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## Employee Experiences of Rewards Systems and Work Performance in Undesirable Locations

Valentine Okechukwu Ukandu  
*Walden University*

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# Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Valentine Okechukwu Ukandu

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Walden University  
2022

Abstract

Employee Experiences of Rewards Systems and Work Performance in Undesirable

Locations

By

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MA, Webster University, 2008

MBA, Webster University, 2005

MIS, Webster University, 2005

BSc, Methodist College, 2003

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management/Applied Management and Decision Science

Walden University

January 2022

## Abstract

Rewards systems have become an inherent aspect of how managers motivate employees in the workplace. This is influenced by factors that involve employees as well as employers. The researcher intended to investigate the impact of different rewards systems used in diverse organizations near a military installation in the southern United States, which impact employee work performance. This study examined the lived experiences of veterans and non-veterans who have worked in rural areas and their experience involving the rewards systems and work performance in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States. This research involved employing an interpretive research paradigm using a qualitative phenomenological research methodology, where twenty participants working in the military, health, and retail sectors were interviewed via in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Participants were sampled using a purposeful approach, their interview data were coded and grouped into themes. The thematic analysis concluded that the participants experienced a disparity in the way rewards systems were implemented, affecting employees' work performance and organizational productivity in undesirable locations. Findings established that employee rewards systems interfered with social implications as described by Lloyd and Mertens have some unintended outcomes that are affected by various factors by crushing employees' expectations for an organizational steady bonus. A non-strategic rewards system erodes the link between what Lee described as effort will lead to a certain performance, leading to a given outcome.

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## Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to “The Most-High God” with whom all things are possible; my late father, who is smiling from above; my sweet mother whose dedicated prayers, hard work, and support primarily, during my military training and deployments provided me with the educational foundation leading to my current academic attainment; my Twin daughters whose obedience, endurance and loyalty allowed me time to combine single parenthood with military duties and intellectual pursuits; and my siblings, whose prayers and moral support encouraged me to be focused.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Introduction**

This research is focused on the perceptions and attitudes among veterans and non-veterans' workers that work in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States.

Rewards systems influence employee productivity and organizational performance. It is imperative to understand the effect rewards systems have on work performance. This can help improve how a particular workplace can ensure high productivity, profitability, and sustainability. This chapter includes a background review and problem statement involving linking rewards systems to work performance. I also address the purpose of the research, why the problem should be addressed, and the significance of outcomes to different stakeholders. The research questions follow this. I also manage the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that guide the investigation. The conceptual framework includes Victor Vroom's expectancy theory and the leader-member-exchange (LMX) theory. I have definitions of critical terms. I also have assumptions, the scope and delimitations, limitations, and significance of the research.

The research design was aligned with the interpretive research approach that offers methods for researchers to explore real-life human experiences. The interpretive (constructive) worldview is focused on employees' describing their experiences with the reward systems and work performance through subjective storytelling. The researcher interpreted and translated the employees' lived experiences but relied heavily on the employees' views of their work environment and how the rewards systems motivated

them to increase their work performance leading to an increase in organizational productivity. Additionally, the interpretive world view employed the qualitative phenomenological research method which was further influenced by the researcher's experience working in rural areas as active-duty military and as a veteran who worked in rural areas as a DoD employee. Also, the choice of the research design was necessitated by personal experiences of the research participants in relation to the rewards systems. The phenomenological data analysis was inductive leading to the random emergence of themes.

The study participants were veterans and non-veterans who worked in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States. In this study, the data measured was employees' experience involving rewards systems and work performance in undesirable location.

### **Background of Study**

This research focused on the perceptions and attitudes among veterans and non-veterans' workers that work in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States.

According to Andriani et al. (2018), understanding motivation is imperative for organizations, leaders, managers, governments, and stakeholders to develop dynamic, highly efficient, and productive work environments. Asaari et al. (2019) posit that motivation involves strategies in organizational settings to influence increased and sustainable work performance by fulfilling workers' needs and requirements. This implies that there are different perspectives regarding what motivates people to work and

improve at their work. Motivation is perceived as the driving force in how individuals or a group of people engage in an activity (Bourgeois et al., 2016; Farooq & Shafique, 2016). Goh and Lee (2018) posit that employees work for a salary or there is a physical and emotional fulfillment derived from their work. This phenomenon is attributed to an increased focus on the quality of life (Widiani et al., 2019). Therefore, there are different levels, kinds, and amounts of motivation. Aspects of motivation and how they contribute to work performance can be linked to rewards offered to the workforce for engaging in tasks, taking up responsibilities, being accountable, and meeting set objectives.

Mieke (2016) posited that rewards offered within organizations are critical factors in determining how individuals are motivated and focused on contributing to organizational goals. Rewards form an essential aspect of incentives that promote productivity among workers and enhance organizational performance. Therefore, rewards are inherently linked to optimal achievements in any work environment (Locke & Schattke, 2019).

Incentives offered through rewards systems directly influence workers' capacity to function more efficiently in accomplishing organizational goals. The absence of strategic approaches involving offering incentives can negatively impact the performance of workers. Therefore, organizations across all industries must enhance their strategies in applying incentives to motivate the workforce. According to Park and Sturman (2016), incentives offered to workers through rewards systems have varying impacts on individuals due to differences in perceptions and attitudes that emerge from a diverse group.

Incentives may be considered appropriate or adequate depending on the interests of the individuals. The primary objective of any reward system or incentive package is to enhance once the workforce's general performance and increase organizational productivity. This guarantees increased performance, profitability, and sustainability. According to Iqbal et al. (2017), rewards are linked to job satisfaction, retention, adequate staffing, a sense of pride, good imaging, a healthy work environment, reduced absenteeism, professional and personal growth, increased productivity, and corporate earnings. As a result, employee work performance and organizational production outlook are growing exponentially.

Organizations are beginning to identify the correlations between employee job satisfaction and the rewards systems. Therefore, leaders of organizations are placing a higher premium on employee job satisfaction, considering that employees are the essential asset of any business entity. Job satisfaction is central to the performance of employees due to increasing costs of living. Employees who are substantially rewarded can meet their personal needs, impacting how they participate in the workplace. Therefore, an effective rewards system improves relationships in organizations. This contributes to improved communication, collaborations, teamwork, and enthusiasm in the workplace, affecting employee loyalty and enhanced retention. However, motivation among employees is lowest when the rewards are minimal.

