
Research

Reward Systems and the Performance of Selected Skilled Workers in Building Construction Sites in Edo State, Nigeria: A Quantitative Study in Nigeria

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Abstract: The construction industry remains one of the most labour-intensive sectors in Nigeria, depending significantly on the technical competence and productivity of skilled workers for effective project delivery. However, poor remuneration practices, weak welfare systems, delayed wage payments, and inadequate motivational structures continue to undermine workers' performance across many construction sites in Nigeria. This study quantitatively examined the relationship between reward systems and the performance of selected skilled workers in building construction sites in Edo State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study comprised 560 skilled workers drawn from selected construction sites across Benin City, Auchi, Ekpoma, and Uromi, while a sample size of 233 respondents was determined using the Taro Yamane sampling formula. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and Multiple Regression Analysis with the aid of SPSS Version 29. Findings revealed that financial rewards such as salaries, overtime payments, bonuses, and allowances significantly influence workers' productivity, punctuality, and commitment on construction sites. The study further established that non-financial rewards including recognition, workplace safety, welfare support, and promotion opportunities positively affect morale and job satisfaction among skilled workers. Regression analysis indicated a statistically significant positive relationship between reward systems and workers' performance. The study concludes that effective reward management remains critical for improving labour productivity, reducing absenteeism, and enhancing project efficiency within the Nigerian construction industry. The study recommends that construction firms adopt integrated reward systems combining financial and non-financial incentives to strengthen workforce commitment and productivity.

Keywords: Reward Systems; Skilled workers; Construction industry; Employee performance; Construction productivity; Edo State; Nigeria.

Introduction

The construction industry occupies a strategic position within Nigeria's economic development framework because of its contributions to employment generation, infrastructure delivery, urban expansion, and industrial growth. Building construction activities rely heavily on the productivity, commitment, and technical competence of skilled workers such as masons, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, welders, painters, tilers, and iron benders. These workers constitute the operational foundation upon which construction quality, cost efficiency, and project completion timelines are achieved. Nevertheless, despite the importance of skilled labour within construction activities, many construction firms in Nigeria continue to operate under weak reward structures characterised by irregular wage payments, poor welfare conditions, limited recognition systems, and inadequate safety incentives. These challenges have increasingly contributed to declining productivity, absenteeism, labour turnover, poor workmanship, and project delays across construction sites. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2024), labour productivity challenges within Nigeria's construction industry are closely associated with inflationary pressures, unstable wages, and poor employee welfare systems.

The concept of reward systems has therefore become increasingly important within construction management discourse because employee motivation directly influences productivity outcomes and organisational performance. Reward systems refer to structured financial and non-financial mechanisms through which employers compensate, motivate, and retain workers in exchange for their contributions toward organisational goals. Financial rewards include salaries, wages, overtime allowances, bonuses, and fringe benefits, while non-financial rewards involve recognition, career advancement opportunities, job security, workplace safety, training opportunities, and welfare support. However, many construction firms in Nigeria still adopt informal labour management practices that inadequately address workers' welfare and motivational needs. Reports from the Nigerian Institute of Building (2023) indicate that weak reward systems remain one of the major causes of low morale and declining productivity among construction workers across Nigeria.

In Edo State, construction activities have expanded significantly due to increasing urbanisation, population growth, road rehabilitation projects, private real estate investments, and public infrastructural development. Urban centres such as Benin City, Auchi, Ekpoma, and Uromi have witnessed growing construction activities involving residential buildings, shopping complexes, educational facilities, and commercial structures. Despite this expansion, labour-related challenges linked to poor motivation, inconsistent remuneration, weak welfare support, and inadequate safety measures continue to affect workers' productivity on many construction sites. Observations from local contractors and site supervisors suggest that dissatisfaction with reward systems frequently contributes to lateness, reduced commitment, low-quality workmanship, and labour turnover among skilled workers. Although studies on employee motivation exist within management and manufacturing sectors, limited empirical attention has been given to reward systems and skilled workers' performance specifically within construction sites in Edo State. This study therefore quantitatively investigates the relationship between reward systems and the performance of selected skilled workers in building construction sites in Edo State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Concept of Reward Systems

The concept of reward systems extends beyond the payment of wages and salaries. Contemporary human resource management perspectives conceptualise reward systems as holistic frameworks integrating monetary compensation, employee recognition, welfare support, career advancement opportunities, workplace safety, and psychological satisfaction. Financial rewards typically include salaries, overtime payments, bonuses, allowances, fringe benefits, and performance incentives, while non-financial rewards encompass promotion opportunities, recognition, job security, training, employee participation, welfare schemes, and conducive working environments. The integration of these reward dimensions is important because employee motivation is multidimensional and cannot be sustained through financial incentives alone.

