

BEST PRACTICES IN REWARD SYSTEM FROM PAKISTAN: EVIDENCE OF ISLAMIC FINANCE

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ABSTRACT: *It is common belief that best practices approach leads to series of effective bundle of HR practices which carries the best of it. End results of these HR practices finds that a company should not use these practices in the form of a set, but rather to implement according to their demand and worth for the organization. Reward and incentives system are the most common means in regard to the organizational performance. This study means to explore potential practices associated with reward and incentives system. The qualitative and explorative slant of this paper will contribute valuable acquaintance by highlighting its generalization. This study presents the findings of financial reward system and the effects of these best Practices with respect to local government service departments in Pakistan. The study reveals the universal best practice linked with their respective theories and also evaluates the perceived level of excellence of these HR practices into different scenarios of Pakistan. It also considers the effects of the reward based practices on the psychological behaviors of employees, and the outcome of these behaviors. The findings reveal that the all sectors of Pakistan require uniformity of these best practices as all over rather than to some specific areas.*

INTRODUCTION:

In this current era worldwide employees face the challenge that employers are skewed towards utilization of skilled resources instead of their long-term retention [1, 2]. Theoretically an imperative role of best practice in reward systems is to recognize, motivate, retain and reward individuals who consistently attain their workplace objectives with honesty. Employers acknowledging and maintaining necessary conformance between reward system and organizational performance, gain best from their employees [3]. Retention of the sincere and skilled resources is an aspired best practice promising win-win both for employers and employees. For such best practice a key is reward system that happens just, timely paying, legal, at par with market standards and effective in all means [4]. Islam as a universal code of life for entire mankind in all affairs advised employers to adopt such best practices in compensation and reward centuries ago. Modern researchers of HRM now advocate appropriate and effective reward systems finding them antecedents to improved organization performance, employees' motivation and retention and success of all [5, 6]. Literature however yet does not integrate the Divine guidelines with latest best practices nevertheless these are phenomenally synchronous.

Best practices in reward systems singularly are indeed not sufficient as these affect and determine culture and way forward in business organizations [7]. Worldwide for regional, legal, religious and social parameters, best practices shape agile in procedures [8] but our study identified that despite all such operational diversifications these need to be synchronous with Islamic and contemporary theories. For example; equity theory relates enables employees to judge the fairness and equality in reward systems [9]. Islam also reinforces such distributive justice for servants. Reward systems synchronized with [9] ultimately lead to enhanced job satisfaction.

Islam substantiates that in all times and kind of works

compensation and reward matters to people. A meta-analysis by [10] of reward systems and performance found that nature of the tasks moderated the relationship between actual performances of the employee and pay for performance while these two had a significant positive relationship. Such empirical findings of [10] confirm with what Islam guides and this match reinforce the need to review how best practice in reward systems as prescribed by standards of Islamic finance benefit mankind in this era where HRM standards have much improved.

Others [11] reported financial reward systems as the best indicators to facilitate employees. Conclusions of another study reported that school teachers who had proper rewards with an imposition of a penalty for the lack of performance performed out of the box consistently [12]. There is an emerging trend in all over the world of high acceptance for foreign companies by local employees due to their best practices for reward and companion [13]. Participants who have to face failure in the feedback they relied more towards degree of reward system while to get large reward through great effort. [14]. The qualitative approach of this study enables to provide results with respect to best practices in reward system by basic theories. Performance based reward practices mean to enhance employee productivity [15].

At a macro level, existing studies still question on reward dispersion. Such as what is the best practice in reward dispersion? Should it be skill, seniority, performance or their mix? Which dimension of reward dispersion is best practice like horizontal, vertical or any other direction? Is reward dispersion linked with output? Are organizational processes egalitarian or elitist? [23]. The literature on best practices in rewards is though massive, yet, isolated from the theoretical support that Islamic teachings provide. To the best of our findings such gap seems to have left literature in quest of answers to the mentioned questions. A review of real cases of good reward systems in Pakistan, a country whose culture, social artifacts, laws and standards are predominantly Islamic is identified imperative to best answer the mentioned questions in the existing literature.

