

Exploring the Effects of Reward Systems on Employees' Motivation and Performance in the Hospitality Industry Post COVID-19: A Case Study at Four Seasons Resort

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

This study begins with a background that is summarized below.

Tourism and the hospitality sector are major drivers of economic development, jobs and employment throughout the world. Hotel businesses are service-driven and depend heavily on their staff for providing the highest possible service standards and retaining competitive edge. As a result, employee motivation and employee performance are now crucial factors in the success of organisations. Employees with positive motivations will be more apt to evidence high commitment, productivity, service quality, and customer satisfaction, which will result in increased organisational performance (Chien et al., 2020).

COVID-19 presented a unique set of challenges to the hospitality sector globally. Hospitality operations and workforce management practices were significantly affected by travel restrictions, lockdown measures, reduced occupancy and business closures. Layoffs, salary cuts, shorter working hours, and dwindling job security negatively impacted employee morale and motivation, especially for many in the hospitality sector (Cwibi and Mxunyelwa, 2024). The pandemic also brought to the forefront concerns about employee well-being, safety and retention, leading organizations to revisit their human resource management practices (Jiang & Wen, 2020).

Reward systems have become more relevant than ever in the post-COVID-19 context as they are becoming more strategic in attracting, motivating, and retaining employees. Rewards can include financial rewards, including salary, bonuses and incentives, and non-financial rewards, such as recognition, career development opportunities, flexible working arrangements and employee appreciation programmes. Rewards have been found to have positive effects on employees' motivation, engagement, job satisfaction and performance in hospitality organisations (Cwibi and Mxunyelwa, 2024). As a result, the importance of reward systems in improving employee outcomes has gained special significance for luxury organisations in the hospitality industry like Four Seasons Resort.

1.2 Research Problem

Although the hospitality industry is slowly recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic, the industry still has significant staffing issues. Labour shortage, job insecurity, employee burnout and turnover intentions are still widespread throughout the industry (Choi, Fang and Khatter, 2022). As a result, there has been a drop in employee motivation and performance in various hospitality companies. While reward systems are known to be good motivational tools, there is a lack of research that explores their effectiveness in the post-pandemic hospitality environment. Moreover, there is little evidence-based research specific to the luxury hospitality sector (Four Seasons Resort) to explore the link between reward systems and employee motivation and performance.

1.3 Research Aim

3 Research Aim This study seeks to examine the impact of reward system on the motivation and performance of the employees of the Four Seasons Resort in the post COVID-19 era.

1.4 Research Objectives

The aim of this study is to achieve the following objectives:

To analyze the reward systems that are implemented at Four Seasons Resort.

To analyse the impact of reward systems on employee motivation.

To look into how an employee's performance is affected by the rewarding system.

To make suggestions on how to improve reward strategies in the hospitality industry.

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions are used to guide the study:

What types of rewards are put in place at Four Seasons Resort?

What impact do reward systems have on employee motivation?

What are the effects of reward systems on employee performance?

What improvements can be made to enhance the effectiveness of reward systems?

The meaning of the study is to understand the significance of the study.

This study builds on the existing research in the area of employee motivation, performance management and reward systems in the hospitality sector. Academically, it fills a gap in the current research on reward systems in the post-COVID-19 era, which is relatively unexplored in the hospitality literature. The results will contribute to the knowledge of the factors of reward, motivation and performance in service type organisations.

Practically, the study offers a lot of insights for workplace managers, HR professionals, and organisational leaders wanting to increase employee engagement and performance. The results can support decision-makers to develop a successful reward system that meets changing employee needs and the organisation's goals in the new business landscape after the pandemic.

The structure of the dissertation will be the following.

This dissertation is organised into six chapters. Chapter One is an introduction to the study which includes the background of the study, problem statement, aim, objectives, questions, significance, and structure of the study. A detailed literature review of related studies on reward systems, employee motivation, employee performance, and the important motivational theories, such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Expectancy Theory is provided in Chapter Two. Chapter Three describes the research methodology, research philosophy, research approach, research design, research techniques of data collection, sampling strategy, data analysis techniques and ethical considerations. The findings of the case study research are presented and analysed in Chapter Four. In Chapter Five, the results are discussed in the context of the current literature and theories. Lastly, Chapter Six offers conclusions, recommendations, study limitations and suggestions for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The literature review is an in-depth analysis of the scholarly work that has been done in the field of reward system and its impact on employee motivation and performance. In the hospitality sector, employee performance has always been a crucial factor in organisational success and optimising the impact of reward systems on employee behaviour has become more important than ever before. The chapter explains the concept and types of reward systems, looks at theoretical reviews on employee motivation, and examines empirical research on the relationship between rewards, motivation and performance. The chapter systematically summarizes literature and presents gaps in understanding and theoretical and conceptual bases for understanding reward systems in the post-COVID-19 hospitality context, at Four Seasons Resort.

