

Investigating the Influence of Work Conditions, Recognition, Monetary Incentives, and Job Security on Employee Motivation Among Non-Academic Staff in Higher Education Institutions.

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Introduction

The higher education sector faces global challenges due to rapid technological advancements and increasing demands in today's world. Academic institutions must adapt and respond to these demands, similar to how business organizations do (Seonghee & Boryung, 2008; Hashim et al., 2019).

According to Galang (2010), higher education institutions (HEIs) have the potential to make a positive impact on society by training individuals, researching solutions to challenges, and influencing public policy. Quality higher education can significantly contribute to the cultural development of a country. Panda et al. (2019) further emphasized that universities and research centres are essential in creating and sharing scientific knowledge, which drives societal progress and development. HEIs can maximize their influence on the community and society as a whole (Kim & Ju, 2008).

To enhance the performance of the Malaysian education system, funding agencies, and higher education institutions recognize the need for specialized management of research and development (R&D) and innovation. In recent decades, various research and innovation approaches have emerged and evolved in tertiary education across different fields (OECD, 2020). Research management activities encompass activities such as applying for funding, managing funds, collaborating with funding agencies, as well as planning, implementing, supervising, and evaluating tasks. These activities coexist with traditional research activities, including publishing papers, conducting research, and commercialization to some extent.

The literature suggests that different types of strategic and critical roles exist within private and public higher education institutions. For example, Hsiao & Chang (2011) highlight the critical role of leadership, which includes vision, campus administration development, and participation in decision-making. Administrative operations innovation involves aspects such as organizational culture, the adoption of new policies to enhance organizational performance, and improving service quality.

According to a survey conducted by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), administrators often have a heavy workload, as they are responsible for managing courses, administering and conducting research, publishing papers, and serving on committees. Administrator may feel overwhelmed by the amount of work they have to do, which can make it difficult to stay focused and motivated. This lack of motivation can make it challenging to complete work on time. This workload can lead to burnout and stress among faculty members, which can impact their productivity and job satisfaction (Kezar, 2017).

Moreover, employees in higher education frequently work long hours, putting it difficult to balance work and personal life among them. According to Baldwin & Chronister (2019), long work hours and heavy workloads can lead to burnout and decreased job satisfaction, which in turn can lead to decreased motivation. Higher education employees, such as professors or academic support staff, may find it challenging to balance their work responsibilities with their personal lives. Employees may not have as much time or energy for personal activities such as hobbies, exercise, or spending time with family and friends if they work long hours or have a large task. Otherwise, employees who have a good work-life balance may experience greater job satisfaction, higher levels of engagement, and

increased motivation. Employees who maintain a healthy work-life balance are in good mental and physical condition, which can contribute to their motivation and engagement at the workplace.

Besides, higher education employees may feel that their hard work is not recognized or appreciated by their superiors, which can lead to a lack of motivation and engagement. The study by De Vos (2019), found that the lack of perceived recognition at work was negatively related to employee engagement and performance. Employees may feel unappreciated and demotivated when their efforts are not recognized. Moreover, faculty members who felt unrecognized by their superiors reported lower levels of job satisfaction and were less likely to feel committed to their institution (Anfara & Tillett, 2016). On the other hand, when employees feel that their hard work is recognized and appreciated, they feel motivated in their work. A study by Adnan et al. (2021) found that employees who received regular feedback from their supervisors reported higher levels of motivation. They may feel a sense of pride in their accomplishments and be more willing to take on new challenges and responsibilities.