Within the Nigerian construction industry, reward systems have become increasingly important due to the physically demanding and risk-prone nature of construction activities. Skilled construction workers such as masons, carpenters, electricians, welders, plumbers, painters, and iron benders often operate under difficult environmental and economic conditions characterised by long working hours, exposure to

occupational hazards, inflationary pressures, and unstable income patterns. Under such conditions, effective reward systems serve as motivational instruments capable of improving workers' morale, commitment, punctuality, and productivity. According to the Nigerian Institute of Building (2023), weak reward structures remain one of the major causes of labour dissatisfaction and declining productivity across construction sites in Nigeria.

Reward systems within the construction industry also perform strategic organisational functions beyond employee compensation. Effective reward management contributes to labour retention, reduction in absenteeism, improved teamwork, stronger organisational commitment, and enhanced project delivery outcomes. Construction projects are highly dependent on coordination among multiple categories of skilled workers, and weak reward systems often generate dissatisfaction that disrupts collaboration and productivity. For example, delayed wage payments or inconsistent overtime compensation may lead to labour withdrawal, lateness, conflict, or reduced work quality on construction sites. In Edo State, contractors managing residential and commercial construction projects frequently experience productivity challenges associated with poor labour motivation and irregular reward practices.

In practical terms, reward systems within construction sites in Edo State often vary depending on the nature of contractors, project size, and organisational structure. Large construction firms may provide structured salary systems, safety allowances, bonuses, and welfare packages, while smaller contractors frequently rely on informal payment systems with limited welfare support. Such inconsistencies contribute to disparities in workers' motivation and performance across construction sites. The Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria (2023) emphasises that many skilled workers within Nigeria's construction industry continue to face challenges associated with delayed wage payments, inadequate safety incentives, and weak recognition systems.

Reward systems represent comprehensive motivational frameworks combining financial and non-financial incentives aimed at improving employee satisfaction, commitment, and productivity. Within the construction industry, effective reward systems are essential for enhancing labour performance, reducing absenteeism, strengthening workplace commitment, and improving project delivery outcomes. In the context of Edo State, where construction activities continue to expand alongside increasing labour

demands, reward systems remain critical determinants of workers' productivity and organisational efficiency.

Skilled Workers' Performance in Construction Sites

Construction activities require coordinated contributions from multiple categories of skilled workers including masons, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, welders, painters, tilers, iron benders, and site supervisors. These workers collectively influence the structural quality, durability, and timely completion of construction projects. In practical terms, the efficiency with which a mason lays blocks, the precision of a carpenter's measurements, or the competence of an electrician's installation procedures significantly affect overall project outcomes. Therefore, workers' performance is not merely an individual organisational concern but a critical determinant of construction quality, cost control, and operational efficiency.

Within Nigeria's construction industry, labour productivity has increasingly become a major concern due to rising cases of project delays, poor workmanship, labour turnover, and declining worker motivation. Reports from the Nigerian Institute of Building (2023) indicate that many construction firms experience operational inefficiencies associated with weak labour management practices, poor remuneration systems, and inadequate welfare support. Skilled workers operating under poor motivational conditions are more likely to demonstrate reduced commitment, absenteeism, lateness, and low productivity. This situation is particularly evident in labour-intensive construction environments where workers depend heavily on physical effort and daily motivation for sustained performance.