2.2 Concept of Reward Systems

Reward systems have been known to be an integral part of organisational and human resource management strategies for quite some time. They aim to promote behaviours and performance outcomes that are likely to support organisational goals and/or meet the needs and expectations of employees. Reward systems are a powerful organisational tool that affects employee attitudes, effort, commitment and behaviours in the workplace, as stated by Gerhart and Fang (2015). In service-based sectors like hospitality, rewards are particularly important in order to foster service quality and organisational performance, because they influence the quality of service that employees provide directly to customers.

Reward systems are now a significant strategic force in today's workplace, as people's attitudes and expectations towards rewards and the labour market have evolved. However, researchers say that the most effective reward programs don't just involve monetary compensation; they also include other types of rewards, including psychological, career advancement, and other forms of recognition that pay off to a worker's wellbeing and engagement (Kosseck, Valcour and Lirio, 2014). This relates to contemporary HRM strategies which prioritize reward systems based on employees.

The COVID-19 pandemic was another reminder of the need for a robust reward approach. The hospitals' employees in the hospitality sector were more prone to feeling uncertain, having more

workloads, and worrying about job security and wellbeing, which forced organisations to rethink the conventional reward systems (Jiang and Wen, 2020). In this context, the role of reward systems in boosting employee motivation, better retention, and organisational recovery in the post-pandemic era has gained importance.

2.2.2 Identifying the reward systems in the workplace.

Reward systems are the range of organizational policies, practices and processes that are implemented to recognise and compensate employees for their contributions, performance, competencies and achievements (Armstrong & Brown, 2019). Gerhart and Fang (2015) describe reward systems as an organizational mechanism by which employees are rewarded with certain monetary and non-monetary consequences for their efforts and performance. Reward systems serve, therefore, not only to pay employees but to also reinforce desired behaviours, motivate productivity, and align individual goals with the organisation's goals. Reward systems that are effective establish positive relationships where workers are given valued rewards and organisations get better outcomes in terms of performance.

2.2.2 Types of Rewards

Rewards can be divided into financial rewards, non-financial rewards, intrinsic rewards and extrinsic rewards. Rewards are monetary such as salary, wages, bonuses, incentives, commissions and employee benefits. These awards directly serve employees' economic needs and have historically been viewed as crucial "motivators of performance" (Gerhart and Fang, 2015).

Non-financial rewards include recognition schemes, promotion, training and development, supportive management and flexible working arrangements. Such rewards can help meet social and psychological needs, thus increasing employee satisfaction and organisational commitment (Kossek, Valcour and Lirio, 2014).

Intrinsic rewards stem from the work and consist of feelings of achievement, autonomy, competence and growth. Extrinsic rewards, on the other hand, are given by the organisation for the individual and are monetary, promotion, awards and formal recognition. Intrinsic rewards

work best in promoting enduring motivation by meeting the three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness, as described by SDT (Ryan and Deci, 2020). As a result, modern firms tend to incorporate an integrated system of rewards that incorporate both intrinsic and extraneous motivators to power up employee motivation and performance.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

There are theoretical frameworks that can be used to understand how reward systems affect employee motivation and performance. Motivation theories describe the emphasis that influence the actions of employees and enable organizations to develop a reward framework that is consistent with the needs and goals of employees. This research is based on the theories of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, and Vroom's Expectancy theory as the main theories used to understand the impact of reward systems on employee motivation and performance in the hospitality industry. Theories are especially relevant in this context as they help to understand the impact of various types of rewards on employee attitudes, engagement and work outcomes (Pinder, 2014).

The second theory is the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory. The second theory is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory suggests that human needs can be categorized in a hierarchy, with the most basic needs being physiological and then safety, social belonging, esteem, and finally self-actualisation needs (Maslow, 1943). The theory states that when the lower needs are largely met people are driven by the higher ones.