Objectives of study:

1. To review cases of successful reward systems in Pakistan founded on best practices in line with Islamic teachings and ethical standards of the country, and
2. To analyze and discuss certain good examples of best practices in a reward system for helping modern stakeholders find answers to above mentioned questions in the light of Islamic guidelines.

Significance and Rationale of the study

Reward systems are important, challenging and complex. As these influence both human capital and organizations it is critical to design and execute them as per best practices in line with legal, cultural and ethical standards. [16,17] contributed that best practices based financial rewards influence the motivation and performance level of human resource and had negatively association with the intention to quit job. Despite agreeing with [16,17,18,19,20] acknowledged the possibility of multiplicity in their design and execution leaving. Our stance to review, analyze and discuss the cases of successful organizations in Pakistan employing consistent reward systems following best practices in line with the religion and law of the country is significant as such review will help future researchers find answers to questions as listed above. Further it is imperative to integrate the Divine's set of guidelines with best practices in reward systems that are yet deficient in the existing literature.

Methodology:

This study was qualitative and based on the literature review that incorporates best practices in the reward system. Explorative nature of the study included an amplification of motivational theories, past analysis based on organizational performance and job security with reference to the reward system. It is intended to generalize the finding in the complicated and diverse model of Pakistan. This study also gave the shot of current issues and proposed a solution to handle such problems.

Furthermore, past literature on reward system has not been discussed with Islamic perspective especially in the context of Pakistan. We took University of the Punjab and National Highway and Motorway Police as a unit of analysis because these organizations were found to embed best practices of reward system among the public sector of Pakistan. Our study analyzed the perceived cases in Islamic contextualization as well as regulation of best practices in the reward system. We standardized BPS as a best practice system and further perceived it Islamic as it best conforms with Pakistan's laws, latest HRM standards, and ethical practices. As all these are predominantly Islamic in Pakistan therefore non-corrupt and effective adoption and execution of BPS was considered a perfect case of modern Islamic finance compliant reward system. These examples were further used to reach conclusions and recommendations adopting induction and deduction approach as applicable.

Literature Review:

In HRM functions rewarding an employee is the distinctive and effective component for the organizations [26]. On the basis of influential theories; Adam's equity theory, Lawler's Discrepancy Theory with respect to reward and motivation which hocked with this proven that reward and the satisfaction due to these rewards encourage desirable

behaviors (organizational commitment) and discourage negative behaviors (absenteeism).

Best practice affects the organizational performance with respects to its credibility. It also changes the attitude and behaviors of individuals in response to their experience. Employees in case of specific reward and recognition are less intended to leave the organization. Reward system should not take as pay and compensation because managers believe that pay is not an important indicator in some cases [21]. According to [22] employee compensation is the neglected area of research [23]. Moreover, best practices designed for a company of one country may be dysfunction for the company of another country due to differences in culture and exercise of practices [8]. Convergence and divergence views provide different logics about the international transferability of reward systems [24]. It is also effective to consider this as a wide gap that misrepresentation of employees regarding motivation. [25]. Once during preparations for an Eid festival, the Hazrat Ali bin Abu Talib (AS) bought an economical cloth for self and gifted a high quality cloth to his slave. The slave insisted to be provided economical cloth. Hazrat Ali bin Abu Talib (AS) said I am old, you are young. Such example of best practices for rewarding an employee in Islamic history reinforces what [8 and 25] are advocating.