Furthermore, limited resources are also an issue that causes the employees' lack of motivation. As stated by Kim and Kim (2020), limited resources, including insufficient staffing and funding, negatively affected the motivation of administrative staff in higher education institutions. For instance, budget cuts and insufficient resources might make it difficult for employees to do their jobs effectively, leading to a sense of frustration and a lack of motivation. When employees do not have access to resources, they may feel that they are unable to meet the demands of their job. It was supported by Li and Zhang (2021) finding that insufficient resources, including inadequate funding and staffing, can lead to increased job stress and decreased job satisfaction among faculty members in Chinese higher education institutions. It is essential for higher education institutions to identify and address these issues in order to create a supportive and motivating work environment for their employees. Thus, this study examines the effect of work conditions, recognition, monetary incentives, and job security on employee motivation among higher education employees.

Literature Review

Employee Motivation

In today's working environment, motivation varies among individuals, representing the level of workforce energy and their commitment to the company (Taiwo et al., 2022). Motivation is a set of attitudes and values that affect a person to attain a specific goal in line with their goals (Anggraeny et al., 2023). The researcher Haerani (2020) explains that motivation is a mental condition that encourages a person to achieve maximum performance. Besides, motivation components relating to recognition at work aid the employees in finding their value in the company (Bashir et al., 2020). Employees' work effectiveness also can inspire them to work and bring more work motivation and commitment to their work (Basalamah & As'ad, 2021).

According to Zeng et al., (2022), employee motivation has been divided into intrinsic motivation, where defined as the performance of an activity for its inherent satisfaction rather than for some separable consequence, while extrinsic motivation is a construct that pertains to an activity that is performed to attain some separable outcome, as opposed to engaging in an activity simply for its instrumental value. Moreover, motivation is the existence of autonomy support, which means that organizational managers pay attention to every decision meant to lead to the welfare of employees (Paais & Pattiruhu 2020).

Work Conditions and Employee Motivation

Work conditions always affect employee satisfaction in any industry, for instance, a better working environment positively affects employee performance, however, an inappropriate working environment shows adverse effects on employee performance (Hartinah et al., 2020). Another researcher by Sedarmayanti & Rahadian (2018), found that working conditions, namely lighting, air temperature, noise, use/selection of colors, space needed, and work safety can affect employees.

Besides, the previous study has shown that work conditions, including job autonomy, recognition, and career development opportunities, were positively related to employee motivation (Miao et al., 2020).

Moreover, Afif et al., (2023) found that the condition of the work environment is said to be good if humans can carry out activities optimally, healthy, safe, and comfortable. Healthy work conditions for employees will only lead to performing well if the employee is motivated enough to work (Matsuo, 2019). One finding was reviewed, paying attention to a good work environment or creating working conditions that are able to provide motivation to work (Sujito, 2023). Thus, an environment of good jobs or creating condition-able work give motivation work, then will influence the performance of employees in work (Anggraeny et al., 2023). Thus, this study examines whether work conditions influence employee motivation.

H1: There is a positive relationship between work conditions and employee motivation.

Recognition and Employee Motivation

Recognition is an incentive for employees in the workplace over a long period of time. Recognition is an important aspect that needs to be in the organization to increase motivation (Asaari et al., 2019). Every employee in work must have hopes or needs, including the need to get rewards, internal factors such as self-esteem, and achievement, as well as external factors such as recognition where the success and performance of a person in a field of work are determined by the level of competence, however, if the success of the performance without the presence or lack of attention and recognition will affect the decreased motivation (Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020). On the other hand, recognition is appropriate for intrinsically motivated behaviors such as inventiveness, commitment, and initiative. (Hansen et al., 2002).

According to Chantal et al., (2022), employee recognition can take the shape of both financial and non-financial awards, whereas wages and perks are popular financial incentives. Employees who feel appreciated are more likely to be motivated to perform their duties. Another research by Asaari et.al (2019) found that employees also feel other rewards such as salary and recognition are also important in order to increase the employee's motivation. In addition, employee motivation will raise if the wage system is managed well by the organizations.