In the hospitality sector, Maslow's theory is relevant to employee motivation since many workers in the hospitality sector may want to satisfy several needs at the same time. Financial rewards such as salaries, wages, and employment benefits contribute to satisfying physiological and safety needs by providing economic security. In the meantime, supportive workplace relationships, team working and the workplace culture meet employees' social needs. Other sources of esteem needs are recognition programmes, promotions and performance awards that extend the sense of achievement and status for employees (Steers, Mowday and Shapiro, 2004).

It is suggested that the theory of effective reward systems should include both monetary and non-monetary rewards to cater to the needs of employees. As the pandemic has gone on, aspects of employee safety, job security, and wellbeing programs have gained increasing importance in the post-COVID-19 era, because workers are looking for protection and stability in their workplace amid workplace uncertainty (Jiang and Wen, 2020). Therefore, it can be argued that the concept of reward structures proposed by Maslow can be used to explain the need for comprehensive reward structures to maintain employee motivation and performance.

2.3.2 Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, hygiene factors and motivators are two different factors that affect employee satisfaction and employee motivation (Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman, 1959). Hygiene factors are those of the job's setting that cause employees to refrain from being discontented but are not necessarily factors in their getting motivated to work. These include job security, working conditions, salary, interpersonal relationship, and organisational policies. Motivators, on the other hand, are those which inherently encourage satisfaction and motivation like achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, and personal growth.

The theory has important implications for reward management because it has been suggested that financial rewards may not be enough to elicit sustained motivation. While competitive salary and benefits are important to stave off employee dissatisfaction, true motivation can only come from recognition, advancement and opportunity for achievement (Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman, 1959). This is especially important in the hospitality industry, where staff is often faced with challenging workloads and customer service demands.

Organisations are seeing the value of pairing the hygiene factors with motivational rewards in the post-pandemic hospitality world. Compensation and recognition initiatives help overcome issues of job security and economic wellbeing, while career development helps to improve employee engagement and commitment. The theory of Herzberg, therefore, emphasizes the need to create well-balanced rewards systems that will include both employee satisfaction and motivation.

2.3.3 ExPectancy Theory of Motivation

Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory suggests that the motivational factors driving employee efforts are expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. Expectancy is the belief that an individual will perform successfully if he or she makes an effort. An employee's instrumentality is his or her belief that the rewards will follow good performance, and his or her valence is the value the employee puts on the rewards.

The theory holds that employees will be motivated when they think that if they put in more effort, their performance will improve, and their performance will be rewarded with something that they value. However, the effectiveness of reward systems is influenced not only by the rewards themselves but also by the perceptions of employees about the rewards distribution process in terms of fairness, transparency and attainability (Van Eerde and Thierry, 1996).

In the hospitality sector, the Expectancy Theory also helps with the study of the link between employee performance and rewards. When there is a clear connection between effort, performance and rewards, then performance-based bonuses, recognition schemes and opportunities for promotion will likely lead to motivated employees. But, when reward allocation processes are seen as inconsistent or unfair, motivational outcomes can be diminished. So Expectancy Theory is concerned with the need to make clear reward structures that increase the perceived linkage between the effort employee puts in, the performance level attained and the likelihood of the reward being achieved.

2.4 Hospitality Industry Employee Motivation

Motivation is one of the important factors that can affect the quality of services, customer satisfaction and organizational performance in the hospitality industry. Organisations rely heavily on motivated employees in providing their exceptional hospitality services to their guests and ensure competitive advantage, because the job of a hospitality worker is labor intensive and requires motivated employees for the job (Karatepe and Olugbade, 2017). Motivation is the internal and external factors that start, guide and maintain work-related behaviour to accomplish the goals of the organisation (Pinder, 2014). An employee with a positive attitude and interest in the job will exhibit a greater level of commitment, engagement, productivity and job satisfaction, which will be of benefit to the organisation.

The importance of employee motivation has become more evident in the current post-COVID-19 world of hospitality, where there are continued issues with job instability and employee retention. There is evidence that a sense of purpose, career growth prospects, recognition, and a supportive approach to management will increase employee engagement (Baum et al., 2020). Therefore, it is critical to hospitality organisations, to understand what influences employee motivation, in order to have better performing and sustainable employees.

