A Study on the relationship between the current reward system and academic staff members’ dissatisfaction of ‘SLIATE’ in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

S M C P K Samarathunge

Assistant Lecturer
Sri Lanka Institute for Advanced Technological Education (SLIATE)


Indexing:
Abstract

Reaching organizational goals is the prime aim of any organization but due to various reasons it is difficult to maintain the competitive advantage for a long time in the market by providing quality service and products. Due to the existing competition especially for an education organization like Sri Lanka Institution for Advanced Technological Education (SLIATE) in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Education field in Sri Lanka has a competitive environment therefore motivated staff creates an excellent competitive education environment by producing good quality final products to the nation.

This institution offers higher national diplomas in Engineering in the fields of civil, mechanical, electrical and electronic engineering. Final products of the institution have a great demand in the job market as assistant engineers not only in the local market but also in the international market. Therefore maintaining this current situation is important but new entrants to the market even from international markets such as foreign universities offer various diplomas and degrees in the Sri Lankan education market. Therefore attracting clever students towards the institution is a challenge.

In this report, literature review chapter describes relating and prevailing theory and previous research data about reward systems. Methodology chapter explains the
method of continuing the research and priority has been given to methodologies to collect data. Questionnaires and structured interviews are recognized as the tools.

Findings according to the responses given by the workforce have described the dissatisfaction about the existing reward system and their desires about the returns from the organization.

As the conclusion of this research, researcher highlights the requirement of new effective reward elements to be introduced to the existing reward system. Provision of essential training and development programs is recommended as one of the recommendations to the organization.

**Key words: Total rewards, Reward elements, compensation scheme, payments and benefits, Training and development opportunities**
Introduction

A Study on the relationship between the current reward system and academic staff members’ dissatisfaction of ‘SLIATE’ in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Dissatisfaction of employees in an organization can be identified by using several factors such as individual efficiencies and the productivity of the whole organizational process.

Delighted employees offer a better service but if they are not satisfied with the returns from the organization attitudes are negative and final result is not a quality one. Final product of this institution should be a professionally qualified person but if academic staff works with dissatisfied conditions their service would not be a quality one (Dan, 2011).

In evaluating existing reward system, ideas and suggestions of the academic staff members are important. Existing reward elements can be improved and new reward elements can be introduced to the betterment of the academic staff as well as the organization.
Objectives

• To analyse current reward system and employee response about the system.

• To evaluate employee recognition in their current jobs and sufficiency of feedback on their duties.

• To analyse employee suggestions for their preference in motivating them and suggest suitable recommendations to implement in the organization.

  • To study the employee commitment to the organization because of effective reward elements including monetary rewards.

Literature Review

Total Rewards

Definition

Procedures, rules and standards associated with allocation of benefits and compensation to employees (Baruch, 2004).

Attracting, motivating and retaining employees can be executed by using the total reward system of an organization. Provision of best facilities to employees to continue their work within the organization including providing the welfare facilities to them as well as their close relatives make the employees motivated to
work efficiently. These factors pave the way to strengthen the relationships among each other and to increase the productivity (Black and Gregersen, 2011).

At the initial stages of a business, management experiences the difficulty to attract, satisfy and retain employees with the business to continue the task successfully. Barter system was used from the past and maintaining continuous improvements in this system employers could create the current incentive system to the business environment. Continuous improvement of the productivity of the business is the final aim of all these attempts (Meyer and Allen, 1991).

Organisational culture, environment, attractiveness, retention and motivation of employees directly affect the incorporated total reward strategy of any business organization.

Culture and normal working environment of an organization depend on the internal as well as external environmental factors. But employees mostly interact with the closest interior environment of the organization, therefore considering the internal working environment along with the organizational culture in designing the total reward elements is essential (Baruch, 2004).
Types of rewards

Extrinsic and intrinsic rewards

Financial rewards can be offered to employees for their returns to the organization and these financial offers are called extrinsic rewards. Pay rises as increments, bonus and many other types of financial benefits are recognized as extrinsic rewards and they are tangible.

Psychological rewards or intangible rewards are the intrinsic rewards. They are offered for special performance of employees and these performance are valuable ones to the organization (Black and Gregersen, 2011).

Improving employee performance by motivating them for day-to-day work by offering intrinsic rewards because of prevailing current competitive business environment is important.

Research Methodology

Data collection

There are two types of primary data namely quantitative and qualitative data. The issue which is being considered is not able to connect directly to numerical values since the researcher expected to understand how individuals interpret information or things about the current reward system and its weak points(Meyer and Allen, 1991).
Although there are several methods to collect qualitative data, case study method had been used since one organisation is being considered to study. Interviews have been conducted with an aim of collecting open ended answers for the structured questions of the interview and qualitative data has been used to analyse with the research approach of inductive (Meyer and Allen, 1991).

