyivu & Katamba, 2020).
Objective and Hypothesis of the study
The following were the objective and hypothesis of the study:
$O_1$: To assess the influence of monetary rewards on employee work attitude in telecommunications companies in Kabale Uganda.

$HO_1$: Monetary rewards have no significant effect on employee work attitude in telecommunications companies in Kabale Uganda

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational rewards are the benefits, compensations, and incentives offered by an organization to employees in recognition of their contributions toward achieving organizational goals. These rewards play a crucial role in attracting, retaining, and motivating employees. According to Cao et al. (2022), rewards are vital for maintaining a motivated workforce and enhancing performance. Similarly, Gupta and Shaw (2020) argue that a well-designed reward system fosters employee satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Organizational rewards refer to the various incentives and benefits that an organization provides to its employees to motivate them, enhance their performance, and foster loyalty. These rewards can be intrinsic or extrinsic and are designed to recognize and reinforce desirable behaviors and outcomes within the workplace (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). The concept of organizational rewards is grounded in motivation theories, such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which suggest that rewards can fulfill employees' needs and drive their engagement and work attitude (Robinson & Judge, 2019).

Monetary rewards include financial incentives such as bonuses, salary increases, and profit-sharing plans. Monetary rewards are often linked to performance metrics and are effective in driving short-term performance improvements

(Kuvaas, 2020). Studies show that competitive compensation packages can attract and retain top talent in organizations (Gerhart & Rynes, 2020).

## EMPIRICAL REVIEW

### Monetary Rewards and Employee Work Attitude

Awino and Korir (2020) conducted a study aimed at examining the influence of financial incentives on employee work attitude. Utilizing an explanatory research methodology, the study involved 435 manufacturing companies as participants. The selection of respondents was carried out through proportionate, stratified, and simple random sampling techniques. The results indicated that reward systems exert a positive and significant influence on employee work attitude. In a similar vein, Walters, Bamidele, Emmanuel, Nwanneka, and Benedict (2019) explored the effects of reward schemes on employee work attitude in Cameroon. Their findings revealed that profit-sharing and collective bargaining significantly enhance employee work attitude within manufacturing firms, while flat-rate systems were found to adversely affect work values.

Gholitabar, Costa, and Tourian (2020) undertook a descriptive study to assess the effect of monetary incentives on employee work attitude. Data collection was facilitated through the use of questionnaires and interview guides. The regression analysis indicated that financial incentives have a substantial positive effect on employee work attitude. Likewise, Chien, Mao, Nergui, and Chang (2020) examined the relationship between financial incentives and both employee and organizational work attitude, employing questionnaires and interview guides for data collection. The findings of this study confirmed that financial incentives significantly boost employee work attitude.

Darachart (2019) conducted a descriptive study in the Middle East to explore the influence of monetary incentives on employee work attitude. This research employed a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Data collection was facilitated through self-administered questionnaires and structured interviews. The analysis of the data utilized Pearson's correlation and regression methods. The results indicated that financial incentives significantly enhance employee work attitude. In a similar vein, Serhan, Salloum, and Abdo (2021) examined the relationship between financial incentives and employee work attitude, and established that such incentives also exert a substantial positive influence on work attitude levels.

Widodo and Damayanti (2020) investigated the effects of financial rewards on employee work attitude among 154 public vocational high school teachers in Indonesia. The analysis of the data was conducted using Pearson's correlation and regression techniques. The findings demonstrated that financial incentives positively affected both employee and organizational work attitude.

In the African context, issues of financial stability and economic empowerment are of paramount importance. There is a scarcity of research specifically addressing the effects of financial incentives on employee work attitude specifically in Uganda. Nevertheless, it is plausible to anticipate that financial incentives positively affect the work attitude of employees. For instance, a study conducted by Tugume and Kimuli (2021) in the banking sector revealed a positive correlation between financial rewards and employee work attitude. Employees who regarded their financial compensation as adequate demonstrated increased job satisfaction and work attitude levels. Providing competitive salaries and performance-based rewards can boost employee motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment, ultimately leading to enhanced work attitude. Furthermore, financial incentives play a crucial role in decreasing turnover rates and attracting as well as retaining skilled personnel, which in turn fosters work attitude.