Globalization in the workplace has increased diversity among workers and the necessity for effective rewards systems. According to Parente et al. (2018), the effects of globalization on the workplace include the immigration of multinationals with varying



degree of desires to meet certain professional and personal goals, sharing of knowledge, and opportunities that have brought together highly diverse workforce. Furthermore, different cultural backgrounds influence how workers comprehend rewards systems (Noe et al., 2017). Impacts of globalization are evident in both public and private work environments in terms of supply chains, competition in business environments, increased sharing and adoption of technological solutions, improved information and communication systems, improved access to financial markets, development of new business models, and organizational structures, and improved strategic management approaches to attract and retain talented workers.

The work environment in most industries and organizations is also characterized by keeping the workforce highly motivated. However, this has numerous challenges due to economic and management issues faced by organizations. According to Hunt et al. (2018), employees are key players in how organizations use available resources to meet objectives, create competitive advantages, and deliver to customers. With constrained resources, organizations face numerous challenges, which result in situations where they require employees to produce more and perform more. The challenges employees face includes the demand for increased production among as measured by the overall productivity capabilities. This has influenced the organizational need for strategic management practices to strike a balance between organizational and employee demands for businesses to achieve sustained improvement in terms of performance. Güreker et al. (2018) posit that increasing employee productivity and organizational performance is common in both the public and private sectors. This trend of sustaining a competitive

edge has led to organizational management and leadership efforts to balance employees' contributions and compensation for their contributions to the organization. This has emerged as the organization's primary objective of developing effective employee reward systems.

Employee rewards systems involve initiatives undertaken by organizations to reward or compensate workers. According to Rodriguez and Walters (2017), the employee rewards systems should be designed to ensure that workers are appropriately compensated and motivated for their contributions to the organizational goals. King et al. (2017) posit that the rewards system is essential in workplace motivation for individual employees and groups. Organizational strategic rewards systems influence are required to provide the necessary incentives that can keep workers engaged, committed, satisfied, and motivated to contribute to corporate objectives.

Additionally, establishing good relations between workers and employers is critical in identifying the aspects of the rewards systems that enhance employee's motivation for increased organizational productivity. Also, an appropriately designed rewards systems is instrumental in terms of predicting an organization's success. According to Osborne and Hammoud (2017), organizational behaviors that result in increased performance and productivity are a result of a convergence of effective communication of organizational goals and the development of healthy relationships. This implies that rewards systems are linked to organizational behaviors and how they shape work performance.

Organizational behaviors are developed over time, and they are outcomes of how the workers engage in corporate culture development. Organizational behaviors are shaped by how organizations use specific rewards to influence how employees engage with the workplace and contribute to corporate objectives (Baker & Dutton, 2017). Management can strategically employ new systems to influence behaviors that emerge among workers and achieve corporate goals. A strategically managed rewards systems incorporates diverse approaches in developing compensation packages influence and control workers' behavior and emotions. According to Riasat et al. (2016), organizational rewards systems serve to attract, retain, and motivate employees to increase their productivity improve organizational performance.

### **Problem Statement**

This study addressed that organizational leadership in undesirable and remote location in the southern United States did not leverage employee rewards systems to improve work performance.

The impact of rewards systems in the public sector is less understood than in the private sector. Many organizations face challenges involving employee retention mainly due to appropriate incentives, rewards, and motivation. According to Asseburg and Homberg (2020), workers in the public sector are likely to take up jobs in the private sector because they perceive better rewards are offered. In this context, rewards systems have become inherent in ensuring that public organizations meet their objectives effectively. Asseburg and Homberg (2020) posit that lack of appropriate rewards systems in the public sector led to reduced employee retention. According to the article, a survey

report shows 60% of graduate in the United States prefer working in the private industry over an employment with the Federal, State, City or County establishment. Workers are motivated to increase productivity and employee performance when rewards systems meet their needs and expectations. The lack of a strategic rewards systems leads to organizational goals less likely to be achieved, prohibiting the emergence of better opportunities that results in understaffing. Rewards offered in the public sector are dictated by policy makers and often lack substantial input from the workforce in terms of their formulation (Coccia & Igor, 2018). Additionally, rewards in the public sector are influenced by factors such as policies that limit employee benefits and subsidies that inhibit competition. This makes it imperative to understand how additional prizes offered in government organizations contribute to work performance.

The military is essential in most countries. The US military is considered the largest in the world due to its power. Despite this, there are shortcomings involving the management of human resources in the military. There is a lack of clear understanding of how military personnel is rewarded (Bryan & Rozek, 2018). Enlisting in the U.S. military requires a term contractual obligation during which period the enlistee does not opt out of the military service but feels imprisoned and works towards completing the contract term. The individual recruit strives to maintain a good outward composure while waiting for the end of the contractual obligation. The enlistee declines to renew or extend the term of contract regardless of the rewards presented. This makes it harder to recruit and retain a highly skilled labor force to fill critical positions especially in rural locations. Workers hired with little, or no experience compete for jobs in rural locations

and transfer to better locales after acquiring sufficient job experience and competency. In undesirable locations, personnel who hail from those locations often feel entitled to job positions and rewards because they have little or no desire to relocate to urbanized localities. Competition in undesirable areas for promotion to fill available vacancies is often unhealthy. This makes it difficult for aspiring skilled workers to thrive in such environments.

The general problem is that there is disparate treatment in the way employees that work near military installations in the southern United States are rewarded. There is not enough incentive to attract and retain experienced employees in undesirable locations. The consequence is that employees recruited locally seek for more desirable cities as soon as they gain enough experience to compete with their peers. Additional ramifications include overworked employees and a lack of oversight of government projects.