2.4.1 Motivation Drivers

The motivation of employees in the hospitality industry is due to several factors. Financial factors, such as salary, bonus, and incentive schemes still play a significant role in motivating employees because they close employees' economic needs and perception of fairness (Chiang and Jang, 2008). But, recent studies show that things are more complex than that, and that non-financial is also important to maintaining motivation over the long term.

Supervisor's recognition, career progression, empowerment, training and development programmes and working relationships have been identified as some of the most important factors that motivate employees in hospitality organisations (Karatepe and Olugbade, 2017). Also, employees psychological wellbeing and engagement are enhanced through meaningful work and organisational support. Job security, employee wellbeing programs, and flexibility at the workplace have become crucial motivators in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, as people are looking for stability and work-life balance (Baum et al., 2020).

2.4.2 Industry-Specific Challenges

While employee motivation matters, there are several challenges that are specific to the hospitality sector which can impact employee engagement and performance. High employee turnover is one of the most chronic problems in this industry and is a characteristic of the industry in the past, in which attractive and stable wages were not available, advancement opportunities were limited and conditions were found to be challenging (Iverson and Deery, 1997).

Workload pressures are also great challenges. Staff at hospitals are often required to work outside of normal business hours, long hours, weekends and public holidays whilst still providing a high level of service. These demands can be associated with job stress, burnout and loss of motivation (Karatepe and Uludag, 2008).

Then the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the workforce problems with significant unemployment, disruption in the labour market and heightened employee uncertainty. Despite the revival of tourism, there have been challenges in getting skilled hospitality staff and retaining them, as reported by many hospitality organisations (Baum et al., 2020). The difficulties faced in this context illustrate the importance of good human resource and reward management that can motivate and retain employees.

The hospitality industry is a blend of service and commerce. The hospitality industry combines service and business.

Organisation's success depends upon the employee performance in the hospitality industry because the delivery of services is largely dependent on the behaviour of the employees and how they interact with the customer. Performance is defined as how well employees accomplish their duties and activities that help achieve organizational goals (Campbell and Wiernik, 2015). Employee performance directly affects customer satisfaction, service quality, operational effectiveness and organisation profitability in hospitality organisations.

Considering the competitive nature of the hospitality business, organisations are now increasingly paying attention to employee performance through training, motivation, leadership development, and rewards. It has been found that employees with high performance levels can lead to better customer satisfaction, positive organizational reputation, and financial performance (Chien et al., 2020). So it is necessary to grasp the size and factors affecting employee performance to create proper workforce management strategies.

2.5.1 Definition and Dimensions of Performance

There are two types of employee performance: task performance and contextual performance. Task performance encompasses both service, operational, and performance tasks – activities

closely related to a worker's formal duties, such as whether or not they provide service, operate equipment, and meet performance targets (Campbell and Wiernik, 2015).

Contextual performance includes discretionary behaviors that contribute to the organizational context (Borman and Motowidlo, 1997), including teamwork, cooperation, helping others, and exhibiting behaviours of organizational citizenship. In the hospitality sector, both dimensions play a role as customer experiences are affected by the technical quality of the service as well as the interpersonal service and willingness of staff to over deliver for the customer. Hence, the performance of a worker should not be considered just a productivity measure but also a multidimensional construct.

2.5.2 Conditions that impact employee's performance

There are many personal and organisational determinants affecting employees' performance. Motivation is always cited as one of the most significant determinants because when employees are motivated, they are more inclined to do their work and so produce better performance outcomes (Pinder, 2014). Likewise, enhancing employees' knowledge, skills, and competencies through training and development programmes helps them to perform competently.

Performance levels are also affected by other factors such as the quality of leadership, organisational culture, employee engagement, job satisfaction and support in the workplace (Karatepe and Olugbade, 2017). Moreover, the importance of reward systems lies in that it reinforces the desired behaviour and motivates employees to attain organizational goals. Fair, meaningful and performance-based rewards are associated with increased commitment and productivity from employees (Gerhart and Fang, 2015).

2.6 Reward Systems and Employee Motivation. Reward Systems and Employee Motivation.

There is a large amount of empirical literature on the link between reward systems and employee motivation. Research indicates that both monetary and non-monetary incentives have a positive effect on employee motivation that helps to meet economic, social and psychological needs. In the hospitality sector, for instance, the findings from Chiang and Jang (2008) showed that compensation, and recognition had a significant impact on employee satisfaction and

motivational outcomes in these organisations. Likewise, Stringer, Didham and Theivananthampillai (2011) found that recognition-based rewards led to a higher level of employee engagement and commitment.