The performance of skilled workers is influenced by multiple organisational, economic, and environmental factors. Financial rewards such as wages, overtime allowances, bonuses, and salary regularity remain among the strongest determinants of workers' productivity within construction sites. Workers who perceive compensation as fair and timely are more likely to demonstrate commitment, punctuality, and productivity. Conversely, delayed wage payments and poor compensation structures often contribute to frustration, dissatisfaction, and labour withdrawal. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2024), inflationary pressures and rising living costs have significantly reduced workers' purchasing power across Nigeria, thereby intensifying the importance of financial incentives within labour-intensive industries.

In addition to financial rewards, non-financial factors such as recognition, job security, workplace safety, training opportunities, and welfare support also significantly

influence skilled workers' performance. Construction workers are more likely to demonstrate commitment and efficiency when employers recognise their efforts and provide conducive working environments. For instance, workers operating within sites that prioritise safety equipment, medical support, and respectful supervision often exhibit stronger morale and reduced absenteeism. This reflects Herzberg's argument that motivational factors such as recognition and achievement are critical for improving employee satisfaction and performance.

Workplace safety remains another important determinant of performance within construction sites. Construction work exposes labourers to multiple occupational hazards including falls, equipment accidents, electrical injuries, and exposure to hazardous materials. Where safety measures are inadequate, workers may become fearful, demotivated, or physically vulnerable, thereby reducing productivity levels. The Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria (2023) notes that poor safety practices within many Nigerian construction sites continue to contribute to accidents, injuries, and declining worker morale. Consequently, safety incentives and protective welfare systems are increasingly recognised as important components of workers' performance management.

Within Edo State, construction activities have expanded considerably due to urbanisation, population growth, private real estate investments, and public infrastructure development. Urban centres such as Benin City, Auchi, Ekpoma, and Uromi continue to experience increasing construction activities involving residential, institutional, and commercial projects. Despite this growth, many construction sites still experience labour-related challenges associated with low motivation, inconsistent reward structures, inadequate welfare systems, and weak supervision. Site observations and industry reports suggest that some contractors rely heavily on informal labour practices characterised by unstable wages and limited welfare support, thereby negatively affecting workers' productivity and commitment.

Skilled workers' performance within construction sites represents a multidimensional concept encompassing productivity, work quality, punctuality, commitment, safety compliance, and operational efficiency. The performance of construction workers is strongly influenced by reward systems, workplace safety, welfare support, leadership practices, and broader economic conditions. In Edo State, where construction activities continue to expand alongside increasing labour demands, improving the performance of skilled workers remains essential for achieving efficient project

delivery, sustainable infrastructure development, and enhanced construction industry productivity.

Financial Reward Systems and Workers' Performance

The relationship between financial rewards and workers' performance is grounded in motivational and behavioural theories which suggest that employees are more likely to exert greater effort when compensation systems are perceived as fair, timely, and commensurate with their contributions. From the perspective of Expectancy Theory, workers become motivated when they believe that improved effort and performance will result in desirable financial outcomes. Similarly, Equity Theory argues that employees compare their compensation with their workload and with the rewards received by others performing similar tasks. Where workers perceive inequity or exploitation, dissatisfaction and reduced productivity are likely to emerge. Within construction environments in Edo State, these theoretical assumptions are particularly relevant because skilled workers often operate under difficult conditions requiring substantial physical effort and technical expertise.

In practical terms, wages and salaries constitute the most immediate and visible form of financial reward within construction sites. Skilled workers such as masons, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, welders, and painters depend heavily on daily or weekly wages for livelihood sustenance. Consequently, timely and adequate wage payments significantly influence workers' commitment, punctuality, and productivity levels. Delayed or irregular wage payments, on the other hand, frequently contribute to absenteeism, labour turnover, frustration, and reduced morale among workers. Reports from the National Bureau of Statistics (2024) indicate that inflationary pressures and rising living costs continue to weaken workers' purchasing power across Nigeria, thereby intensifying the importance of stable financial compensation within labour-intensive sectors.

However, financial reward systems within Nigeria's construction industry remain highly inconsistent across firms and project categories. Large construction companies and formal contractors may provide structured salary systems, allowances, and bonuses, whereas smaller contractors frequently operate informal wage structures characterised by unstable payment schedules and limited welfare support. In Edo State, many skilled workers employed by smaller contractors reportedly experience irregular payments and inadequate compensation despite rising living expenses. Such disparities contribute significantly to dissatisfaction and declining labour productivity within construction sites.