### **Purpose of Study**

This phenomenological research explored veterans' and non-veterans' lived experiences involving rewards systems in productivity and employee performance in a remote and undesirable location. Abidin et al. (2019) posit that employee rewards include policies that ensure that individuals are rewarded or promoted based on their capabilities and achievements rather than seniority, patronage, or quotas. The study aims to research how the employee rewards systems administered by the U.S. government influence the performance of the government employees working in locations near a military installation in southern United States. Those rewards are vital in terms of improving

organizational performance. According to Mieke (2016), rewards are instrumental in developing motivation within organizations and increasing organizations' potential to retaining talented workers that contribute to sustained improvements in organizational performance. The research will establish rewards that are most influential to veterans and non-veterans who work near military installation in southern United States.

### **Research Questions**

The purpose of this research was achieved by addressing the following questions:

*RQ:* What are employees' lived experiences who engage with rewards systems and work performance in undesirable locations?

*SQ1:* How do intrinsic benefits offered via rewards systems contribute to organizational performance in undesirable locations?

*SQ2:* How do extrinsic benefits offered via rewards systems contribute to organizational performance in undesirable locations?

### **Theoretical Foundation**

Two theoretical foundations were used to investigate veteran's and non-veterans' experiences with the rewards systems and work performance in undesirable locations in southern United States. The theories were the Victor Vroom's expectancy theory and Leader-Member-Exchange (LMX) theory.

#### **Expectancy Theory**

Vroom's expectancy theory means that actions or efforts result in outcomes, which create expectations for rewards. The anticipation of a relevant result triggers actions. According to Vroom's (1964) out-come-driven theory, employees are motivated

to increase performance when adequately rewarded by employers. The employee rewards systems lead to increased productivity, which is the focus of this study. According to Lee (2019), the expectancy theory involves the notion that an individual or team is motivated to perform if they are guaranteed that the effort, they put into a task is recognized and rewarded. Therefore, there is pressure on organizations to offer rewards that are based on employee's work performance. Perceptions developed by workers are influenced by various motivational factors that include job security, self-esteem, autonomy, and self-actualization. According to Badubi (2017), individuals weigh certain factors relative to motivation regarding how they engage in tasks. Consequently, employers who implement effective rewards strategies can improve work performance and positively influence attracting, retaining, and increasing participation and engagement among workers.

Zboja et al. (2020) posit that another critical aspect of the expectancy theory is instrumentality, which means the degree an employee believes the organization will incentivize him or her for achieving a desired goal or behavior. For this study, workforce performance is linked directly with relationships between rewards and consequences of implementation. Lloyd and Mertens (2018) posit that organizations need to offer individuals steady increases in compensation or bonuses to remain motivated, work hard, and contribute to innovations that enhance organizational performance. Employee's experience in taking actions that meeting their organization's goals results in an employee's effort to meet deadlines through task performance standards, competency, and efficacy. Success is achieved when meeting goals and rewards is perceived as a positive incentive that reinforces behaviors. Failure to punish failure results in negative

reinforcement, leading to management establishing alternative strategies for meeting organizational objectives.

The expectancy theory involves cognitive elements of behavior that influence motivation and how they relate to each other. According to Lloyd and Mertens (2018), the expectancy theory allows researchers and practitioners to establish how basis is developed within an organization and outcomes of the work performed to complete tasks and meet organizational objectives. The expectancy theory involves the ideology that workers are motivated if they believe that steps, they put into their jobs for organizations lead to good performance, resulting in desired rewards. Victor Vroom developed this theoretical framework in 1964.

### **LMX Theory**

The LMX theory or vertical dyad linkage theory suggested that leadership is premised on a two-way relationship that links leaders to followers. Based on the notion of Leader-Member-Exchange theory, organizational leadership relationship involves exchanges with the employees (Radulovic et al., 2019), because the key to leadership-employee dynamics is interaction. Leader-member-exchange could be at low level. However, leader-member-exchanges at high levels are characterized by much more trust and mutual respect.

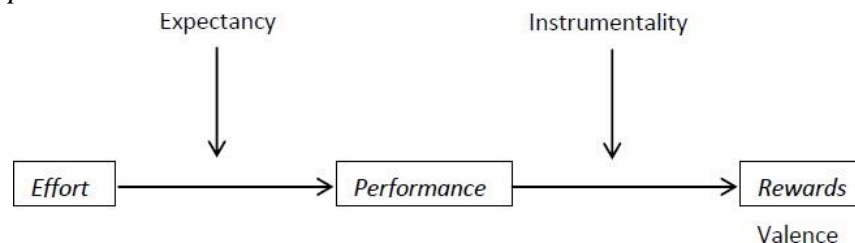
Leaders automatically establish relationships with their subordinates, and the quality of the relationship is affected by leadership responsibilities, decision-making strategies, availability of organizational resources necessary for productivity, and performance of subordinates. Subsequently, the relationship between leaders and their



associates can be advantageous for organizations or groups. Leadership is a difficult task to manage and could become more problematic if the leader fails to manage the relationship with the employee well based on the notion of the leader-member-exchange processes. The LMX process involves three steps. First, role-taking involves leaders in the group or organization identifying the skills and talents of new members. This facilitates a quick formulation of an image or identity for new members, enabling leaders to offer appropriate opportunities and roles to maximize their productivity. The second part of the LMX process is role making, which involves new employees taking up their first tasks and engaging in informal and unstructured negotiations with their supervisors. This facilitates building trust and respect between leaders and subordinates. This is important considering that cultural and ethnic differences between a leader and an employee can negatively impact productivity and performance if not handled appropriately. The third part of the leader-member-exchange process is routinization, which entails an employee to develop a work routine, meeting leader's expectations, and professional standards as these qualities enhance the relationship between the leaders and

**Figure 1**

*Conceptual Framework*



The followers.

The expectancy theory, which is an out-come-driven theory and leader-member-exchange, which is a supervisor-employee relationship theory are crucial for employee motivation and the implementation of the rewards systems in organizations. The combination of Vroom's expectancy theory and LMX theory shows how efforts by leadership in organizations near a military installation in southern United States can be implemented to build motivation and professional relationships leading to outcomes that highlight achievements or failures in terms of work performance, recruitment, and retention. Combining the two theories shows how different factors lead to inspiration and subsequent work performance leading to increased productivity (see Figure 1).