As stated by Ali & Anwar (2021), it is important for employers to recognize workers' contributions entails valuing and thinking about their contributions. This is because employees are likely to stay in organizations where they believe that their capabilities, contributions, and efforts are appreciated (Febrianti & Se, 2020). One of the ways organizations can use to enhance employee motivation and performance is to reward them for their performance (Asaari et al., 2019). Another researcher stated that, employee participation not only enhances efficiency, growth, and innovation but also increases employee motivation in the organization (Dobre, 2013). Thus, this study develops the hypothesis as follows:

H2: There is a positive relationship between recognition and employee motivation.

Monetary Incentives and Employee Motivation

Incentives are a form of appreciation from company leaders in the form of money with the aim of motivating employees (Wulandari et al., 2022). Besides, incentives can be in the form of financial incentives, namely money, bonuses, commissions, compensation for old-age benefits, overtime, and social security, non-financial as annual leave, awarding degrees, and thanks (Wurarah et al., 2022; Hassi et al., 2021). In this context, past researchers mentioned that work motivation can be created by incentivizing employees in the form of money that can be felt as supported by people and have their place in organizing. (Basalamah & As'ad, 2021). It can inspire employees to contribute to their work.

The idea behind monetary incentives is that by offering employees a tangible reward for their efforts, they will be more motivated to work harder and perform better. Past researchers also mentioned that incentives are positive motivators for employees to increase their passion, and creativity and develop themselves to become professional workers where the higher the work performance, the greater the incentives received (Zebua & Chakim, 2023). It also was supported by Ngwenya et al., (2018),

“monetary incentive” is the topmost motivating factor. Thus, when used appropriately and in conjunction with other motivational strategies, monetary incentives can help to increase employee satisfaction, productivity, and overall performance.

To sum up, each person has unique needs, preferences, and values that drive their behavior and performance in the workplace. Therefore, it is essential to understand what motivates each individual employee to create a work environment that supports their needs and aligns their goals with those of the organization.

H3: There is a positive relationship between monetary incentives and employee motivation.

Job Security and Employee Motivation

Job security is defined by said researchers as consisting of certain guarantees regarding one's workplace, which in turn, ensures social and economic security (Sverke et al., 2010). It is the sense of stability and predictability that an employee feels about their job and the continuity of their income stream. According to Van Tam (2021), the job security factor is ranked 4th among the top important motivational factors identified in the literature and was identified in 17 different articles. It is obvious that job security is the main influential tool of motivation and puts the individuals very far off from mental tension. They give their best to the companies, ultimately it leads to performance maximization (Sekhar et al., 2013).

Besides, the available scientific literature examines various aspects of employee job security but those aspects that are emphasized most frequently are as follows: assuring a stable income, employment preservation, and the continuous acquisition of necessary job skills, etc (Valackiene et al., 2021). Job security plays a significant role in enhancing employees' motivation. Some employees are driven by success, whereas for others job security is more important (Davidescu et al., 2020).

Jobs in certain industries, such as healthcare, education, and government, tend to be more secure due to factors such as government funding and demand for services. However, even within these industries, job security can be affected by changes in funding or regulations. Thus, scholars have described the need for an improved understanding of job security in an organization, although there are various approaches and benefits for an organization to motivate employees for their better performance (Valackiene et al., 2021).

H4: There is a positive relationship between job security and employee motivation.

Research Methodology

Frequency Analysis

The sample is obtained by distributing the online questionnaire through email to UiTM non-academic administrator staff from 24 faculties within 4 weeks (December 2022). A total of 335 were distributed/sent out via emails, and 226 responded and collected with 67% response rate. 51.8% of the respondents are in the range age of 25 to 29 years old and 41.6% of them have between 1 to 5 years of working experience.

Therefore, in selecting the samples, the researcher referred to all the non-academic administrator staff of UiTM Shah Alam, Selangor. To identify and include all the non-academic staff members, the researcher utilized the following process:

1. Accessing Employee Database: The researcher has accessed the employee database or records of UiTM Shah Alam, Selangor. This database contains information about all the employees, including their job titles and departments.
2. Identifying Non-Academic Administrator Staff: Within the employee database, the researcher specifically targeted non-academic administrator staff members. This would involve filtering or selecting individuals based on their job titles or positions within the organization.