Furthermore, the broader economic environment in Nigeria has intensified the significance of financial rewards within construction labour management. Rising inflation, unemployment pressures, transportation costs, and food prices have substantially increased workers' economic vulnerability. Under such conditions, financial compensation functions not merely as organisational motivation but also as a survival mechanism for many construction workers and their families. Construction firms that fail to adjust wages and allowances in response to economic realities may therefore experience reduced productivity and workforce instability.

In Edo State, ongoing urban expansion and infrastructural development have increased demand for skilled labour within residential and commercial construction projects. Nevertheless, labour productivity challenges linked to inadequate financial rewards continue to affect project efficiency. Site observations within construction environments in Benin City, Auchi, and Ekpoma indicate that workers operating under stable wage structures and performance-based incentives generally demonstrate higher productivity and stronger commitment compared to those employed under informal or inconsistent payment systems.

Financial reward systems represent critical determinants of workers' performance within construction sites. Salaries, wages, overtime payments, bonuses, and allowances significantly influence productivity, morale, punctuality, commitment, and workmanship quality among skilled workers. Within the context of Edo State's expanding construction sector, effective financial reward systems remain essential for improving labour efficiency, reducing absenteeism, enhancing project delivery, and sustaining workforce stability within Nigeria's construction industry.

Non-Financial Rewards and Construction Productivity

Recognition represents one of the most influential forms of non-financial reward within construction sites. Recognition involves acknowledging workers' efforts, technical competence, punctuality, or exceptional performance through praise, commendation, certificates, or public appreciation. Skilled workers such as masons, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, and welders often derive psychological satisfaction from being recognised for quality workmanship and dedication. Construction workers who receive recognition from contractors or site supervisors are more likely to demonstrate loyalty, improved morale, and stronger work commitment. Conversely, lack of appreciation may generate feelings of neglect and reduce workers' enthusiasm toward assigned tasks.

Promotion opportunities and career advancement also significantly influence construction productivity. Skilled workers are more likely to remain committed to organisations where opportunities exist for advancement into supervisory or managerial roles. Within Nigeria's construction industry, many workers perceive long-term career stagnation as a major source of dissatisfaction. Workers who believe that performance and competence can lead to advancement are generally more motivated to improve productivity and develop technical skills. Training opportunities further complement career advancement by improving workers' competence, confidence, and adaptability within modern construction environments.

Workplace safety constitutes another critical non-financial reward influencing construction productivity. Construction work exposes labourers to occupational hazards including falls, equipment injuries, electrical accidents, and exposure to hazardous materials. Employers who provide safety equipment, medical support, and safe working environments demonstrate concern for workers' welfare, thereby improving morale and reducing fear-related productivity challenges. According to the Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria (2023), construction sites with stronger safety cultures often experience higher productivity levels, reduced accident rates, and improved workforce stability. Workers operating in safe environments are generally more confident, focused, and committed to assigned responsibilities.

Employee welfare support similarly influences construction productivity and organisational commitment. Welfare measures such as medical assistance, transportation support, meal provisions, accommodation assistance, and rest facilities contribute significantly to workers' physical and psychological well-being. Construction work is physically demanding, and inadequate welfare support may lead to fatigue, stress, and declining productivity. In Edo State, some construction firms have increasingly introduced welfare initiatives aimed at improving labour conditions and sustaining workforce efficiency, particularly within large residential and commercial building projects.

Managerial behaviour and interpersonal relationships within construction sites further shape the effectiveness of non-financial rewards. Respectful communication, fairness, and supportive supervision positively influence workers' attitudes toward assigned tasks. Construction workers who experience harassment, discrimination, or abusive treatment from supervisors are more likely to develop resentment and reduced commitment.

Effective leadership therefore functions as an indirect non-financial reward because it creates supportive workplace relationships capable of improving morale and productivity.

The influence of non-financial rewards on productivity is particularly important within the Nigerian economic context where financial constraints sometimes limit employers' ability to provide substantial monetary incentives. Under such conditions, recognition, supportive leadership, training opportunities, and workplace safety become strategic alternatives for sustaining employee motivation. The Nigerian Institute of Building (2023) notes that many construction firms underestimate the motivational value of non-financial rewards despite their strong influence on workers' morale and organisational commitment.