### Theoretical framework

### Expectancy Theory

The Expectancy Theory was popularized by Wage Vroom in 1964, proposing that individuals' actions are geared toward maximizing expected satisfaction with intended outcomes. The theory posits that motivation is influenced by two key functions: the relationship between an individual's effort and the expected outcome, referred to as "effort-outcome expectancy," and the attractiveness of the intended outcome, known as "valence." These factors drive individuals to choose efforts that will yield their desired outcomes (Bonner & Sprinkle, 2002).

In the context of organizational rewards, the Expectancy Theory is highly relevant in shaping employee work attitudes. According to Vroom, money plays a crucial role in fulfilling personal desires, as it carries symbolic value associated with status and prestige. This explains why monetary incentives tend to have a greater valence compared to non-contingent incentives (Bonner & Sprinkle, 2002). Employees are more likely to exhibit positive attitudes toward work when they perceive a clear link between their efforts and tangible rewards.

Expectancy Theory suggests that employees' motivation and overall attitude toward work improve when rewards are structured based on effort and expectations. The effect of monetary incentives can be understood in two ways: first, financial rewards serve as a desirable outcome; second, monetary incentives hold higher expectancy than non-monetary incentives because they are strongly linked to employees' expectations of effort leading to valued rewards (Locke & Latham, 1990). When employees believe that their efforts will result in meaningful and desirable rewards, their attitude toward their work shifts positively, fostering greater engagement, job satisfaction, and commitment.

Pay serves as a tool that influences employees' attitudes by reinforcing behaviors associated with reward attainment. Since pay holds strong valence due to its instrumental power in fulfilling various needs—such as social esteem, physiological necessities, and personal aspirations—its presence in organizational reward systems significantly shapes employees' perceptions of fairness, recognition, and satisfaction. As a result, when organizations establish fair and transparent reward structures, employees are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward their work, exhibit higher morale, and feel valued within the workplace.

Managers may apply the principles of Expectancy Theory to influence employees' attitudes by ensuring that wages and other rewards are perceived as equitable and aligned with employees' expectations. When employees trust that their efforts will lead to fair rewards, they are more likely to display enthusiasm, dedication, and a positive outlook toward their work environment (Ertanın & Şafaklı, 2012). This aligns with Vroom's fair awarding systems theory, which states that "if the individual expectations are positively related to rewards, employees will manifest great interest, be committed, diligent, and work with elevated motivation.

In summary, the Expectancy Theory underscores the relationship between organizational rewards and employee work attitudes by highlighting how expectations of fair and meaningful rewards shape employees' perceptions of their work environment. When employees perceive rewards as directly tied to their contributions, they develop a more positive attitude toward their roles, fostering job satisfaction, loyalty, and engagement. The theory is instrumental in explaining how different types of rewards—monetary incentives, recognition rewards, skill-based pay, and empowerment rewards—significantly influence employees' attitudes, reinforcing the importance of structured and fair reward systems in organizations.

**Social Exchange Theory (SET)**
The Social Exchange Theory (SET) was conceptualized by Peter Blau in 1964. It explains the relationship between employees and organizations, emphasizing that employees' perceptions of the organization's intentions and attitudes toward them are reflected in the policies and procedures imposed by the organization's representatives. Human resource practices serve as a key indicator to employees, either strengthening or weakening their relationship with the organization (Whitener, 2001). According to Gergen (1969), there is a reciprocal exchange of resources where individuals or parties tend to repay deeds of others, whether positive or negative (Gouldner, 1960). As Blau (1964) states, "the exchanges are, however, influenced by the relationship between the actor and agent."

Social Exchange Theory (SET) centers on social behaviors that involve exchanges where individuals are motivated to obtain rewards, even though these exchanges entail some forfeited cost or value. According to the theory, people strive to maximize rewards while minimizing costs, and negative attitudes or dissatisfaction tend to arise when there is a perceived lack of equity or unfairness in the rewards relative to the effort invested (Redmond, 2015). A key element of this theory is the notion that rewards hold different values for different people; as Homans (1961) explains, employees assess rewards based on their personal significance and perceived fairness. Moreover, social rewards—such as respect, recognition, and acceptance—are derived from workplace interactions and significantly contribute to an individual's sense of belonging, satisfaction, and fulfillment (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). The concept of costs involves what is given up in an exchange, including factors like effort, time, or personal convenience (Homans, 1961), while profits refer to the net benefit realized when the rewards received exceed these costs. Lastly, equity and distributive justice are crucial, as Cook and Yamagishi (1983) suggest that relationships remain stable when rewards and costs are perceived as fairly distributed among partners, reinforcing fairness in workplace exchanges.