But the research evidence also suggests that the effectiveness of rewards is dependent on the design and implementation of the rewards. Overuse of financial rewards can lead to loss of intrinsic motivation if employees think that rewards are coercive or manipulative (Ryan and Deci, 2020). Therefore, today's research suggests a balance of reward, including pay, recognition, career development and meaningful experiences.

Recent research trends show that the focus is on holistic reward management practices that take into account employee wellbeing, flexibility and work-life balance, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic (Baum et al., 2020). The results highlight the need for robust reward systems in contemporary hospitality businesses that can motivate employees and contribute to sustainable operations.

2.7 The system of rewards and employee performance is

Rewards and performance of employees have been a subject of extensive study in organisational and hospitality research. Reward systems are regarded as key determinants of productivity as they motivate workers to work harder and also help to motivate workers to act in a way that is conducive to the organizational goals (Gerhart and Fang, 2015). The empirical evidence shows that tangible and intangible rewards have a positive impact on employee outcomes related to performance, where tangible rewards include monetary incentives like bonuses and performance-based pay, and intangible rewards include things like recognition and career opportunities (Aguinis, 2019). In the hospitality sector, a motivated employee who sees that reward systems are fair and meaningful is more likely to demonstrate higher levels of service quality, commitment and productivity (Chien et al., 2020). However, the benefits of rewards will rely on employee perceptions of fairness, clarity, and support.

2.8 Literature Gap

While there has been extensive research regarding reward systems and motivation, and their impact on employee performance, few studies have considered the relationships between these factors in the post-COVID-19 hospitality environment. The literature that is available for this subject covers only the general organisational context, and there is a need to examine studies in the industry context. Moreover, the effectiveness of the reward system in luxury hospitality organisations like Four Seasons Resort has not yet been studied empirically, which is why the present study is justified.

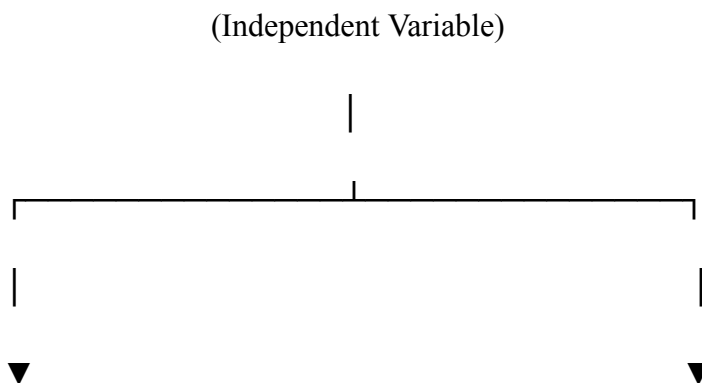
2.9 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework on which this study is based is based on the assumption that reward systems is the independent variable that affects employee motivation and dependent variable of employee performance. It is believed that good pay and non-pay incentives will increase the motivation of employees, leading to better performance results. This relationship is used as a basis for examining the effectiveness of rewards in Four Seasons Resort.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

You may use the following figure right after section 2.9:

REWARD SYSTEMS



EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

(Dependent Variable)

The better an employee is motivated, the more productive they will be.

Value (Y) = Value (Y)

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

(Dependent Variable)

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the method used to explore the issue of the impact of reward systems on employees' motivation and performance at Four Seasons Resort. It provides details about the research philosophy, approach, design, data collection, sampling, analysis of data, ethical issues and strategies used for ensuring the reliability and validity of the research (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019).

3.2 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy is the philosophy behind the process of data collection and analysis and interpretation (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). This research uses a positivist philosophy in which the relationship between reward systems and employee motivation with employee performance is observed from an objective data approach. The positivist approach implies that social phenomena can be explained using observable facts and empirical evidence, which enables it to find patterns and relationships between variables (Bryman, 2016). The philosophy is especially relevant as the study is intended for the purpose of providing objective results of employee perceptions of reward systems and their effects on four seasons resort workplace outcomes.