Within Edo State, ongoing construction activities in Benin City, Auchi, Ekpoma, and Uromi have increased demand for skilled labour across residential, commercial, and infrastructural projects. However, labour productivity challenges associated with weak welfare support, inadequate recognition systems, and poor safety conditions remain evident across many construction sites. Skilled workers operating within firms that provide training opportunities, recognition, and supportive welfare systems often demonstrate stronger productivity, punctuality, and teamwork compared to workers employed under poor managerial conditions.

Non-financial rewards represent important motivational mechanisms influencing construction productivity and organisational performance. Recognition, workplace safety, career advancement opportunities, welfare support, job security, training, and supportive supervision significantly affect workers' morale, commitment, efficiency, and loyalty. Within the context of Edo State's expanding construction industry, non-financial rewards remain essential for improving labour productivity, reducing absenteeism, strengthening workforce stability, and enhancing project delivery outcomes within building construction sites.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research approach using a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to systematically obtain measurable and objective data regarding reward systems and the performance of skilled workers within selected building construction sites in Edo State, Nigeria. The quantitative approach provided a scientific

basis for examining the relationship between financial and non-financial reward systems and workers' productivity through statistical analysis.

The choice of the survey design was influenced by the nature of the study variables, which required direct responses from construction workers concerning wages, bonuses, recognition systems, welfare support, safety conditions, and workplace motivation. Similar research designs have been widely used in construction management and labour productivity studies because they allow researchers to collect data from large populations and generate findings that can be generalised across related populations.

Furthermore, the quantitative design enhanced objectivity in data analysis by enabling the use of statistical tools such as frequency distributions, percentages, Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and Multiple Regression Analysis. These analytical tools were useful in determining the extent to which reward systems influence workers' performance within construction environments.

Area of the Study

The study was conducted in selected building construction sites across Edo State, Nigeria. Edo State is located in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria and is characterised by increasing urbanisation, infrastructural development, and private real estate expansion. The study specifically focused on construction sites within Benin City, Auchi, Ekpoma, and Uromi because of the growing concentration of residential, commercial, and institutional construction projects within these urban centres.

Benin City, the capital of Edo State, has experienced rapid urban growth resulting in increased construction activities involving housing estates, shopping complexes, educational facilities, hotels, and office buildings. Similarly, Auchi and Ekpoma have witnessed increasing private and public infrastructural development linked to educational expansion, commercial growth, and population increase. These developments have substantially increased the demand for skilled construction labour including masons, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, welders, painters, and tilers.

The selection of Edo State was further justified by the strategic role of the construction sector in employment generation and infrastructure delivery within the state. Reports from the Nigerian Institute of Building (2023) indicate that Edo State remains one of the emerging construction activity zones within southern Nigeria due to expanding urban development and increasing real estate investments.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised skilled workers operating within selected building construction sites in Edo State, Nigeria. The target population included masons, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, welders, painters, tilers, iron benders, and site supervisors actively engaged in ongoing construction projects across the selected urban centres.

The total population for the study was 560 respondents obtained from labour records and site attendance registers across selected construction firms and project sites within Benin City, Auchi, Ekpoma, and Uromi. The population included workers attached to both private construction companies and independent contractors engaged in residential and commercial building projects.

The selected population reflects the labour-intensive nature of Nigeria's construction industry where skilled workers remain central to project execution, structural quality, and timely project completion.

Sample Size Determination

A sample size of 233 respondents was derived from the total population of 560 using the Taro Yamane sample size determination formula. The formula is expressed as:

$$n = \frac{N}{[1 + N] (e^2)}$$

Where:

- n = sample size
- N = population size
- e = level of significance (0.05)

Assuming the population is 5000, the sample size is calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{[1 + N] (e^2)}$$

Where; n = Sample size

N = Population size = 560

e = Error term (0.05 on the basis of 95% confidence level)

$$n = \frac{560}{1 + (560 \times 0.0025)}$$
$$\frac{560}{1+1.4}$$

n = 233

Therefore, the study adopted a sample size of 233 respondents.