SET has been widely applied in organizational behavior, particularly in understanding supervisory and organizational support, justice, commitment, and workplace attitudes (Tepper & Taylor, 2003). In a workplace setting, SET conceptualizes the organization (or its representatives, such as supervisors) as the actor who engages in positive or negative exchanges with employees. Positive actions, such as fair compensation, recognition, and empowerment, lead employees to reciprocate with positive work attitudes, such as trust, loyalty, and commitment (Cropanzano & Rupp, 2008). Conversely, negative exchanges, such as unfair treatment, lack of recognition, or inequitable reward distribution, result in negative attitudes such as resentment, dissatisfaction, and disengagement (Gergen, 1969; Gouldner, 1960).

The process of social exchange fosters a relational bond between employees and the organization, reinforcing their commitment, trust, and sense of belonging (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). When organizations implement fair reward systems—such as monetary incentives, recognition-based rewards, skill-based pay, and empowerment rewards—employees perceive the organization as supportive and fair, thereby strengthening their positive attitude toward work. However, when employees experience inequity in rewards, they may develop negative attitudes characterized by decreased morale, detachment, and dissatisfaction (Schyns & Schilling, 2013).

Thus, SET is instrumental in explaining the connection between organizational rewards and employee work attitudes. Employees interpret rewards as signals of their value within the organization, shaping their perception of fairness, trust, and organizational commitment. Positive social exchanges in the form of well-structured reward systems encourage enthusiasm, loyalty, and engagement, whereas negative exchanges undermine these attitudes, leading to dissatisfaction and weakened organizational ties.

**Conceptual Framework**

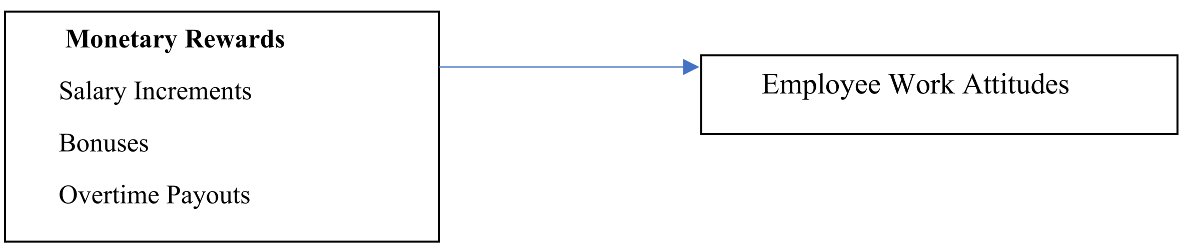


**Fig. 1: Conceptual framework**

**Source: Researchers, 2025**

The conceptual framework attempts to explain the relationship between monetary rewards and employee work attitudes. From the literature review, it is evident that monetary reward influence employee work attitudes ultimately affecting their engagement, retention and productivity.

## METHODOLOGY

The study utilized the descriptive survey design whereas the target population comprised of employees in telecommunication companies in Kabale, Uganda, with a sample size of 63 selected using the census method. Data collection was achieved through a structured questionnaire and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 28 was used for data analysis. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyze the quantitative data and hypothesis testing.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

**Response Rate**

During the data collection phase, research questionnaires were distributed to 63 employees of telecommunication organizations in Kabale, Uganda. Of these, 57 questionnaires were completed, yielding a response rate of 90.48%. Pielsticker and Hiebl (2020) assert that a response rate of 50% is deemed acceptable, 60% is considered good, and a rate of 70% or higher is categorized as very good. Furthermore, Cerar, Nell, and Reiche (2021) suggest that a response rate exceeding 70% is effective, indicating that the study population is sufficiently represented. This high response rate also contributes to the overall precision of the research findings. Consequently, the response rate achieved is

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viewed as both adequate and satisfactory for drawing conclusions in this study. A summary of the response rate is presented in the table below

**Table 1: Showing the response rate**

| Questionnaires | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Completed | 57 | 90.48 |
| Incomplete | 6 | 9.52 |
| **Total** | **63** | **100.0** |

**Descriptive analysis**

The objective of the study was to assess the influence of monetary rewards on employee work attitude in telecommunications companies in Kabale Uganda. The participants were requested to express their degree of agreement or disagreement regarding certain statements related to recognition rewards and employee work attitude. A Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 was utilized and the responses are displayed in the table below.

