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Exploring the Influence of Reward Systems on Job Satisfaction in Ghana's Hospitality Industry

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Abstract

This qualitative study examines the impact of remuneration on job satisfaction in the hospitality industry in Ghana. The main objective of this study was to assess the impact of remuneration on employee satisfaction, analyze the equity in the application of remuneration policies, and identify the different remuneration systems used in the sector. A non-probability sampling technique, specifically quota sampling, was employed, involving 50 employees from AH Hotel who responded to both closed and open-ended interview questions. The findings indicate that remuneration plays a significant role in determining job satisfaction, as most employees expressed contentment with their wages and salaries. This satisfaction contributes to higher employee morale, loyalty, punctuality, and teamwork. This study emphasizes the importance of fair and equitable remuneration policies in increasing job satisfaction and employee retention in the hospitality industry in Ghana.

Keywords: Reward System, Remuneration, Salary, Fringe Benefits, Job Satisfaction

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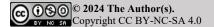
Introduction

This research investigates the impact of remuneration on employee job satisfaction, particularly within the hospitality industry in Ghana. In this context, remuneration is considered a critical reward that directly influences employees' attitudes and engagement with their work. Job satisfaction is a key factor that reflects how content employees are with their jobs, and it has profound implications on their motivation, productivity, and overall work experience.

Job satisfaction refers to the positive emotional state employees feel when they assess their job and work environment [1]. Employers are increasingly aware of the importance of remuneration, recognizing that it significantly affects job satisfaction and, consequently, employee retention [2]. Low job satisfaction often leads to negative outcomes, such as high turnover rates, increased absenteeism, and a decline in organizational performance. Therefore, employers must design remuneration strategies that foster job satisfaction and enhance employee loyalty and performance [23].

Although remuneration alone does not guarantee job satisfaction, research suggests a strong link between the two, as employees' financial compensation meets their needs and expectations, which influences their decision to stay with an organization [4-7]. This connection is particularly important in the hospitality industry, where employee engagement and retention are essential to business success.

Problem statement



AH Hotel, one of the leading hotels in Accra, Ghana, faces significant challenges related to employee satisfaction and retention. The hospitality industry in Ghana has experienced a decline in occupancy rates, exacerbated by the ongoing impact of COVID-19. According to the annual reports of the Ghana Tourism Authority, this drop in occupancy is largely attributed to ineffective reward systems, which have led to job dissatisfaction and reduced productivity [8]. Thang and Buyens [9] found that low job satisfaction contributes to employee burnout and disengagement, motivating this study to explore how remuneration, as a reward system, impacts job satisfaction in the Ghanaian hospitality sector.

In a global context, many organizations are grappling with how to improve job satisfaction, as it is linked to organizational commitment and long-term success [10]. This challenge is particularly relevant for hospitality operators in Ghana, who need to identify strategies that will enhance employee morale and improve overall performance. A well-structured remuneration system is essential for attracting and retaining employees, motivating them to perform their duties effectively, and ensuring their loyalty [1].

While research on the link between remuneration and job satisfaction is abundant, few studies have focused on the hospitality industry in Ghana [11]. This research aims to fill this gap by examining how remuneration practices in the Ghanaian hospitality sector affect employee job satisfaction.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of remuneration as a reward system on job satisfaction among employees at AH Hotel. By examining how remuneration influences employee morale and performance, the study aims to uncover insights that could enhance employee retention and overall organizational effectiveness.

Research objectives

To determine the influence of remuneration on employee job satisfaction.

To understand how remuneration policies were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic as part of the reward system for employees.

To explore how remuneration as a reward system is implemented within Ghanaian organizations.

Literature review

Conceptualization of remuneration systems

Previous studies have concluded that remuneration alone does not guarantee employee satisfaction, as motivation plays a critical role in determining job satisfaction [3]. Over time, it has become evident that remuneration systems must be reviewed periodically, as they significantly impact employee satisfaction [12-14].

Bratton and Ray [5] explained that rewards could be categorized into financial and non-financial forms, such as gifts, and other benefits packages provided by employers to enhance employee performance and productivity. Gross and Friedman [16] described rewards as comprehensive packages that include total remuneration, benefits, and other incentives designed to motivate employees and boost their contributions to organizational goals. A reward system, according to Kibet *et al.* [17], is a strategy developed by human resource managers to retain and attract employees, ensuring they remain committed to their roles within the organization.