The use of the Taro Yamane formula ensured that the sample size was statistically adequate and representative of the study population.

Sampling Technique

The study adopted a multistage sampling technique involving purposive, stratified, and simple random sampling methods.

Firstly, purposive sampling was used to identify active construction sites within Benin City, Auchi, Ekpoma, and Uromi where skilled workers were actively engaged in building projects. These locations were selected because of the high concentration of construction activities and labour participation within the state.

Secondly, stratified sampling was employed to categorise respondents into occupational groups such as masons, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, welders, painters, tilers, and site supervisors. This ensured fair representation of different categories of skilled workers within the study.

Finally, simple random sampling was used to select individual respondents from each occupational category. This method reduced selection bias and enhanced fairness in respondent selection.

Sources of Data Collection

The study utilised both primary and secondary sources of data.

Primary Data

Primary data were obtained directly from respondents through the administration of structured questionnaires to skilled workers across selected construction sites in Edo State. The primary data provided first-hand information relating to workers' perceptions of wages, bonuses, overtime allowances, workplace safety, recognition systems, welfare support, and job satisfaction.

Secondary Data

Secondary data were obtained from textbooks, journal articles, conference papers, government publications, institutional reports, and industry documents relevant to construction management and employee motivation. Materials from organisations such as the National Bureau of Statistics, the Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria, and the Nigerian Institute of Building were consulted to support the conceptual and empirical framework of the study.

Instrumentation

The major instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled: “Reward Systems and Skilled Workers’ Performance Questionnaire (RSSWPQ)”

The questionnaire was designed by the researcher based on the objectives and variables of the study. It consisted of five sections:

- **Section A:** Demographic characteristics of respondents
- **Section B:** Financial reward systems
- **Section C:** Non-financial reward systems
- **Section D:** Workers’ performance indicators
- **Section E:** Challenges affecting reward systems in construction sites

Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale structured as follows:

- Strongly Agree (5)
- Agree (4)
- Undecided (3)
- Disagree (2)
- Strongly Disagree (1)

The questionnaire items reflected practical labour realities within Nigerian construction environments, including issues relating to delayed wages, overtime compensation, safety support, welfare packages, and recognition systems.

Validity of the Instrument

To ensure face and content validity, the questionnaire was presented to experts in construction management, business administration, and research methodology for professional assessment and evaluation. Corrections and recommendations provided by the experts were incorporated into the final version of the instrument to ensure that the questionnaire adequately measured the variables under investigation.

The validation process further ensured that the instrument reflected contextual realities specific to Edo State’s construction industry.

Reliability of the Instrument

A pilot study was conducted using 20 skilled construction workers outside the selected study locations. Data obtained from the pilot study were analysed using Cronbach’s Alpha reliability test. The instrument produced a reliability coefficient of 0.82, indicating a high level of internal consistency and reliability. This confirmed that the

questionnaire was suitable for collecting reliable data regarding reward systems and workers' performance.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher personally administered the questionnaires with the assistance of trained research assistants across selected construction sites in Edo State. Respondents were approached during work breaks and after daily construction activities to minimise disruption to ongoing operations. The direct administration method improved questionnaire retrieval rates and enabled clarification of questions where necessary. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and assured that all information provided would be treated confidentially and used strictly for academic purposes.

Verbal permission was also obtained from site supervisors and contractors before questionnaires were distributed within construction locations.

Method of Data Analysis

Data collected were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 29. Descriptive statistical tools such as frequency counts, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations were used to analyse demographic variables and respondents' perceptions regarding reward systems and workers' performance. Inferential statistical tools including Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis were used to test the study hypotheses and determine the relationship between reward systems and workers' performance.

All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. Regression analysis was particularly useful in determining the predictive influence of financial and non-financial rewards on productivity, punctuality, commitment, and workmanship quality among skilled construction workers.

Ethical Considerations

The study ensured voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and informed consent throughout the research process. Respondents were informed that participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty. Ethical considerations were particularly important because construction workers operate within employer-controlled environments where concerns about job security and managerial reactions could affect responses. Consequently, respondents were assured that no personal identifiers or company-specific information would be disclosed in the study.

Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data collected from respondents regarding reward systems and the performance of skilled workers in selected building construction sites in Edo State, Nigeria. The chapter is organised into demographic characteristics of respondents, descriptive analysis of study variables, hypothesis testing, and discussion of findings.

Out of the 233 questionnaires distributed to respondents, 221 were correctly completed and returned, representing a response rate of 94.8%. The high response rate enhanced the reliability and credibility of the study findings.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

| Gender | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|------------|----------------|
| Male | 187 | 84.6 |
| Female | 34 | 15.4 |
| Total | 221 | 100 |

Interpretation

The table indicates that 187 respondents representing 84.6% were male, while 34 respondents representing 15.4% were female. This finding reflects the male-dominated nature of construction activities in Nigeria, particularly within physically demanding skilled occupations such as masonry, carpentry, welding, and iron bending.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

| Age Range | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------|------------|----------------|
| 18–25 years | 39 | 17.6 |
| 26–35 years | 88 | 39.8 |
| 36–45 years | 63 | 28.5 |
| 46 years and above | 31 | 14.1 |
| Total | 221 | 100 |

Interpretation

The table shows that respondents within the age bracket of 26–35 years constituted the majority with 39.8%, followed by respondents aged 36–45 years with 28.5%. This suggests that the construction industry in Edo State is dominated by economically active

and productive young adults who possess the physical strength required for construction activities.

Table 3: Occupational Distribution of Respondents

| Occupation | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------|------------|----------------|
| Mason | 52 | 23.5 |
| Carpenter | 37 | 16.7 |
| Electrician | 28 | 12.7 |
| Plumber | 24 | 10.9 |
| Welder | 29 | 13.1 |
| Painter | 21 | 9.5 |
| Tiler | 18 | 8.1 |
| Site Supervisor | 12 | 5.5 |
| Total | 221 | 100 |

Interpretation

The table reveals that masons constituted the highest category of respondents with 23.5%, followed by carpenters with 16.7%. This reflects the labour structure within building construction projects where masonry and carpentry activities dominate most stages of project execution.

Descriptive Analysis of Reward Systems and Workers’ Performance

Table .4: Financial Reward Systems and Workers’ Performance

| S/N | Statement | Mean | Std. Dev. | Decision |
|-----|--|------|-----------|----------|
| 1 | Timely wage payment improves workers’ productivity | 4.42 | 0.71 | Accepted |
| 2 | Bonuses motivate workers toward better performance | 4.18 | 0.83 | Accepted |
| 3 | Overtime allowances increase workers’ commitment | 4.05 | 0.88 | Accepted |
| 4 | Poor salaries reduce morale and productivity | 4.36 | 0.76 | Accepted |
| 5 | Financial incentives reduce absenteeism | 4.12 | 0.81 | Accepted |

Interpretation

The table indicates that respondents strongly agreed that financial reward systems significantly influence workers’ productivity and commitment. The highest mean score of 4.42 was recorded for timely wage payment, suggesting that regular salary payment remains a major determinant of labour productivity within construction sites.

Table 5: Non-Financial Rewards and Construction Productivity

| S/N | Statement | Mean | Std. Dev. | Decision |
|-----|--|------|-----------|----------|
| 1 | Recognition improves workers' morale | 4.21 | 0.79 | Accepted |
| 2 | Workplace safety improves productivity | 4.47 | 0.68 | Accepted |
| 3 | Welfare support increases commitment | 4.16 | 0.84 | Accepted |
| 4 | Promotion opportunities motivate workers | 4.03 | 0.89 | Accepted |
| 5 | Training opportunities improve performance | 4.28 | 0.75 | Accepted |

Interpretation

The table reveals strong agreement among respondents regarding the influence of non-financial rewards on productivity. Workplace safety recorded the highest mean score of 4.47, indicating that safe working conditions significantly affect workers' morale and efficiency on construction sites.