3. Inclusion Criteria: The researcher may have defined specific criteria for inclusion in the sample. For this research include only full-time non-academic administrator staff members and individuals who have been employed for minimum one year working experience.
4. Sample Size Determination: The researcher determined the desired sample size based on factors such as the research objectives, available resources, and statistical considerations.
5. Final Sample Selection: After applying the inclusion criteria and determining the sample size, the researcher finalized the sample by including all the non-academic administrator staff members who met the defined criteria. This ensured that the sample represented the target population of non-academic staff at UiTM Shah Alam, Selangor.
By following this process, the researcher was able to refer to all the non-academic staff members at UiTM Shah Alam, Selangor and include them in the sample for the study.
The method that has been used by the researcher on data collection in this survey is by using google form and distribute it by email to all the non-academic administrator staff at UiTM Shah Alam, Selangor

PLS Data Analysis and Results

Researchers used partial least squares (PLS) modeling using the SmartPLS 4.0 version (Ringle et al., 2022) as the statistical tool to examine the measurement and structural model as it does not require normality assumption and survey research is not normally distributed (Chin et al., 2003).

Measurement Model Analysis

We followed the suggestions of Anderson and Gerbing (1988) to test the model developed using a 2-step approach. First, we tested the measurement model to test the validity and reliability of the instruments used following the guidelines of Hair et al. (2019) and Ramayah et al. (2018) then we ran the structural model to test the hypothesis developed. For the measurement model we assessed the loadings, average variance extracted (AVE) and the composite reliability (CR). The values of loadings should be ≥ 0.5 , the AVE should be ≥ 0.5 and the CR should be ≥ 0.7 . As shown in Table 2, the AVEs are all higher than 0.5 and the CRs are all higher than 0.7. The loadings were also acceptable with only 7 loadings slightly less than 0.708 (Hair et al., 2019).

Then in step 2, we assessed the discriminant validity using the HTMT criterion suggested by Henseler et al. (2015) and updated by Franke and Sarstedt (2019). The HTMT values should be ≤ 0.85 the stricter criterion and the mode lenient criterion is it should be ≤ 0.90 . As shown in Table 3, the values of HTMT were all lower than the stricter criterion of ≤ 0.90 as such we can conclude that the respondents understood that the 5 constructs are distinct. Taken together both these validity test has shown that the measurement items are both valid and reliable.

Table 2 Measurement Model

| Constructs | Items | Loadings | AVE | CR |
|---------------------|-------|----------|-------|-------|
| Employee Motivation | B1 | 0.733 | 0.542 | 0.914 |
| | B10 | 0.693 | | |
| | B12 | 0.801 | | |
| | B13 | 0.692 | | |
| | B3 | 0.676 | | |
| | B4 | 0.744 | | |
| | B5 | 0.756 | | |
| | B6 | 0.766 | | |
| | B9 | 0.754 | | |
| Job Security | C10 | 0.91 | 0.619 | 0.936 |
| | C11 | 0.937 | | |
| | C9 | 0.924 | | |