This research focused on the perceptions and attitudes among veterans and non-veterans' employees that work in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States of America

The LMX theory highlighted the role leadership plays in achieving desired organizational outcomes through the efforts of the leaders to adequately manage their professional relationships with the subordinates.

The LMX theory includes two roles played by employees in corporate settings. These are categorized as in-group and out-group employees. The in-group employees have access to corporate resources, more responsibilities, more attention from the leaders, and are offered more rewards.

The dynamics of the inner and outer groups were explored to understand how these groups engage with leadership in relation to expected rewards. It was discovered

that the expectancy of rewards is low among some workers and high among the other worker based on the task and level of engagement in terms of organizational responsibilities provided by the leaders. Without resources or opportunities to maximize their potential, the performance of employees can be compromised. However, workers have a high valence when leaders provide them with the appropriate resources.

The LMX theory substantially compliments the expectancy theory by creating a working relationship where the leader adopts an inclusive approach and evenly distribute resources to subordinates leading to a level playing field. Thus, the merging of both theories link leadership approach, organizational resources, and opportunities to performance outcomes of employees. Also, insights from the inner group employees and outer group workers converged for data analysis in decision making.

The LMX theory is essential to understanding the influence of leadership styles exemplified by the military and their impact on the rewards systems, and subsequent organizational outcomes. The LMX theory depicts a clear understanding of behaviors, perceptions, and opinions among military personnel and leadership regarding how they are rewarded in different work situations. Fundamentally, a focus on the outer group workers was critical because the performance of the outer group workers was compromised due to lack of leadership support and organizational resources leading to sub-standard performance and reduced productivity.

### **Nature of Study**

Whereas there is extensive literature on building motivation in high-performance teams, there is not enough study on building motivation in high-performance teams in

public organizations leading to a corporate gap in knowledge in terms of leadership experiences in the public sector. I conducted an exploratory study involving how the reward system improves work performance in the public sector. I focused on the military, which presents a compelling case study due to numerous challenges workers in this sector experience. I carried out a phenomenological study that concentrated on the lived experiences of veterans and non-veterans working in organizations near a military installation in southern United States to develop insights about the issue under investigation. The research result showed that there is a correlation between a strategic implementation of the rewards systems and employee motivation leading to increased productivity and retention in rural areas. Using the expectancy and LMX theories, the phenomenological research design effectively explored the impact of rewards systems on work performance. Insights from previous studies were compared to the current study to develop a comprehensive account utilizing an integrated exploratory process. Subsequently, both primary and secondary data sources were imperative in meeting the objectives of this research.

According to Tuffour (2017), the phenomenological research design is a qualitative approach to conducting human subjects' investigations. The qualitative design facilitated the exploration of various ideologies that exist concerning rewards and employee performance. The research was carried out in organizations near a military installation in southern United States, whose employees were veterans and non-veterans. A robust intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of rewards systems help increase the motivation of employees, leading to increased work performance and organizational productivity.

Extrinsic rewards include salary, benefits, job security, and better working conditions.

Intrinsic rewards are not physical, meaning they cannot be seen or touched, but they emotionally impact the employees. According to Mustafa and Ali (2019), some of the critical rewards in modern organizations are recognition and autonomy in the workplace.

Further, the article identified extrinsic and intrinsic rewards such as recognition, leadership support and career development increase employee motivation and organizational loyalty.

According to Malik et al. (2016), although intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are essential, they have varying influences on employee productivity. The purpose of this study is to examine how different kinds of rewards contribute to improved organizational outcomes. Monetary rewards may not be necessary in terms of motivating employee retention and enhanced performance. Therefore, organizations become creative in fashioning non-monetary ways to increase employee satisfaction and performance. According to Kanfer and Chen (2016), some environmental factors that impact performance include leadership support within organizations and crucial resources in terms of organizational output. Sustaining a comprehensive employee rewards systems requires leadership constant monitoring of internal and external organizational environments for social and demographic changes to correctly forecast workforce composition. Companies often face challenges involving forecasting the force to be comfortable with the rewards system in a diverse workforce. The remedy lies in a continues adjustment of the rewards systems and engagement with the employees to align rewards with employee performance.

Retaining a talented and high-quality workforce is a competitive edge for organizations. Increased productivity leads to competitive advantages that result in improved organizational performance and profitability. The motivation to increase performance by employees is as a result of strategic and robust rewards systems. However, a poorly designed and implemented rewards systems create disparate treatment among the employees and demoralizes the workforce. Disparities in employee rewards systems is a social issue that must be creatively and adequately addressed to mitigate effects on marginalized employees across industries.

This research required drawing insights from the personal experiences of workers in the organization. This was achieved using an interpretivism research philosophy to understand the assumptions individuals make in relation to the environment and the subjective meaning of their experience. Researchers who employ the interpretive approach can use various research methodologies.

According to Saunders et al. (2016), qualitative phenomenological research design leads to the researcher's comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon by gathering information via interactions with research participants. This was achieved through a subjective approach that included conducting interviews and focus group meetings with identified and selected participants using convenience sampling. Through this approach, I explored the phenomenon by drawing from different respondents who experienced the phenomenon.

According to Neubauer et al. (2019), phenomenology involves investigating the real-life experiences of individuals in a particular setting. Personal experiences facilitate

the collection of rich data that can be analyzed to draw theoretical conclusions appropriately.

Neubauer et al. (2019) posit that phenomenological studies involve researchers focusing on a particular phenomenon to develop insights relevant to meeting the research objectives and addressing research questions. The phenomenological study design based on the interpretivism research philosophy allowed me to explore and understand the effects of rewards systems inductively and subjectively.

### **Definitions**

*Employee work performance:* Measures of employees' performance in particular work settings regarding workforce behavior and how individuals use their skills and talent to perform their duties with competency so as to increase organizational productivity.

*Extrinsic rewards:* Extrinsic rewards result from the completion of a goal or task. These include salary, benefits, job security, and better working conditions. According to Lissitsa et al. (2017), extrinsic rewards are tangible and possess external appeal of the reward to be offered to the employee. Malik et al. (2019) posit that extrinsic rewards are financial or tangible and include salary, bonuses, benefits, and pay raises based on employment contracts or decisions made by management to compensate individuals' contributions in terms of meeting set objectives. According to Lissitsa et al. (2017), these rewards are extrinsic because they are external in terms of roles involving completing tasks. They are controlled or managed by management.