**Table 2: Showing descriptive statistics on monetary rewards**

| Statements | Mean | Std. Dev |
|---|---|---|
| I am satisfied with the salary increments I receive. | 2.75 | 0.981 |
| Bonuses motivate me to perform at a higher level. | 2.79 | 1.087 |
| Overtime pay is fair and reflective of my efforts. | 2.61 | 1.137 |
| I appreciate profit-sharing opportunities provided by the organization. | 3.48 | 1.062 |
| Performance-based incentives drive me to excel in my role. | 3.03 | 1.045 |
| Competitive compensation packages make me feel valued as an employee. | 2.92 | 0.908 |
| **Average mean/Std.Dev** | **2.93** | **1.037** |

Profit-sharing opportunities emerged as the most positively received monetary reward, with a mean score of 3.48 (SD = 1.062). This indicates that employees generally agree with profit-sharing opportunities provided by the organization. Performance-based incentives showed moderate positive effect, with a mean score of 3.03 (SD = 1.045). This suggests that employees tend to agree that these incentives drive them to excel in their roles, though the agreement is not as strong as with profit-sharing. Competitive compensation packages received a mean score of 2.92 (SD = 0.908), indicating a neutral to slightly positive attitude toward their value in making employees feel valued. Salary increments and bonuses showed similar levels of agreement, with mean scores of 2.75 (SD = 0.981) and 2.79 (SD = 1.087) respectively. These scores indicate neutral to slightly positive attitudes toward these monetary rewards. Overtime pay received the lowest mean score of 2.61 (SD = 1.137), suggesting the most neutral or slightly negative attitude among all monetary reward strategies.

The overall average mean of 2.93 suggests a generally neutral to slightly positive disposition toward monetary rewards, with significant variations across different reward types. The findings showed that monetary rewards have a generally neutral to slightly positive effect on employee work attitudes, with significant variations across different reward types. Profit-sharing opportunities emerged as the most effective monetary reward in influencing positive work attitudes, while overtime pay shows the least effect.

The findings concur with a study by Sethunga and Perera (2018) who investigated the most effective methods of pay for reducing employee turnover in IT firms. Compensation is inversely linked to employee turnover. Employees are more willing to work in IT businesses since cash rewards are plentiful and regularly granted. Long-term monetary benefits delivered every six months were more successful in keeping staff, according to a detailed review. There is a contextual gap since the study was conducted in Sri Lanka, which is a different environment from Uganda.

**Hypotheses Testing**

In this study hypothesis testing was done through inferential analysis using a linear regression model to establish the statistical relationship between recognition rewards and employee work attitude. The regression coefficients are shown below.

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**Table 3: Showing coefficients for recognition rewards**

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 4.647 | 4.69 | | 1.991 | 0.005 |
| | Monetary rewards | 0.005 | 0.106 | 0.174 | 1.061 | 0.013 |

a. Dependent Variable: Employee work attitude

The regression coefficients, as shown indicate that the constant value is 4.647. This implies that if monetary rewards and other factors are held constant, employee work attitudes would still exist at a baseline level of 4.647. The Beta coefficient for monetary rewards is 0.005, with a standardized coefficient of 0.174. This means that a unit increase in monetary rewards results in a 17.4% increase in employee work attitude. The p-value for monetary rewards is 0.013, which is below the 0.05 threshold, confirming a significant and positive relationship between monetary rewards and employee work attitude.

Based on these findings, the null hypothesis ($HO_1$) is rejected, affirming that monetary rewards have a significant effect on employee work attitude.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is evident that monetary rewards significantly affect employee work attitude. Organizations hoping to positively influence their employee attitudes should deploy monetary reward strategies such as salary increments, bonuses, overtime payouts and profit sharing among others. Such strategies will not only impact employee attitudes positively but will also enhance commitment and productivity.

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