Reward and Motivational Theories:

Convergence and divergence views provide different logics about the international transferability of reward systems [24]. The convergence view, focusing mainly on macro-level aspects, maintains that best practices are transferable universally, irrespective of national culture or institutional context [27]. Having universal best practice such as organizational patterns, organizational stricter, technological and industrial logistics is the way to create similarity and harmony among different cultures [27]. Pressure from competitive isomorphism is one example of the many forces imposing greater congruence in reward systems around the globe [28]. In contrast, scholars subsumed under the divergence or non-convergence school, focusing largely on micro-level aspects, emphasize the embeddedness of reward systems in terms of cultural or institutional context, which is opposite to the transferability of best practices. BPS reward system in Pakistan is aligned with these theories that this study will present in next part.

National culture is the combination of beliefs, value system and norms which we learned from childhood that distinguish one culture from another culture [29]. This is so deeply embedded in the lives of people which are impervious to change. That's why the level of satisfaction of an employee shaped by the cultural preferences, and should be aligned with the unique context of the culture [30].

According to convergence view, companies are able to get desired results from employees by implementing Performance Related Reward System (PRRS). PRRS enable alignment of employee behaviour with the employers' objectives. PRRS can be effective for an employer to reduce the personal interest of an employee and align his interest with the company's vision. Second, PRRS is perceived as fair because they provide a clear linkage between rewards and performance [4].rewards based on performance has also been endorsed by Holy Prophet (PBUH), who These reward

practices can be viewed in NH&MP which made it imperative to study this organization's reward system.

According to equity theory [9], for example, an individual can judge the fairness which is linked with his own reward program by comparing the ratio of his output to the inputs ratio of same designated person. In contrast to the convergence view, cultural self-presentation theory [31] maintains that cultural values moderate the relation between motivational practices and individual behavior. Individual Performance Related Reward System is more effective for the individualistic cultures because they are familiar to work on their own, they can work independently rather than in a group [7]. According to Hofstede, Pakistani culture is based on individualistic approach, which advocates that people tend to prefer individual rewards rather than group rewards [29].

Best practices in reward systems and employee performance:

The term best practice is one of the concerned areas of Strategic HRM is stated to the detailed policies of reward system which enlighten how HRM policies and reward policies are effective in specific that leads to organizational performance. According to Thorpe and Homan, previous and existing strategies related to reward system are not dealing with the actual problems and real priorities which require revision of reward strategy.

The reward system is emphasized by Lawler, he stated that the new pay is not a set of compensation practices but rather a way of thinking about the role of reward systems in a composite organization. It suggests against a supposition that best practices must be incorporated into a company's method to pay. Undoubtedly, he compares the reward system to a traditional management style with one employee involvement. The true fit for the previous includes a reward system that is based on the job with merit pay after that it is skill-based with bonuses depending on the success of the business.

Schuster and Zingheim state that merit pay and traditional performance appraisal make it impossible to see employees as an important element of organizational strategy and philosophy. They propose that each factor of an organization's reward system should contribute to expand employees' vision and to include concern about how their organization is working [32]. Incentive pay, which is not combined with base pay, alters the conventional merit plan.

Purcell noticed about the best practice model and there is no discussion on company strategy. The fundamental principle of this view is that organizations implementing a set of best practices attract effective human resources, proficiencies and competencies. These effective human resources will ultimately influence the strategy of the organization and become the source of its competitive advantage [4]. According to Wood, the difficulty occurred by incorporating performance related pay (PRP) taken as part of the high commitment model because it can destabilize the competence and self-determination.

Wood suggested that there remains a great deal of literature on High Commitment Model and Human Resource Management unwillingness to remove PRP, despite several doubts about it. Although Pfeffer clearly endorses that a firm pays high wages in relation to its industry competitors. This

brief explanation of two approaches indicates that there is one main area of settlement. Human Resource policies should be consistent. Reward systems as one area should interlink and complement other policies like employee selection, training and performance appraisal with reward systems.

Best practice policies are universal and used by companies in the world. The policy package does not change regardless of the organization's strategic plunge. This suggested that related reward systems will prevail across organizations. However, advocates of this approach are not in the complete contract about the impact on reward systems. Schuster and Zingheim recommended that employee rewards should always be linked to organizational performance. His traditional management design option does not include any pay component that varies with organizational performance. Although considering a universal approach best practice advocates have not mentioned an agreed bundle of HR policies. Increased importance of reward practices supported by literature makes it essential to incorporate them in generalized context of Pakistan which lacks such motivation for employees in public sector organizations.