*Intrinsic rewards:* These are not physical and cannot be seen or touched, but they have an emotional impact on employees. According to Ali et al. (2016), these rewards appeal to employees due to their perceived value to the organization. Such rewards include recognition and freedom regarding how they engage with their responsibilities (Malek et al., 2020). According to Farooq and Shafique (2016), intrinsic rewards influence work performance by motivating employees internally to think and behave. They are designed to promote increased effectiveness of the rewards systems and encourage employees to take more responsibilities by building their passion for work.

*Leadership:* According to Rahbi et al. (2017), leadership involves keeping the employees motivated to achieve a common objective in the organizational setting. According to Alkahtani (2016), leadership consists in accomplishing goals through strategic measures and directing subordinates to offer their skills, knowledge, and energy via collaborative approaches, guiding and influencing employee behaviors.

*Rewards systems:* According to Prouska et al. (2016), the rewards system is an integrated approach comprised of tangible and intangible rewards determined by employment contracts between employers and employees. A rewards system is an integrated approach to compensating employees for their roles in terms of organizational objectives. According to Ali et al. (2016), the rewards system is how organizations manage rewards to influence how the workforce contribute to meeting goals, influence incremental performance, and promote attendance, retention, commitment, and job satisfaction. Malek et al. (2020) posit that organizations publicize their rewards systems with the intent of gaining competitive advantage, attracting, and retaining workers.



*Undesirable location:* This is a rural area in southern United States where certain job positions that are critical to organizational success are difficult to fill by an employer. Additionally, the commuting time to a major city is about 2 hours.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

This research is qualitative and draws insights from veterans and non-veterans with diverse professions who work in organizations near a military installation in southern United States.

This research is delimited to general aspects of rewards systems used in the organization near military installation in southern United State. I addressed primary data from face-to-face interviews and focus group meeting discussions. This research involved using the expectancy and LMX theories, which were integrated to develop a comprehensive account of the phenomenon. This research is carried out in a military setting, which can be transferable in other contexts.

### **Limitations**

The research is qualitative, making it difficult to present evidence textually compared to a quantitative study. This research also had limitations associated with the phenomenological approach. The challenges were the global COVID-19 (Corona Virus) environment that restricted travels and social contacts among human beings due to its high rate of transmission. Additional challenge was the reluctance in some participants in the focus group to share their experiences and knowledge in a group setting. Another rule involves difficulties encountered by the researcher in dealing with politics and grouping of focus group participants that could affect meeting discussions and therefore

the data. Another challenge during the research was the issue of guaranteeing confidentiality between group members. The challenges might interfere with the researcher interpreting the data, leading to findings that might not reflect actual sentiments expressed by the respondents because each participant relied on the discretion of other members of the group to contribute to the discussions. Therefore, the researcher set clear ground rules explaining the timing and process to participants and engaging their attention. Qualitative data can also be hard to illicit the setting context due to the limited amount and type of data the researcher can include in the research report. This aspect of a qualitative research could make it hard to present a research report in a manner that readers and practitioners understand. Despite the transferability of results, it is challenging to generalize the results because the rewards systems experienced in the military substantially differ from the employee experience involving the private the private sector.

These limitations were addressed by taking a critical approach that facilitates an in-depth review of research by interpreting data collected in interviews and focus groups. Relevance of data was guaranteed by ensuring that the study's intent was followed when developing the research and gathering primary data from research participants. To avoid the limitation as seen in gathering secondary sources, I encouraged consistency in the participants' responses by ensure that the information they offered were truthful and reflected their actual experiences. I also avoided the researcher's bias towards the secondary sources by interpreting and triangulating data using relevant insights from previous studies.

## **Significance of Study**

### **Significance to Practice**

Managers and leaders acknowledge rewards systems within organizations as key for motivating workers. Rewards are often used in the process of enticing and retaining skilled workforces. Furthermore, it is expensive and time-consuming to recruit and hire new workers. Chimhutu et al. (2016) stated that increased globalization and the high ethnic background of high diversity in multinational and small-scale businesses have increased competition for talents in the labor market. According to Alhmoud and Rjoub (2019), trained and educated individuals are hard to retain in Jordanian banks making it imperative for employers to offer competitive reward packages. Most businesses require low turnover. Ensuring productivity in the workforce ensures that companies maintain consistency in terms of performance and develop confidence between customers and shareholders. Rewards systems offer the most effective means for leaders in organizations to communicate what they deem necessary. This allows organizations to focus on strategic objectives and prioritize work by offering rewards for accomplishments—insights in this study highlight changes in the structuring and implementation of the rewards systems required changes to promote efficiency in employee work performance regarding how rewards systems are used in organizations and military installations in southern United States.

### **Significance to Theory**

Many organizations across different industries are operating in competitive and dynamic business environments. According to Parente et al. (2016), economic growth,

technological innovations, and globalization are factors that have led to increased competition in the labor market. According to Fareed et al. (2016), employees are the most critical assets in any organization. Therefore, organizations in public and private sectors compete for good employees are highly sought for because their work performance is difficult to be replicated by competitors.

According to Hidayat and Budiartma (2018), employees are the most critical assets for any organization, setting the tone for creating sustainable competitive advantages. Additionally, Hidayat and Budiartma (2018) posit that accomplishments made by organizations are based on the capacity of management to develop motivating work environments that guarantee employee productivity and organizational performance. A motivated workforce is central to creating competitive advantages via experiences and knowledge that rivals cannot replicate. This source suggested that a motivated workforce is more productive and happier leading to employee loyalty. The longer an employee works in an organization, the more corporate knowledge the employee possesses thus the workforce is a priceless asset of an organization. Employee. Subsequently, findings in this research will offer insights that can be employed to develop a theoretical perspective that increase efficiency in terms of how rewards systems are used in organizations. This highlights how leadership roles can enhance reward management and rewards systems to keep workers motivated and focused on organizational objectives in undesirable workplaces. Results are essential because organizations in undesirable locations deserve to be informed on how imperative it is to develop and implement a strategic rewards

system that meet the intrinsic and extrinsic expectations of the workforce leading to increased productivity.