Griffin and Moorhead [18] highlighted the reward system's purpose of attracting, retaining, and motivating qualified employees. Armstrong [19] echoed this by emphasizing that an effective reward system should balance both non-monetary and monetary incentives to satisfy employee needs and expectations, encouraging them to contribute to organizational success. Remuneration plays a significant role in motivating employees, contributing greatly to organizational performance and success [19]. The value of rewards in driving employee motivation cannot be overstated, as they are key drivers of organizational effectiveness and achievement.

Remuneration as reward practices or system

There are several remuneration reward packages that organizations can utilize to show appreciation for employees' efforts. Wages and salaries refer to the monetary compensation paid to employees for performing their jobs. Employers are required by law to pay employees on agreed intervals, whether weekly, monthly, or otherwise. This regular payment system helps employees meet their basic needs, such as food, clothing, and shelter, as outlined by Maslow's theory of needs.

A bonus is an additional payment given to employees beyond their regular salary or wage, often based on performance or company profitability. Bonuses are not automatically owed to employees unless stipulated in their employment contract or a collective agreement. When implemented effectively, bonuses can significantly contribute to job satisfaction by enhancing employee motivation and performance.

Allowances are supplementary payments made to employees to cover specific expenses, such as transportation, healthcare, or living costs. They can also be offered for special working conditions, such as overtime or working unsocial hours. Allowances show employees that the organization values their well-being, fostering a sense of appreciation and reciprocation. Employee recognition involves acknowledging and appreciating employees' positive accomplishments and behaviors. Public recognition can motivate employees to continue contributing to the success of the organization. It enhances morale, and job satisfaction, and encourages behaviors that align with the organization's goals, such as assisting coworkers and providing excellent customer service.

Fringe benefits are non-financial rewards that organizations provide in addition to basic salaries. These benefits, which might include health insurance, retirement plans, or other perks, are designed to improve the overall attractiveness of a remuneration package. Fringe benefits play a key role in employee retention, reducing turnover, and increasing commitment and performance.

Job satisfaction concepts

Job satisfaction refers to the emotional state of employees about their work, and it is influenced by various factors such as pay, supervision, working conditions, and relationships with coworkers. During the COVID-19 pandemic, workers in the hospitality industry, much like those in the healthcare sector, experienced significant disruptions to their work, leading to reduced job satisfaction. The pandemic created a period of uncertainty and isolation, which affected workers' well-being and job morale.

There is no universally agreed-upon set of dimensions for job satisfaction, but commonly recognized factors include pay, working conditions, promotional opportunities, supervision, and relationships with coworkers. Among these, pay is often regarded as one of the most important factors influencing employee satisfaction. Research indicates that a well-structured reward system, which encompasses pay and benefits, significantly affects how employees perceive their job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is closely linked to employee performance, and understanding the factors that influence it can help organizations improve productivity and retention. The key dimensions of job satisfaction are typically pay, working conditions, promotion opportunities, supervision, and co-worker relationships. When these factors are effectively addressed, employees are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs, which in turn enhances their performance and productivity (Figure 1).

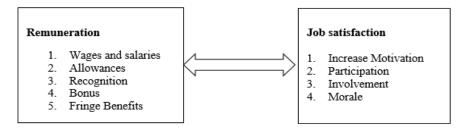


Figure 1. Research review framework

Materials and Methods

Research design

This study aimed to assess the impact of remuneration and job satisfaction among hotel workers in Ghana, specifically at AH Hotel. Given the qualitative nature of the study, a qualitative research approach was adopted to gather in-depth insights into remuneration practices and their effect on job satisfaction within the hospitality industry.

Sample and sampling technique

A sample of 50 workers from AH Hotel was selected using quota sampling, a non-probability method that allows for the non-random selection of participants. Quota sampling was chosen because the hotel encompasses a diverse range of workers, and the population was not readily available for random sampling. The predetermined number of participants represented a segment of the workforce, making the sample suitable for a qualitative study rather than a quantitative one.

Data collection instrument

The data collection was conducted through interview questionnaires designed to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. The questionnaire contained closed-ended questions for structured responses and open-ended questions for more in-depth feedback. The questionnaire consisted of three sections: the first section gathered bio-data from participants, including their

age, marital status, education, and gender. The second section focused on remuneration-related questions, while the third section addressed job satisfaction factors.