There is lack of generalizability with regard to reward systems. Theoretical discussion and researches have not shed light on specific reward elements implemented by organizations with a best practice philosophy. Best practices models need to be identified in Pakistan also to improve employee and organizational performance.

The case of National Highways and Motorway Police (NH&MP)

National highways and motorway police (NH&MP) is an organization in Pakistan which controls all rules and regulations of highways and motorways in the country. In 1997 a modern and capable police force was raised for management of traffics on the National highway Motorways. The main focus of this initiative is to mount these police forces as a true servant of public [33]. The results of these struggling initiative surprised to public and government of Pakistan. Due to its remarkable performance government recognize their performance and took a step to expand the services of Motorway Police. Thus the taxonomy of Pakistan Motorways Police changed to National Highways and Motorway Police.

NH & MP With their success handed over by the government to all the federal highways of Pakistan Today National Highways & Motorway Police is one of the leading institutes of government which is admired by the public of Pakistan. For the first time in the history of the Police department of Pakistan that they get praised for their honest, integrity and harmony. [33].

In the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) report for the year 2002 [34], National Highways & Motorway Police was reported to be the only corruption free department in the country. Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Shaukat Aziz also declared this force as "The Island of Excellence". Transparency International has included NH&MP among the corruption-free departments of the world.

Reward system of (NH&MP) is Basic Pay System (BPS) of Pakistan. Grades for all the government and semi government organizations. BPS is a pure and correct way to reward and reimburse their employees because of the transparency and

clear set of rules and regulations for each and every member of organization and system. Promotion of an employee from one grade to next grade is based on qualification, trainings and experience. This is how NH&MP is holding their employees through job security and outright return packages. These best practices indicate that employees demands job security and political free. NH&MP is an ideal best practice in reward system organization.

NH&MP gives following after retirement benefits to the employees

- a) Pension
- b) Benevolent fund
- c) Group Insurance fund
- d) Gratuity
- e) Family Pension
- f) Special Family pension
- g) General Provident Fund Scheme

NH&MP is holding their employees through job security and outright return packages which are mentioned above for the employees and employee's families. These rewards tell that employee demands job security and NH&MP is an ideal organization in reward system and following Best practices model and providing what employee needs.

The case of University of the Punjab (PU)

University of the Punjab is one of the renowned and finest academic institutes of Pakistan. University of the Punjab played the foremost role in development of higher education. It intended to provide affordable education opportunities to create learning knowledge and research centered education, to strength the scientific and political leadership in the economy. University consists of 5 campuses in different localities of Pakistan. It has almost 900 faculty member as permanent over 36000 students in all campuses [35].

Reward system of any organization/ institute refers to rewarding employees for their contribution for organization/institute. University of the Punjab ideally deals with their employee for their reward system on Basic Pay System (BPS) of Pakistan. Government of Pakistan has set basic pay system from Grade 1 to onwards grade 22 for all the government and semi-government institute and organizations. BPS is a clear and proper way to reward and compensate their employees, in that way they don't face any discrimination or preference. In case of promotion from previous grade to next grade, compensation of that employee concerned with revised pay scale according to Basic Pay system of Pakistan. Gratuity is one of the parts of reward compensation system for the employees of Punjab University. Gratuity is the after retirement benefit which employee receive after retirement or upon leaving the job. Pension is also the after retirement benefiting for the employees. Pension is the collective pool of saving by employer and employee.

Promotion of faculty members from one grade to next grade is entirely based on academic performance indicator of the institute. Academic performance indicator based on three sorts. Sort one is related to learning and teaching evaluation. The second sort is linked with professional development and extracurricular activities. And last and third sort linked with on research based contribution.