### **Significance to Social Change**

Results of this study will inform senior management on the urgent need to review its leader-subordinate professional relationship with the goal of creating organizational culture where all employees are treated fairly, with respect and dignity. This approach will improve working environment and motivation to increase work performance. Also, there will lots of improvement on the treatment of workers by leaders. An improvement in the treatment of subordinates by leaders will lead to reductions in the relocation of workers, legal processes and fees, and alternative dispute resolutions (ADRs). Findings can facilitate the effective adoption of rewards systems that can balance employee social and work life. Additionally, leaders can identify rewards that are most at to workers to guarantee commitment to organizational objectives and personal life goals. Findings also involve tips for workers in undesirable workplaces. This is imperative to stress the relevance of good working conditions that include safe environments and healthcare services, contributing to quality workplace experiences. This research also addresses rewards systems that highlight organizational need for the professional advancement of employees to acquire work performance enhancing skills and experience that can foster the development of organizations and communities. I also link rewards systems to diversity experienced in modern-day organizations regarding culture, religion, and age. This contributes to integrity and dignity in the workplace and informs how leadership can effectively use rewards systems to maximize employees' potential.

### **Summary and Transition**

Chapter 1 includes background information regarding employee rewards systems that demonstrate that they are essential factors in how motivation is generated within organizations. I formulated the research problem and presented my objectives and research questions. Also, I addressed theoretical frameworks as well as assumptions that shaped the research. Insights in this section are further elaborated in the literature review in Chapter 2.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

I investigated employee rewards systems involving work performance in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States, where leadership does not leverage employee rewards systems to improve employee work performance. It has become challenging for organization leadership to employ rewards systems as a planned approach for increasing employee motivation that can lead to high performance and increase the retention of high-performing workers, resulting in meeting organizational objectives. Chapter 2 includes explanations of the theoretical foundations of this study, which are the expectancy and LMX theories. The expectancy theory states that employees expect that their efforts will lead to a given performance threshold leading to a given organizational outcome. The LMX theory states that the type of professional relationship between a leader and his subordinates determines the rewards received by the employee thus the employee levels of motivation and work performance. I address these theories and how they were applied. I also manage the strengths and weaknesses of each approach to ensure that they are effectively used in the study. The literature review also includes information about rewards management and the significance of rewards in creating motivation to improve performance. Next, I addressed how organizational factors such as inefficiency in allocating efforts, influenced evaluations, and leadership favoritism impact employee work performance and the influence these factors have on rewards offered and attitudes and perceptions associated with such tips among employees who work in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

The literature review included journals and books to develop a comprehensive account of issues under research. Insights emerging from secondary sources, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were integrated into a narrative that determined the impact of the rewards systems on employee work performance and organizational productivity. References to the literatures reviewed were chosen based on their credibility and relevance to the study to ascertain the effects the rewards systems have on employee work performance. For this research, I used the following academic databases via Walden University library: ProQuest Central, Google Scholar, ABI/INFORM collection, Academic Search Complete, APA PsycArticles, Thoreau Multi-Database Search, ERIC and Education Source Combined Search, Business Source Complete, ERIC, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global, CQ Researcher, SAGE Journal, Science Direct, EBSCO, SAGE Knowledge, APA Style Citation, Walden University Center for Research Quality, Walden University Writing Center, and Walden University Publications: Journals and Articles.

### **Identifying Key Concepts and Terms**

I first identified the concepts and terms to ensure that the literature review was relevant and covered studies that offer critical insights regarding the phenomenon. This involved an integrated approach as well as reading significant studies that are associated with the employee rewards systems. In conducting the literature review, the researcher identified key words for searching the literature. The key terms used in this study were:



*reward systems, reward management, organizational performance, leadership and rewards, expectancy theory, LMX theory, and employee productivity.*

### **Selecting Relevant Databases**

Information in this research included insights from library searches and online databases. There were challenges the researcher overcame to be successful in searching for topics related to the rewards systems and employee performance. The challenges were as follows: access to databases that required subscriptions, placing priority in selecting relevant literature materials, identifying, and deciding on resources to search, how to select and navigate the repositories, evaluating the results from the searches, running the search in the databases due to internet latency, and deciding which literature was relevant to employee experiences involving rewards systems and work performance in undesirable locations. Online databases were critical to minimizing the challenges involved in getting relevant information for the study. Databases offer a wide range of sources relating to employee rewards systems that included journal articles, Walden University student-written dissertations and internationally written dissertations found in ProQuest, and books.

### **Reviewing and Refining Search Results**

After search results were identified and selected for application in this research, it was imperative to ensure they were appropriate. This required reviewing different sources via in-depth reading, comparing, and contrasting. Sources that were considered most suitable for research were identified, while those considered inappropriate were discarded. Authorities had to be written by authors that belong to high-quality editorial

boards. Leading literature materials needed to have been published by scholarly peer reviewed journals, high-quality editorial boards, encyclopedia, accredited institutions of higher learning, and professional journals. All references were peer-reviewed. Sources included information that was recent to ensure the most relevant information for this study. This was achieved by selecting contemporary sources involving veterans and non-veterans that worked in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States addressed in the research. In selecting materials relevant to the study, the researcher also focused on past studies that used appropriate research methods to investigate and develop new knowledge to the study.

### **Theoretical Foundation**

#### **Expectancy Theory**

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the expectancy theory involves cognitive elements of behavior that influence motivation and how they relate to each other. According to Lloyd and Mertens (2018), the expectancy theory allows researchers and practitioners to establish how basis is developed within an organization and outcomes of the work performed to complete tasks and meet organizational objectives. The expectancy theory involves the ideology that workers are motivated if they believe that steps, they put into their jobs for organizations lead to good performance, resulting in desired rewards. Victor Vroom developed this theoretical framework in 1964.