3.3 Research Approach

The method used in the study is deductive research. Deduction is a type of research that generates the study from the theories that have been previously established, and is then tested to see whether the theories hold up to empirical evidence (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019).

This method is appropriate because the study is based on the well-known theories of motivation: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and Vroom's Expectancy Theory. These theories suggest that rewards have an impact on employee motivation and performance. As a result, data gathered from the employees at the Four Seasons Resort will be analysed to see if the theoretical relationships which have been identified in other literature are present in the chosen organisational context.

3.4 Research Design

In this investigation, a case study research design is used. Case studies allow the researcher to examine the real world phenomenon of the organisation and offer in-depth contextual information on a particular case (Yin, 2018). Four Seasons Resort is an internationally known luxury hospitality company that is a key player in the industry's focus on employee engagement and service excellence, and is the company selected for the case organisation. By concentrating on one organisation, any study of reward systems and their impact on employee outcomes can be more detailed. Moreover, the case study approach is suitable in order to reveal detailed aspects of the reward management practices in the post-COVID-19 hospitality setting.

3.5 Data Collection Method

The collection of primary data is the major source of data for this study. Primary data are data that are gathered firsthand, and they contain firsthand information related to the research questions. (Bryman, 2016) The main data collection tool will be the structured questionnaire, which can be used to collect standardised data from a relatively large number of employees, as this is an effective way of collecting data. The questionnaire will include closed ended items on a 5 point likert scale to assess the perception of employees on the reward systems, motivation and performance.

The questionnaire will be sent via email to all employees who work at Four Seasons Resort. Participants will be handed an information sheet outlining the study and how to fill out the survey. Responses will be anonymous to allow for honest responses and to reduce response bias. The questionnaire should be used as it allows quantitative data analysis and makes it easy to

identify the relationships between the key variables that have been studied in the research (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019).

3.6 Sampling Strategy

The population of this study will include staff members in the four major areas of the Four Seasons Resort such as the front office, housekeeping, food and beverage and administration staff. The proposed size of the sample is about 100 employees, which is a manageable number of employees to collect but at the same time would be sufficient for meaningful statistical analysis of the data.

The convenience sampling technique will be used. Convenience sampling is a form of sampling in which the participants are the ones who are easy to get and are willing to take part in the study (Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim, 2016). This approach is not widely generalisable, but is commonly employed in research in hospitality because of access and time constraints. The approach is seen as suitable for the exploratory case study carried out in a specific organisation.

3.7 Data Analysis Technique

Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques will be used to analyze the collected data. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations) will be used to summarise the demographic characteristics and perceptions of reward systems of respondents. The relationships between the reward systems, employee motivation and performance will be analyzed by using inferential analysis.

The data will be analyzed by SPSS and other statistical analysis programs. Correlation analysis can be used to establish the relationships between the study variables and the intensity of the correlation. The type of statistical analysis is suitable for the research questions and objectives of this study, as it permits objective evaluation of research questions and helps the study be oriented towards positivist (Field, 2018).

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical is a basic tenet throughout the research process. Informed consent forms will be distributed to the participants that explain the purpose of the study, the participants' voluntary participation and the right to withdraw at any time. Personal information will not be disclosed, providing thus confidentiality and anonymity. Data collected will be kept securely and only be utilized for academic purposes in line with recognised research ethics guidelines (Bryman, 2016).

3.9 Reliability and Validity

Reliability is used to describe how consistent the research results are, and validity is used to describe the level of accuracy achieved in the research in terms of measuring the concepts that were intended (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). Standardised questionnaire items from previous studies will be used in order to increase reliability. Careful questionnaire design, linking to existing body of motivational research and scales previously validated in organisational research will enhance the validity.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the findings of the questionnaire survey carried out among the employees of Four Seasons Resort, which is presented and analyzed. The analysis is organized by the research targets and the results are concentrated on the perceptions of the respondents with regard to the reward systems and the influence they have on employee motivation and performance. Descriptive statistics are used to present the findings and interpreted based on literature and theoretical studies.

The demographic profile of the respondents is presented in

4.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents.

A total of 100 questionnaires were analysed. According to the demographic profile, 56% of the respondents were male and 44% were female. As far as age distribution is concerned, 38% were in the 21-30 age group, 42% in the 31-40 age group and the rest were above 40 years of age.