| | | | | |
|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Monetary Incentives | D1 | 0.818 | 0.853 | 0.946 |
| | D10 | 0.796 | | |
| | D11 | 0.708 | | |
| | D12 | 0.795 | | |
| | D2 | 0.694 | | |
| | D3 | 0.825 | | |
| | D4 | 0.806 | | |
| | D5 | 0.784 | | |
| | D6 | 0.89 | | |
| | D7 | 0.828 | | |
| Recognition | D8 | 0.724 | 0.623 | 0.952 |
| | D9 | 0.783 | | |
| | E1 | 0.673 | | |
| | E10 | 0.797 | | |
| | E11 | 0.878 | | |
| | E12 | 0.824 | | |
| | E13 | 0.87 | | |
| | E14 | 0.789 | | |
| | E15 | 0.843 | | |
| | E2 | 0.756 | | |
| | E3 | 0.675 | | |
| | E5 | 0.751 | | |
| | E6 | 0.793 | | |
| | E7 | 0.724 | | |
| | E8 | 0.88 | | |
| Work Condition | E9 | 0.88 | 0.637 | 0.961 |
| | F1 | 0.793 | | |
| | F2 | 0.693 | | |
| | F3 | 0.703 | | |
| | F4 | 0.862 | | |
| | F5 | 0.81 | | |
| | F6 | 0.68 | | |
| | F7 | 0.872 | | |
| | F8 | 0.854 | | |
| F9 | 0.786 | | | |

Note: Item B2, B7, B8, B11, C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C8, E4 were deleted due to low loadings

Table 3 Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Employee Motivation | | | | |
| Job Security | 0.714 | | | |
| Monetary Incentives | 0.618 | 0.374 | | |
| Recognition | 0.85 | 0.675 | 0.618 | |
| Work Condition | 0.865 | 0.748 | 0.555 | 0.859 |

Structural Model

As Jammalamadaka et al. (2020) recommended, researchers did the assessment through multivariate skewness and kurtosis. The results showed that the data we collected was not multivariate normal, Mardia's multivariate skewness ($\beta = 2123.835$, $p < 0.01$) and Mardia's multivariate kurtosis ($\beta = 4623.906$, $p < 0.01$), thus following the suggestions of Hair et al. (2022) we reported the path coefficients, the standard errors, t-values and p-values for the structural model using a 5,000-sample re-sample bootstrapping procedure (Ramayah et al. 2018). Also, based on the criticism of Hahn and Ang (2017) that p-values are not a good criterion for testing the significance of the hypothesis and suggested using a combination of criterions such as p-values, confidence intervals, and effect sizes. Table 4 shows the summary of the criterions we have used to test the hypotheses developed.

In testing the hypothesis, bootstrapping procedures were applied to find the relationship between said variables. The overall results of predictors for employee motivation variables which are job security, monetary incentives, recognition, and work conditions were discussed. Job security ($\beta = 0.134$, $t = 2.389$, $p < 0.05$), monetary incentives ($\beta = 0.139$, $t = 2.191$, $p < 0.05$), recognition ($\beta = 0.294$, $t = 4.041$, $p < 0.05$), and work condition ($\beta = 0.404$, $t = 4.521$, $p < 0.05$) are significant. Thus, H1, H2 H3, and H4 are all supported. Overall, the R^2 is 0.728 indicates that 72.8% of the variance in factors influencing employee's motivation can be explained by the independent variables.

Mardia's multivariate skewness and kurtosis

| | b | z | p-value |
|----------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Skewness | 2123.835 | 79997.78253 | 0 |
| Kurtosis | 4623.906 | 78.77006 | 0 |