In this research, motivation was viewed through the prism of Expectancy Theory as first proposed by Vroom (1964) and later modified by Lawler (1971) and Lloyd and Mertens (2018). The data revealed that disparity in the awards of employee rewards

systems had a negative effect on the expectancy factor of motivation under the Vroom/Lawler/Lloyd and Mertens framework. Expectancy as expressed by Vroom is comprised of three factors: self-efficacy, difficulty of the goal, and perceived control over the outcome. Lawler posited that expectancy was a combination of two different expectancies: effort leading to a given performance and performance leading to a given outcome. Under either conception, inequitable rewards systems interfere with expectancy. Participants reported second-guessing of their skills and abilities and self-doubt after experiencing inequitable rewards systems, which interferes with self-efficacy.

Employees work in organizations with certain expectations that their needs are met by the organization which creates the employee motivation as reference is drawn from the employee previous work experiences. These factors impact how people react to the company and the subsequent commitments to achieve the organizational objectives. Secondly, there is the assumption of how people behave as a result of their conscious choices. This implies that workers can choose how they engage with the organization based on their expectancy calculations. The third assumption is that individuals are interested in different things offered by organizations—these range from good positions, salaries, job security, career advancement, and challenging responsibilities. The fourth assumption is that the workers choose from different alternatives in optimizing the outcomes according to their personal preferences. According to Soyoung and Sungchan (2017), the intent of the workforce to remain engaged in the workplace and improve their work performance is linked to perceptions they hold towards the organizational objectives. In this context, well-defined goals motivate the workers, leading to high levels

of engagement and commitment to improving work performance. Drawing from these assumptions, the expectancy theory is complicated on three key elements. These are expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. This can be summarized as an individual being motivated to perform based on the notion to which they believe that their effort will result in acceptable performance, which shows the expectancy then the version achieved will be rewarded by the organization, which is the instrumentality. The value of the rewards offered is substantially positive, which shows the valence.

### ***Expectancy***

Expectancy shows the estimates made by the individual on the probability that the efforts they put in a particular role will lead to achievements of a given level of performance. Reviews by Lloyd and Mertens (2018) present that where the workers feel that the expectations that their efforts in the organization will be lowly rewarded results in reduced desire to engage and remain committed to meeting the set objectives. Contrarily, a high probability that the effort put in achieving organization objectives will be appropriately rewarded results in good outcomes on work performance(Lloyd & Mertens, 2018). The expectancy levels are inherent in determining the effects of a task through the effort offered by individuals.

### ***Instrumentality***

The instrumentality of an individual shows the estimates a person makes based on the probability that the achievements made in the performance of a particular task can result in specific work outcomes. For instance, the instrumentality value is high because good job performance can result in a salary increase or rewards. Consequently, the

perceived relationship between a good performance rating and the level of compensation and rewards offered influences the instrumentality of the employee.

### *Valence*

Valence shows the strength of preferences made by the employee for a particular reward or reward system. Resultantly, salary increases, promotions, acceptance in the workplace, recognition, and other rewards impact how individuals and groups of workers develop perceptions and attitudes towards compensations and rewards. From this perspective, the valence can be positive or negative. In situations where the employee has a strong preference for attaining high rewards, there is a high valence, while in cases where the employee is indifferent to the reward or reward systems have a low valence. From a theoretical perspective, rewards have valence because they are linked to the worker's needs. According to Soyoung and Sungchan (2017), valence facilitates a link between the expectancy theory and motivational theories developed by Alderfer, Herzberg, Maslow, and McClelland.

According to Vroom (1964) and later modified by Lawler (1971) and Lloyd and Mertens (2018), motivation expectancy, instrumentality, and valence are linked in the following equation:

$$\text{Motivation} = \text{Expectancy} \times \text{Instrumentality} \times \text{Valence}.$$

From a critical perspective, the expectancy model reflects the assumptions of Theory Y, which implies that workers are capable individuals in their engagement with the organization, which highlights the inherent aspects of human dignity in the workplace. According to Soyoung and Sungchan (2017), the Expectancy theory offers a

more scientific approach to researching other motivational ideas. This is because it expounds on the phenomenon linked to the workers' efforts, work performance, and employee motivation, among other factors. These are the inherent aspects that can be observed within organizations offering an opportunity to determine the levels of performance and how the situation in the organization can be modified for higher achievements to be achieved. The expectancy theory also illustrates that modern organizations focus on a reward system that prioritizes work performance rather than other factors such as seniority, the skills in accomplishing tasks, or the job's difficulty.

The theory highlights that performance is the most imperative feature of advancing employees and organizational objectives. Criticism of the expectancy theory suggests that the workers exert low effort in their responsibilities but also highlights the need for the management to recognize and act on the individual needs and motivations among the workers. Soyoung and Sunchan (2017) determined that the expectancy theory is instrumental in modern organizations with high cultural diversity and the need for varying skills and knowledge in meeting organizational objectives in an international context. From this perspective, the expectancy theory ignores some of the simplistic features evident in other motivational approaches advocated by Maslow and Herzberg.

Arguably, the expectancy theory seems more realistic than other systems by harmonizing personal employee goals and organizational objectives. The expectancy theory is also effective in studying workers' experiences in a multinational organization, which operates in a competitive environment that requires an increased focus on a strategic approach in management based on set objectives. This is fostered by the

capacity of the expectancy theory to draw insights about the subjective differences impact on motivation among different people in the organization. The expectancy theory effectively understands a diverse and competitive work environment that focuses on increasing work performance where employees have numerous options if they are not appropriately rewarded. The expectancy theory also does not specify the kind of rewards systems that can increase motivation to improve performance among different groups of workers, making it effective when the diversity in the workforce creates varying interests among the workers. In this light, the practically guides this research by facilitating the link between rewards and performance based on different cultural influences in the organization and the areas where the organizations operate—drawing from experience in practice, managers who have employed the expectancy theory present positive accounts about its practical utility.