Interview

An interview process was deemed suitable for this research design to facilitate the collection of in-depth responses. Participants were approached with the interview questionnaire, and they were asked to provide their answers based on their understanding. The interviews were conducted face-to-face to ensure the researcher's presence, which allowed for immediate clarification and further probing of responses when necessary. This method facilitated a qualitative approach to data collection, ensuring a thorough exploration of participants' views.

Procedure for data collection

The researcher administered the interview questionnaires directly to hotel workers, explaining the purpose of the study and ensuring the participants understood the questions. The researcher then requested the participants to provide their answers to the questions, offering clarification as needed. This process ensured that the data collected was both accurate and comprehensive.

Method and procedure for data analysis

The data collected from the interviews were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. The data were processed with the aid of SPSS and Excel software, employing techniques such as frequency analysis, bar charts, pie charts, and percentages. Descriptive statistics, including measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode), were used to summarize and present the findings in a logical and meaningful way. This approach helped the researcher to efficiently analyze qualitative data and draw conclusions about the impact of remuneration on job satisfaction among hotel workers.

Results and Discussion

The following section presents the results from the data collected from primary sources. It includes an analysis and discussion of the findings. Initially, it was observed that some participants did not answer certain questions on the interview questionnaires, often due to personal reasons. As a result, thorough checks and reconciliations were conducted before inputting the data for analysis. Below is a comprehensive presentation of the results and findings.

Table 1. Demographic profile of interview participants

Category	Subcategory	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-25 years	24	48%
	26-33 years	12	24%
	34-41 years	8	16%
	42-49 years	6	12%
	50 years and above	0	0%
Gender	Male	15	30%
	Female	35	70%
Education level	SSS/SHS	9	18%
	Diploma	3	6%
	First degree	38	76%
	Master's degree	0	0%
	Other	0	0%
Marital status	Single	35	70%
	Married	15	30%
	Divorced	0	0%
	Other	0	0%
Job position	Cleaner	13	26%
	Security/Watchman	9	18%
	Chef/Caterer	7	14%
	Office assistant/Receptionist	18	36%
	Other	0	0%

Table 1 summarizes the demographic details of the interview participants, showing their age, gender, education, marital status, and job position. The majority of participants are between the ages of 18 and 25, with a significant portion having a first-degree education. The gender distribution is predominantly female, and most participants are single. The job position of office assistant/receptionist is the most common among the workers surveyed.

Table 1 provides a detailed breakdown of the participants' demographic profiles. It indicates that the majority of employees at AH Hotel are aged between 18 and 25 years, making up 48% of the workforce, with the next largest group being those aged between 26 and 33 years (24%). Notably, there are no employees over 50 years of age. This suggests that the hotel's workforce is predominantly young, likely possessing the energy and vigor needed for their roles.

The gender distribution reveals a higher proportion of female workers (70%) compared to male workers (30%). In terms of education, most participants (38 out of 50) hold a first degree, constituting 76% of the respondents. The next largest group of employees has completed SSS/SHS education, making up 18%. The findings highlight that the workforce is predominantly female and well-educated, though it is worth noting that none of the employees hold a master's degree.

Regarding marital status, 70% of the workers are single, while 30% are married. This indicates that a significant number of employees are unmarried, suggesting that they might be more flexible with their work schedules and potentially more mobile within their roles.

In terms of job positions, the highest proportion of workers (36%) are Office Assistants/Receptionists, followed by cleaners (26%), security personnel (18%), and chefs or caterers (14%). These figures show that office assistants and receptionists are the most common job roles in the hotel, with cleaners also comprising a significant portion of the staff.