As far as experience is concerned, 35% of the guests had less than three years of experience, 40% had from three to six years of experience, and 25% had more than six years of experience in the hospitality industry. The respondents were from different departments of operations such as Front Office (25%), Food and Beverage (30%), Housekeeping (20%), Administration (15%) and Other Departments (10%). This diversity, in turn, gave a wide range of viewpoints on reward systems in various organisational roles.

4.3 Results on Research Objective 1

Current reward system at 4 Seasons Resort

The results suggest that Four Seasons Resort uses a mixture of monetary and non-monetary motivating systems. Respondents' responses included competitive salaries, annual performance bonuses, service charges, overtime pay, and employee benefit packages as financial rewards. Some 78% of the respondents said financial incentives played an important part in the organisation's retention policy.

Other incentives, such as non-financial, were also commonly mentioned. Recognition programmes, employee of the month, training, career development and feedback were all listed as employees' strengths. Almost three-quarters (71.5%) of the respondents agreed that their supervisors' recognition had a positive impact on their attitudes at work.

The findings indicate an organisation which uses a total rewards strategy, combining monetary incentives with professional development and reward programs. This is aligned with the modern approach towards reward management which focuses on both economic and psychological factors of employee motivation (Armstrong and Brown, 2019).

The implications of research objective 2 to the impact of reward systems on employee motivation are summarized below. Below are summarized the implications of the research objective 2 (impact of reward systems on employee motivation).

Most respondents saw rewards as one of the factors that affected their motivation. About 81% felt that financial rewards influenced them to meet the performance targets and make an effective contribution to the goals of the organisation. Participants often equated competitive salary and bonuses with greater satisfaction and commitment to the organisation.

It was also found that the means of motivation have a strong influence beyond financial rewards. Feedback from participants indicated that recognition programmes improved their sense of value and appreciation in the organisation, at around 76% level. Likewise, learning and development was seen as motivating as it enabled the person to get a better career and professional success.

The results also indicated that fair and transparent allocation of rewards was appreciated by the employees. Individuals who believed that rewards were equitable, reported higher levels of motivation than those who expressed concerns about reward distribution. The results of this study support the tenets of Expectancy Theory which focuses on perceived relations between effort, performance and reward (Vroom, 1964).

To determine the impact of reward systems on employees' performance, the researcher investigated the following:

The results are evidence of the positive correlation between the reward system and employee performance. 78.7% of the respondents agreed that reward programmes motivated them to improve productivity and quality of services. Staff reported that reward systems encouraged them to go above and beyond what is required on their job and to do their best to help their organisation achieve its goals.

Recognition and career development opportunities were particularly associated with improved performance behaviours. When employees' work was recognised by the organisation, they indicated a greater motivation to work in a team, to deliver high-quality customer service, and to behave as good organisational citizens.

In addition, positive attitudes towards reward systems were linked to higher levels of engagement and commitment among employees who reported satisfaction with reward systems. The results align with existing studies that indicate the design of effective reward systems can lead to improved employee performance by reinforcing desirable actions and motivations (Gerhart and Fang, 2015).

4.6 Summary of Findings

The results suggest that Four Seasons Resort has implemented both financial and non-financial reward systems to encourage the employees' motivation and performance. Overall, employees had positive attitudes and linked rewards to motivation, job satisfaction, productivity and organisational commitment. In general, the findings indicate that effective reward management has a significant impact on positive employee outcomes in the hospitality sector.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the major findings which were reported in Chapter Four and their interpretation in terms of the study objectives, theory and literature. This discussion is focused on the link between reward systems, employee motivation and employee performance for Four Seasons Resort, and how the results are applicable to the reward management of the post COVID-19 hospitality industry.

The findings will be discussed in 5.2

Bite-sized learning:

5.2.1 Reward Systems and Motivation

The results suggest that a reward system has a significant effect on the employees' motivation in Four Seasons Resort. The financial aspects (salaries, bonuses) and non-financial aspects (recognition programmes, career development) were seen as motivational factors. The results

reflect the Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory which states that employees are influenced by a series of economic, social and psychological needs being satisfied (Maslow, 1943). Rewards based on money are meeting physiological and security needs, and rewards based on recognition and career growth are meeting esteem or self-actualisation needs.