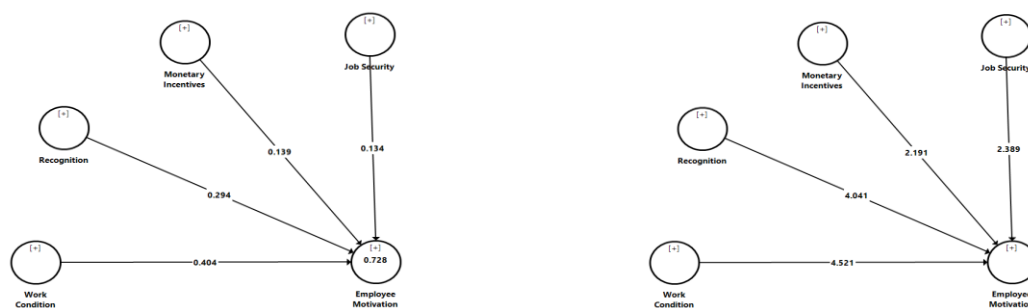


Diagram of measurement model and bootstrapping

Table 4 Hypothesis Testing

| Hypothesis | Relationship | Std Beta | Std Dev | t-value | p-value | BCI LL | BCI UL | f2 | VIF |
|------------|---|----------|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| H1 | Work condition → Employee Motivation | 0.404 | 0.089 | 4.521 | 0 | 0.258 | 0.554 | 0.158 | 3.806 |
| H2 | Recognition → Employee Motivation | 0.294 | 0.073 | 4.041 | 0 | 0.173 | 0.413 | 0.092 | 3.439 |
| H3 | Monetary Incentives → Employee Motivation | 0.139 | 0.064 | 2.191 | 0.014 | 0.037 | 0.245 | 0.047 | 1.523 |
| H4 | Job Security → Employee Motivation | 0.134 | 0.056 | 2.389 | 0.008 | 0.004 | 0.225 | 0.033 | 2.045 |

Note: We use 95% confidence interval with a bootstrapping of 5,000

Further to that as suggested by Shmueli et al. (2019) proposed PLS predict, a holdout sample-based procedure that generates case-level predictions on an item or a construct level using the PLS-Predict with a 10-fold procedure to check for predictive relevance. Shmueli et al. (2019) suggested that if all the item differences (PLS-LM) were lower than there is strong predictive power; if all are higher, than predictive relevance is not confirmed while if the majority is lower than there is moderate predictive power and if minority then there is low predictive power. Based on Table 5, all the errors of the PLS model were lower than the LM model thus we can conclude that our model has a strong predictive power.

Table 5 *PLS-Predict*

| | SE | SE | -LM | predict |
|-----|-------|-------|--------|---------|
| B5 | 0.747 | 0.82 | -0.073 | 0.324 |
| B1 | 0.838 | 0.961 | -0.123 | 0.424 |
| B4 | 0.632 | 0.72 | -0.088 | 0.383 |
| B10 | 0.798 | 0.882 | -0.084 | 0.392 |
| B13 | 0.901 | 0.784 | 0.117 | 0.357 |
| B6 | 0.826 | 0.967 | -0.141 | 0.38 |
| B3 | 0.687 | 0.713 | -0.026 | 0.175 |
| B12 | 0.663 | 0.731 | -0.068 | 0.548 |
| B9 | 0.767 | 0.837 | -0.07 | 0.369 |

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study focused on investigating the impact of work conditions, recognition, monetary incentives, and job security on employee motivation among non-academic staff in higher education institutions. The findings of this study provide valuable insights for the administration of these institutions to ensure and enhance employee motivation levels.

The results of the study confirmed several important relationships. Firstly, work conditions were found to have a positive correlation with employee motivation. Creating a conducive and supportive work environment can significantly contribute to motivating non-academic staff members. Secondly, recognition was identified as another critical factor positively influencing employee motivation. Acknowledging and appreciating the efforts and contributions of staff can foster a sense of value and motivation within the workplace.

Additionally, the study revealed that both monetary incentives and job security have a positive association with employee motivation. Offering attractive financial incentives and ensuring job stability can serve as powerful motivators for non-academic staff in higher education institutions.

The implications of these findings are significant for higher education institutions. Management should prioritize the well-being of employees by providing support for their mental and physical health. This demonstrates a commitment to employee welfare and can contribute to increased motivation levels. Furthermore, offering a range of benefits and rewards can help attract and retain talented individuals within the organization.

It is important to note that employees themselves also play a crucial role in enhancing their own motivation. Surrounding oneself with motivated individuals can create an environment of encouragement and provide opportunities for personal growth and the achievement of new goals.

By considering and implementing the insights gained from this study, higher education institutions can effectively foster employee motivation among non-academic staff. This, in turn, can contribute to a more engaged and productive workforce, ultimately benefiting the institution.

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