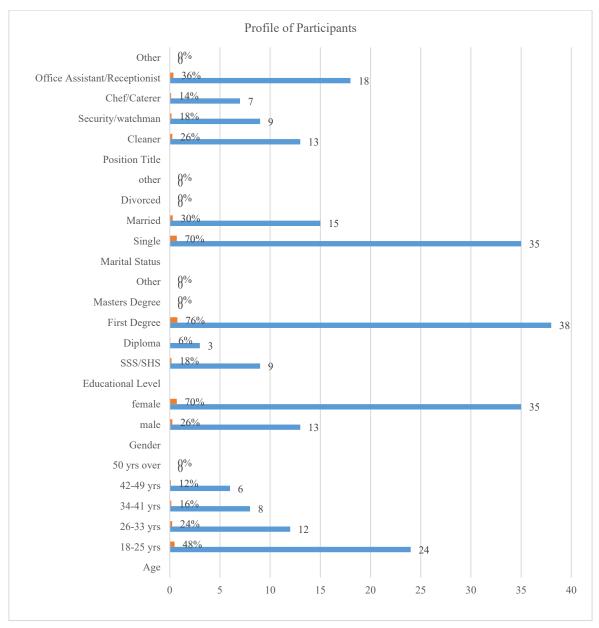


Figure 2. Summary of profile results bar chart of the participants

Figure 2 illustrates the data related to participants' profiles, including their age, gender, educational background, marital status, job position, and other personal details as provided by the participants themselves.

Remuneration (Wages and salaries)

Table 2. Results of remuneration data

As	spect	Frequency (Percentage)
Satisfied with wages/salaries	Yes	18 (36%)
	No	32 (64%)
Receive pay on time	Yes	22 (44%)
	No	28 (56%)
Frequency of pay	Weekly	0 (0%)
	Bi-weekly	0 (0%)
	Monthly	50 (100%)
	Other	0 (0%)
Pay SSNIT contribution	Yes	37 (74%)
	No	12 (24%)
Salary range	201-300	3 (6%)
	301-400	5 (10%)
	401-500	8 (16%)
	501-600	15 (30%)
	Other	0 (0%)
Receive allowance	Yes	21 (42%)
	No	38 (76%)
Types of allowances	Education	0 (0%)
	Health	20 (40%)
	Transportation	20 (40%)
	Overtime	9 (18%)
	Other	0 (0%)
Recognition for performance	Yes	37 (74%)
	No	12 (24%)
Types of recognition	Shoulder/Handshake	13 (26%)
	Noticeboard Announcement	13 (26%)
	Newspaper/Website Publication	6 (12%)
	Letter/Verbal Praise	19 (38%)
	Other	0 (0%)

Wages and salaries: According to **Table 2**, a significant portion of the participants (64%) expressed dissatisfaction with their wages, while 36% were content with their compensation. This suggests that most workers feel their remuneration is insufficient, possibly due to their lower-level job roles or the hotel's financial limitations, especially in light of reduced business during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On-time payment: In terms of salary payments, 56% of respondents indicated they do not receive their pay on time, which points to occasional delays in salary disbursement at AH Hotel.

Payment frequency: All employees are paid every month, as indicated by 100% of respondents, with no participants reporting weekly or bi-weekly pay periods.

SSNIT contributions: The majority (74%) confirmed that their SSNIT contributions are being made, while 24% reported that they are not receiving such contributions.

Salary range: The most common salary range among employees is between 501 and 600, which accounts for 30% of participants, with smaller numbers in other salary categories.

Allowances: About 42% of respondents receive some form of allowance, with health and transportation allowances being the most prevalent, while 76% do not receive any additional allowances.

Recognition for Effort: A majority (74%) of employees receive some form of recognition for their work. Recognition types vary, including public acknowledgment on noticeboards, verbal praise, and in some cases, publication in the company's media channels.

The data in **Table 2** demonstrates that all employees at AH Hotel are paid every month, meaning the company does not operate with piece rates or part-time payment structures. This indicates a consistent pay schedule for all staff members.

Regarding SSNIT contributions, 74% of the participants reported that their SSNIT deductions are being paid, while 24% confirmed that they do not have SSNIT contributions deducted from their salaries. This suggests that while the majority of staff benefit from SSNIT contributions, casual or temporary workers may not be included in this provision.

In terms of salary range, the most common salary among participants is between 501 – 600 Ghana cedis, representing 30% of employees. However, there is also a 6% segment whose monthly pay falls within the lower range of 201 – 300 Ghana cedis. A few employees reported higher pay ranges, with amounts ranging from 1000 to 5000 Ghana cedis, indicating that graduate-level employees or those in higher-ranking roles earn more compared to contract workers or those in lower-ranking positions. The length of service for the majority of employees ranges from 1 to 6 years, with one participant reporting just 2 months of service, suggesting that the company also hires relatively new staff. This implies that AH Hotel meets the minimum wage standards and offers competitive pay structures, especially for qualified or graduate employees.