This shows how the University of the Punjab retaining their employees by providing them job security and accurate reward packages according to their inputs. These best practices indicate that employees either from organization or institute demand job security and safety. The University of the Punjab is the ideal example of such best practices in the reward system. This can be one of the key components of long life in academics.

DISCUSSION:

Numerous theories on the assumed effect of reward on motivation, performance have been taken together with the purpose of making a wide and eclectic theoretical framework for this study. There is gap identified in the pervious literature that holds up the strategies with reference to reward system and ultimate lacks in best practices for the development and performance of the employees. The main theme of this study is to refine the literature and provide evidence for Best Practices from Pakistan. Various aspects of probable relevance for the reward systems as such aspects are derived from theories or empirical evidence. According to the Divergence school of thought, focusing largely on micro-level aspects, emphasize the embeddedness of reward systems in their cultural and institutional context and, therefore, are more skeptical about the transferability of best practices [36, 37], it has also been seen that the best practices cannot be generalized worldwide due to differences in cultures, organizational capability and HR policies determined by the organization. As the result of interviews with the subjects, it has been drawn that employees are more concerned and are affected by individual rewards rather than collective rewards. Here the results of the study are aligned with Self Presentation Theory suggested by Erez and Early which maintains that cultural values moderate the relation between motivational practices and individual behavior. Individuals' reactions to reward systems in this theory depend on the effects they expect these systems to have on the different sides of their identities. In a collectivist society, the collective self is more striking than the individualistic self and individual PRRS can be fruitless because they aim at enhancing the individual self but not the collective self.

BPS is adopted in all the bureaucracy and technocracy of Pakistan, these all are examples of best practices based reward systems that are indeed Islamic but for parsimony, we discussed few of them which are providing reward practice according to Islamic laws and ethics. The result of this study can have effects in several ways. Reward systems of different varieties are popular resources today to achieve company goals. The possible negative impact that a critically designed system could have on influences such as safety should be of serious interest to HR managers. Although the results from this study do not illustrate that the systems present major risks to job security and it cannot be thought that such reward systems may not do same in other organizations who are working the Best Fit Model of reward systems. However, the discussions designated that the three issues and their effects were perceived in clearly different ways due to their differences in organizational cultures and HR policies. The results are clearly supported by the motivational theories which suggest that having a formal and well-designed

organizational structure triggers the performance of employees which leads to having significant impact on organizational performance as maintained by Schuster and Zingheim who said that employee rewards should always be tied to organizational performance.

Recommendations:

1. From theories of motivation, our study contributes a valuable framework for investigating possible effects that reward systems may have on employee and organizational performance considering the best practices exercised in Pakistan.
2. Applying this approach, it's found that the systems under study should positively affect safety behaviors, for example, in terms of increased motivation and job security.
3. The results and the literature clearly suggests that there should be implementation of best practices in other organizations of Pakistan which could lead to improved employee motivation and satisfaction

Limitations:

Few employees were interviewed in the study and area of study was limited to Pakistan so the generalizability of the results is difficult. However, widespread generalizability was not the core purpose of this study, but to gain insights and a deeper understanding of the factors that may underlie changes in existing settings and practices of reward systems in Pakistan. Qualitative and explorative approach studied the employees' reactions to their reward systems, which were considered in broad framework based on numerous prominent motivation theories.

Secondly, the results would be considered more reliable if carried out through an empirical analysis on the organizations and to provide the researchers with the best practices used in the organizations. The study also proposes that organization's reward structures should be based on PPR (Performance Pay Reward). It would encourage the people to strive for the success in their job assignments to gain rewards.

Prospects for the future Research

Empirical evidence may be provided by researchers to further this study. Best practice model should be proposed to be implemented in organizations to have more outputs. For future research, researcher can provide a proposed and ultimate best model specifically to the context of Pakistani organizations which can be tested by implementing and finding its outcomes. This study can be further incorporated by highlighting psychological issues of employees due to reward system which does not match with their inputs.

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