Sample population

Sample population is 50 academic staff members from SLIATE, Colombo Campus and stratified random sampling method has been used since the male and female lecturers as well as demonstrators are included in the population as the participants in the research. At the same time these participants are in different age groups.

Findings

Some of the lecturers have mentioned that their service to this institute was for above ten years and many lecturers have joined the company recently. There is a promotion procedure implemented recently but most of the staff members have still not promoted according to this procedure. Demonstrators were not satisfied because their promotion system has not been introduced yet.

60% of the staff members have mentioned that they are not satisfied with the current working conditions therefore the management has a gap to fill in order to create an efficient working environment. Pleasant environment to lecturers to
continue their studies in preparation for teaching is essential. Facilities such as library books, teaching aids with modern techniques are to be provided according to them.

Majority of the academic staff members expects to improve their personal skills as well as academic skills including related subject knowledge. Therefore training and development programs are expected according to participants’ responses to improve themselves.

**Analysis & Discussion**

More than 70% from total academic staff members feel that the existing reward system is to be redesigned according to the current requirements of the education market. Causes for this feeling are inefficient communicating tools within the institution, low frequency in rewarding staff members for their excellent performance in academic work and for creative and innovative methods used in teaching – learning processes. Further, encouragement to continue higher studies and facilitating the academic staff in their higher studies is a must at present since this assists them to improve themselves to provide a better service in the organization.

Transparent method of rewarding academic staff is essential and as per the studies of Cryne (2004), the importance of maintaining the transparency in the selecting
process of a reward system has been recognized as the most important factor to delight the staff members.

Conclusion

As per the responses of the academic staff members of SLIATE, dissatisfaction of them is revealed about the current rewarding system. This situation has been one of the reasons to the current issues in the education system such as lowering the quality of the teaching-learning process. Lecturers are not motivated to improve their teaching methods and teaching aids according to the modern techniques. All given responses were negative on these factors therefore special attention should be paid to these by the management to improve the teaching process.

Majority of the academic staff prefers monetary rewards to intrinsic rewards. Since there is a huge difference in the salary scales of the academic staff compared to Sri Lankan University academic staff scale, SLIATE academic staff expects to gain more monetary rewards.

An academic staff member has to wait twelve years after he joins with the SLIATE to have a vehicle permit to buy a vehicle but a university staff member gets it after eight years’ time. Comparing these huge differences in gains but producing a professional to the society, SLIATE academic staff members feel negatively on their rewards.
If lecturers and other academic personals are offered with effective monetary rewards and other extrinsic and intrinsic rewards, commitment of them towards this education institute will be much higher. They improve their teaching methodologies to suit to the modern developed world by using these facilities and therefore final product of the institute also will be in higher quality level.

Attention is to be paid to lecturers’ future career goals as well because their higher studies, facilities and assistance to complete these higher studies and training and development opportunities directly affect their promotion process.

Recognition of the staff members for their high performances within the institution encourage other academic staff members to work enthusiastically. But still there is no such a program designed to motivate them according to the responds. Positive or negative both types of feedback on staff members academic work is vital to them in improving quality of the academic work.

One of the existing issues in SLIATE is the dissatisfied academic staff and therefore the lack of quality of the institute’s final products. Result of this situation is negative to the institute as a leading education providing institute in the field of Engineering. This institution is under the ministry of higher education of Sri Lanka, therefore attention on the final products of this institute is high.

**Recommendations to SLIATE in improving the reward system**
• Design an efficient continuous performance reviewing process to evaluate academic staff members while designing suitable training and development programs to academics.

• Pay special attention on sharpening lecturers’ communication skills and other personal skills to improve effective relationships with students and other academics in the same field.

• Consider monetary rewards as well as intrinsic rewards to delight the academic staff since they gain rewards far behind the other employees at the same education field.

• Promotion system is to be well-designed to academics and new system is to be designed and implemented to the demonstrators of SLIATE to motivate them since demonstrators’ turnover from the institution is high due to these issues. Difficulty in recruiting demonstrators can be minimized if the management pays attention on these issues.

• Encouraging academic staff to create creative and innovative learning and teaching methodologies by reviewing them and praising for them teaching methods can be improved massively.
• Introduce a pension scheme to make the staff members feel secured in the future. Improve welfare facilities to them by organizing events to make them meet as a team with their families as well.
Reference