Allowances

The data in **Table 2** shows that 76% of participants do not receive any allowances, while 42% confirmed that they do receive some form of allowance. This lack of allowances for a majority of employees could potentially lead to dissatisfaction, as allowances are typically offered to enhance employee morale. The most common allowances provided are health, transportation, and overtime, with health and transportation allowances being the most frequent, each accounting for 40% of responses. This means that employees receive support for healthcare expenses and transportation, benefiting both their well-being and daily commuting needs.

Recognition

When it comes to recognition for hard work and performance, 74% of employees reported that they are recognized, while 24% felt that their efforts go unnoticed. This indicates that the company values and acknowledges its employees' contributions, which likely boosts morale. The forms of recognition include shoulder pats/handshakes, announcements on the noticeboard, publications in the company's media channels, and letters or verbal praise. The most common form of recognition is verbal praise, which 38% of employees reported receiving. Such recognition is important for motivating staff to continue performing well and for maintaining a positive work environment.

Bonus

There is a need for further exploration of bonuses, as it has not been addressed in this section. If bonuses are offered, it would be useful to identify the criteria and frequency with which they are awarded to better understand how they contribute to employee satisfaction and motivation.

Reward system	Frequency	Percentage
Bonus payment		
Yes	37	74%
No	13	26%
Bonus payment time		
Monthly	6	12%
Yearly	42	84%
Other	0	0%
Fringe benefits		
Yes	15	30%
No	35	70%
Wages/salaries increase loyalty		
Yes	27	54%
No	22	44%

Table 3. Overview of other reward systems

The data from **Table 3** shows that a majority of employees (74%) receive a bonus, with 26% stating they do not. This highlights that the company rewards its staff with bonuses, likely boosting their morale and encouraging greater performance. In terms of the timing of bonus payments, the majority (84%) report receiving bonuses annually, while only 12% receive them every month. Annual bonus payments are standard in many companies, typically distributed after a financial year's profits

and dividends are declared, with any surplus being allocated for bonuses. This annual bonus structure serves as a strong motivator for employees to maintain their efforts throughout the year.

Regarding fringe benefits, only 30% of employees report receiving additional benefits, while the remaining 70% do not. This indicates that most employees do not enjoy extra perks beyond their salary.

Finally, when it comes to the impact of salary increases on employee loyalty, 54% of respondents believe that a rise in wages enhances their loyalty to the company, while 44% disagree. This suggests that a significant portion of the workforce feels more committed to the company when wages are increased.

Fringe benefits

As shown in **Table 3**, a significant majority of the participants (70%) reported that they do not receive any fringe benefits, while only 30% indicated they receive such benefits. This suggests that the company provides fringe benefits to a small portion of its workforce, which could lead to dissatisfaction or disengagement if not properly addressed. Some specific fringe benefits mentioned by participants include healthcare or health insurance, free meals, shoe allowance, clothing allowance, fuel allowance, time-off pay, employee discounts, tuition assistance, free transportation, and vacation benefits (**Figure 3**).

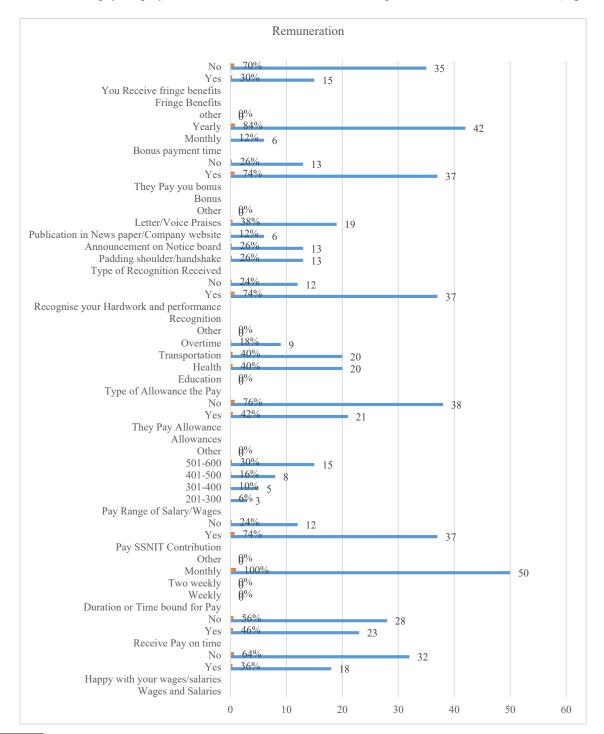


Figure 3. Summary of remuneration chart

Job satisfaction

The results from **Table 3** indicate that staff motivation is positively impacted by wage or salary increases, with 54% of participants agreeing that higher wages enhance their loyalty to the company, while 44% disagreed. This suggests that salary increases serve as a strong motivator for employees, contributing to higher productivity. Wages and salaries are viewed as fundamental motivators for addressing workers' needs.