Workers' Performance Indicators

Table 6: Indicators of Workers' Performance

| Performance Indicator | Mean | Std. Dev. | Decision |
|-----------------------|------|-----------|----------|
| Productivity level | 4.31 | 0.74 | High |
| Work quality | 4.22 | 0.79 | High |
| Punctuality | 4.06 | 0.85 | High |
| Teamwork | 4.11 | 0.81 | High |
| Commitment to work | 4.27 | 0.77 | High |

Interpretation

The findings indicate that workers' performance levels were strongly associated with reward systems. Productivity level and commitment to work recorded particularly high mean scores, suggesting that effective reward systems positively influence overall labour efficiency within construction sites.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: Financial reward systems do not significantly influence the performance of skilled workers in building construction sites in Edo State, Nigeria.

Table 7: Pearson Correlation Analysis of Financial Rewards and Workers' Performance

| Variables | N | r-value | p-value | Decision |
|--|-----|---------|---------|-------------|
| Financial Rewards & Workers' Performance | 221 | 0.721 | 0.000 | Significant |

Interpretation

The table shows a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.721$) between financial reward systems and workers' performance. Since the p-value of 0.000 is less than the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that financial reward systems significantly influence the performance of skilled workers within construction sites.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: Non-financial reward systems do not significantly influence construction productivity in Edo State.

Table 8: Pearson Correlation Analysis of Non-Financial Rewards and Productivity

| Variables | N | r-value | p-value | Decision |
|--------------------------------------|-----|---------|---------|-------------|
| Non-Financial Rewards & Productivity | 221 | 0.689 | 0.000 | Significant |

Interpretation

The result indicates a strong positive relationship between non-financial rewards and construction productivity. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This confirms that recognition, workplace safety, welfare support, and promotion opportunities significantly improve workers' productivity.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 9: Regression Analysis of Reward Systems and Workers' Performance

| Variables | Beta | t-value | Sig. |
|-------------------------|-------|---------|-------|
| Financial Rewards | 0.582 | 8.421 | 0.000 |
| Non-Financial Rewards | 0.437 | 6.318 | 0.000 |
| Model Summary | Value | | |
| R | 0.781 | | |
| R ² | 0.610 | | |
| Adjusted R ² | 0.603 | | |

Interpretation

The regression analysis reveals that reward systems significantly predict workers' performance within building construction sites in Edo State. The R^2 value of 0.610 indicates that 61% of the variation in workers' performance is explained by financial and non-financial rewards. Financial rewards recorded the strongest predictive influence on workers' productivity and commitment.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that financial reward systems significantly influence the performance of skilled workers within building construction sites in Edo State, Nigeria. Timely payment of salaries, overtime allowances, and bonuses were identified as major determinants of workers' productivity, punctuality, and commitment. This finding supports the argument of the National Bureau of Statistics (2024), which emphasises that inflationary pressures and declining purchasing power have increased workers' dependence on financial incentives within labour-intensive industries.

The study further established that non-financial rewards such as recognition, workplace safety, welfare support, and promotion opportunities positively affect workers' morale and productivity. Workplace safety particularly emerged as a major motivational factor because construction activities expose workers to occupational hazards and physical risks. This finding aligns with reports from the Council of Registered Builders of Nigeria (2023), which indicate that construction sites with stronger welfare and safety practices often record higher labour productivity and reduced accident rates.

The regression analysis confirmed that reward systems collectively exert a strong predictive influence on workers' performance. This finding supports Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which argues that both financial incentives and motivational factors significantly affect employee satisfaction and productivity. In the context of Edo State, the findings suggest that construction firms that neglect workers' welfare and motivation are more likely to experience absenteeism, poor workmanship, labour turnover, and project delays.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that effective reward systems remain essential for improving labour productivity, workforce stability, and project efficiency within Nigeria's construction industry.

Conclusion

The study concludes that effective reward systems are essential for improving the performance of skilled workers in building construction sites in Edo State, Nigeria. Financial and non-financial incentives significantly influence workers' productivity, commitment, and job satisfaction. Construction firms that neglect employee welfare and motivation are more likely to experience low productivity and project inefficiencies.

Recommendations

1. Construction firms should ensure timely payment of workers' wages and allowances.
2. Employers should introduce performance-based bonuses and recognition systems.
3. Construction companies should improve workplace safety and welfare support.
4. Training and promotion opportunities should be provided for skilled workers.
5. Government labour agencies should strengthen monitoring of workers' welfare conditions within construction sites.

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