Results also support Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of motivation which suggests that pay and working conditions are hygiene factors and recognition and promotion are motivators which result in increased satisfaction and engagement (Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman, 1959). Moreover, employees' perceptions of fairness and transparency in the allocation of rewards are consistent with the concepts of Vroom's Expectancy Theory. When it was thought that the employee would reap rewarding returns from his work, the expectancy–performance relationship found by Vroom (1964) was reinforced and the employees seemed to be more motivated. Thus, the results indicate that rewards need to cater to both material and psychological needs of employees to increase their motivation.

5.2.2 Reward Systems and Performance, specifically focused on rewards and performance management systems.

The findings also show that employee performance is positively related to the reward systems. Rewards were found to foster the motivation of employees to be more productive, better serviced, and more helpful to the workplace. This reinforces the notion that reward systems are used to reinforce behaviour and to motivate employees to meet organisational goals (Gerhart and Fang, 2015).

The results are especially applicable to the hospitality sector, where the quality of service is significantly linked to employees' work and customer interactions. Rewards perceived as meaningful led to higher commitment to the organisational goal and greater willingness to engage in discretionary behaviours like working collaboratively and showing customer-focused service. This result aligns with the existing literature, which indicates that good reward systems lead to better performance through higher engagement and organizational commitment (Chien et al., 2020).

Moreover, the results indicate that non-financial rewards have an important influence on performance outcomes. There was often a correlation between better work effort and job effectiveness and recognition programmes and career development opportunities. This indicates that the organisations should shift from monetary reward strategy to a broader reward management to optimise the employee performance.

The extent to which this thesis builds on existing literature is discussed below.

The results of the study are similar to the findings of other studies on reward management, employee motivation and performance. Some of previous researches have demonstrated that financial and non-financial incentives have positive impacts on employees' attitudes and organizational results (Chiang and Jang 2008; Gerhart and Fang 2015). Likewise, Chien et al. (2020) found that employee motivation and performance were positively correlated in hospitality firms.

Research findings also contribute to the post-pandemic research agenda for the hospitality industry, which increasingly focused on employee recognition, wellbeing and organizational support as key drivers of employees' work performance (Baum et al., 2020). Thus, the results support the opinion that the new reward system should take into account the economic and psychological needs of employees to be effective.

It is difficult to imagine that the following four seasons will ever happen again. There is no telling what the next four seasons of life will be like.

The results indicate that Four Seasons Resort should persist with a strategy of a balanced rewards approach, combining financial rewards, recognition, career development and employee wellbeing. Increasing the transparency and fairness of reward distribution could also contribute to better employee motivation and performance, which, in turn, would lead to better service quality, employee retention and organisational success.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

The study investigated the impact of reward systems on the motivation and performance of employees in the hospitality industry (the case study: Four Seasons Resort). The results show that rewards have an important influence on employee attitudes and motivations and on their performance at work. Overall the study identified that financial rewards like salaries and incentives to performance as well as non-financial rewards like recognition programs, training and career development have a positive impact on employee motivation and engagement. The results of this study lend support to the following theories: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (1943), Herzberg's Two Factor Theory (1959) and Vroom's Expectancy Theory (1964) which all stress the role of rewards in motivating employee behaviour and performance.

The research goals were fulfilled by locating the systems for rewarding staff at Four Seasons Resort, analyzing their impact on staff motivation and evaluating their impact on staff performance. In conclusion, the study finds that a balanced and effective reward system is crucial to improve employee commitment, productivity and organisational success in the post-COVID-19 hospitality industry.

6.2 Recommendations

From the results, Four Seasons Resort should implement further improvements to the reward program by providing a mix of monetary and non-monetary rewards. Compensation packages should continue to be competitive to help keep staff satisfied and retained.

Additionally, management should widen employee engagement programmes by offering more training programmes, career growth and wellbeing programmes. Recognition programmes should also be strengthened by regular recognition of performance, awards for employees' achievements as well as clear reward allocation system. These initiatives can reinforce employee motivation, enhance service quality and help to support long-term organisational performance. Moreover, managers ought to frequently audit reward policies to make sure they are still relevant to the evolving employee needs in the workplace after the pandemic.

This study had several limitations.

The findings may not be broadly applicable to other hospitality or hotel organisations.

6.4 Future Research Directions

Further research is needed in various hospitality organisations in various regions, and determine how effective reward systems are in various post-COVID-19 organisational contexts.

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