Regarding the impact of allowances on employee retention, the results show that 62% of participants believe allowances do not contribute to their decision to stay with the company, while 34% felt they did. This implies that the absence of allowances would not necessarily lead to workers leaving, but allowances do play a role in retaining employees. This aligns with the previous findings where a significant portion of staff reported not receiving allowances.

In terms of recognition, 72% of the workers indicated that being recognized for their achievements positively influences their decision to stay with the company, while 22% disagreed. Recognition is seen as a vital aspect of employee retention, as it fulfills workers' desire for appreciation and acknowledgment.

When asked if bonus payments make them happier, 72% responded affirmatively, while 24% disagreed. This highlights that employees enjoy receiving bonuses, especially at the end of the year, as it motivates them and contributes to job satisfaction. Regarding fringe benefits, 72% of participants indicated that these benefits serve as a motivator, enhancing their job satisfaction, while 24% did not feel the same. The majority of employees appreciate receiving fringe benefits, as it directly impacts their motivation and satisfaction at work.

Participation/Involvement

The results in **Table 3** show that a significant portion of the workforce (46%) feels excluded from decision-making processes, while 36% believe they are involved. This suggests that the company may not fully embrace the modern practice of involving employees in decisions, potentially missing an opportunity to enhance engagement and morale.

However, 78% of employees reported that they are allowed to participate in company programs, with only 22% stating that they are not. This indicates that, while the company may lack involvement in decision-making, it does encourage participation in various organizational activities, fostering a sense of inclusion and teamwork.

Morale

When it comes to morale, 100% of employees reported that they exhibit good behavior, and punctuality, and are team players. This reflects the positive self-perception of the workers and indicates that they value their role in maintaining a cooperative and efficient work environment. Everyone claims to be punctual, on time, and exhibits good character, reinforcing a positive company culture.

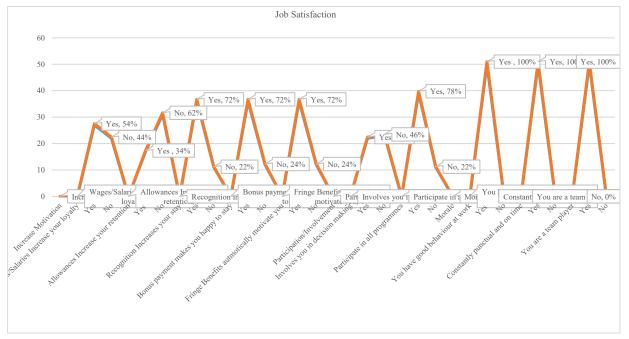


Figure 4. Job satisfaction chart

Figure 4 illustrates the responses to various job satisfaction questions answered by the participants. The image highlights the workers' satisfaction in areas such as motivation, participation and involvement, morale, and recognition. It visually represents how the employees feel about their work environment, showing the extent of their motivation, the level of their involvement in company activities, their overall morale, and the recognition they receive for their efforts.

Conclusion

Based on the analysis and discussion of the findings, it can be concluded that employee remuneration is a critical factor that employers must prioritize by offering appropriate and fair benefits and allowances to all staff members. Although some pay disparities could lead to potential pay discrimination, employers must ensure they are not selective in paying employees and instead conduct thorough and accurate assessments of responsibilities. Compensation should be based on job performance and responsibilities rather than titles alone. The majority of the employees are young and hold some form of university-level education. It is also evident that service companies tend to employ mostly single individuals to avoid issues like absenteeism and tardiness. This inductive study suggests that while some theories emphasize remuneration as a key motivational tool for employee satisfaction, others argue that financial or non-financial incentives are the primary drivers of motivation and job satisfaction.

Recommendation

It is recommended that employees be treated equitably and fairly in terms of remuneration to ensure their satisfaction, which in turn can lead to better performance and increased productivity. Employee dissatisfaction with compensation can result in decreased productivity and poor performance. Future research should explore remuneration and job satisfaction using quantitative methods to better understand their effects and the relationship between them.

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