According to Lloyd and Mertens (2018), the expectancy theory has effectively influenced how organizations design jobs and reward systems to include intrinsic and extrinsic research designs. The idea has also been a practical and effective approach to understanding organizational behavior by offering clear insights into the relationship between individual and corporate objectives. The statement highlights the need for managers to pay substantial attention to the various factors that simultaneously influence employee motivation, especially in complex job-related decision-making

### **LMX Theory**

According to Yukl et al. (2019), the leadership behaviors and strategies in engaging with subordinates differ based on their relationship in interacting with each

individual or group in the organization. The LMX highlights these potential differences by taking leadership as a construct of different dyadic relationships that link the leader to the followers. The effectiveness and quality of the leader-follower relationship are subject to the level of mutual trust, loyalty, support, respect, and obligations in the organizational setting. Resultantly, leaders develop relationships with other groups and individuals, influencing their contributions to the common goal. The group that the leaders favor is known as the in-group. The individuals engaged in the in-group receive substantial attention from the leaders. They also have access to most organizational resources depending on the leader's influence in availing them for production. Resultantly, the in-group tends to be more productive. In contrast, there is the out-group, which is made up of persons who the leader does not favor. These groups have a few or lack access to essential resources from the leaders, compromising their productivity ability. In the deployment of resources, the leaders have to differentiate between the in-group and out-group members. This is often based on the personal characteristics that contribute to the diversity experienced in the organizational setting. These include aspects such as age, gender, and personality. In this light, the leaders can grant individuals the in-group status if they express competency in their performance.

According to the LMX theory, the leader-subordinate relationship is an imperative aspect of performance appraisal. This is linked to the psychological state that is influenced by the relationship leading to habitual patterns of exchange that happen between the leaders and subordinates. The LMX impacts task performance by contributing to improved job performance, lowering turnover rates, improving job



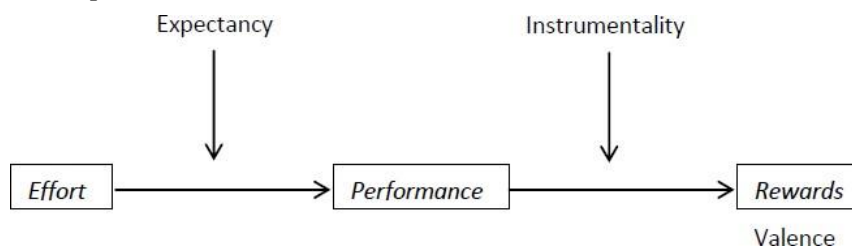
satisfaction, and the workforce's commitment to the organization. Other positive influences of the LMX approach include improved perception concerning the efficiency of the leader. In this context, the subordinates believe that the leader can lead effectively and achieve the organizational objectives. From this perspective, Yu, Matta, and Cornfield (2018) argue that there is increased job performance when the LMX is aligned with the group objectives.

### Conceptual Framework

Figure 2 includes a visual representation of the expectancy theory. In this context, the effort made by the employee determines their level of performance, which determines the rewards offered by the organization. The story of input in the form of an attempt to attain the required performance levels in the organization is subject to the employee's expectations. The organization needs to generate an environment with high expectations to be proactive and contribute to achievements.

**Figure 2**

#### *Conceptual Framework*



Subsequently, the achievements made in performance should be coupled with the instrumentality aspects, which entails guaranteeing that the successes are rewarded. Nevertheless, the rewards offered should be associated with the expectations of the

workers. In this context, tips that are not satisfactory have a lower valence, which is demotivating for the workers. Resultantly, the conceptual framework expresses that the workers' motivation to improve their job performance is subject to the performance levels set by the company, which determines their efforts to make the achievements and the kind of rewards offered, which should be effectively and fairly linked the performance achievements made.

Despite the praise of the expectancy theory among various researchers and practitioners, there is substantial criticism, weakness, and limitations associated with it. In this context, the expectancy theory is deemed not to be entirely or substantially comprehensive. Arguably, like the other motivational theories, the assumptions made in the theory influence a particular view and angle to address a specific phenomenon. Nevertheless, Soyoung and Sungchan (2017) argue that the expectancy theory offers a more realistic leadership approach than other motivational theories. This creates the impression that in practice, managers should not solely rely on the expectancy theory but should incorporate different critical theoretical conceptualizations for increased efficiency in transforming employee and organizational performance. Furthermore, Barakat and Moussa (2017) argue that social science theories often have limitations that require two or more approaches to accomplish investigations, and the expectancy theory is no exception.

According to Soyoung and Sungchan (2017), the effectiveness of adopting the expectancy theory in research and practice is its capacity to develop insights on the probability to explain the various factors that impact the motivational aspects that lead to

improved employee performance. Despite this, factors addressed by the theory, such as human nature, behaviors, attitudes, and motivation, are primarily subjective than objective. This implies that these factors can never be wholly theorized, which highlights one of the critical limitations of the motivation theories. Critics of the expectancy theory suggest a complicated approach that considers numerous variables making it difficult to practically apply in an organizational setting (Barakat & Moussa, 2017). In this context, it is deemed difficult to implement and test the theory in the organizations compared to other ideas such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The weakness of the concept is that diversity among workers implies that all individuals lack the time, willingness, appropriate work environment, and resources critical determinants of motivation levels. This assumption that these factors are similar among workers is contrary to the experiences witnessed among workers.

On the same note, Lloyd and Mertens (2018) established that applying the expectancy theory has challenges due to the lack of consideration of some critical aspects deemed imperative in developing motivation in a diverse workforce.

The qualitative aspects of measurement that determine organizations' expectancy, instrumentality, and valence can be difficult to calculate or impossible at times. This has made the formula suggested in theory a controversy, increasing its qualitative applicability more appealing to this research than the quantitative. Researchers have raised the need to establish reliable valence, expectancy, and instrumentality measures, but there has been a minor contribution to these aspects of the theory. According to Soyoung and Sungchan, applying the expectancy theory is instrumental and valid when

investigating employees who have a clear understanding of the relationship between the efforts they put at work and the rewards offered for meeting organizational objectives. Notably, only a few individuals understand this relationship between the different factors, making the theory romantic.

A fundamental weakness of the expectancy theory is that it fails to offer specific solutions to the motivational issues identified. This is drawn from the assumption that organizations are rational and logical individuals, making the theory substantially idealistic. Additionally, the expectancy model tends to focus on a complex motivational process and lacks to address how the motivational decisions adopted within organizations emerge and are implemented.

Furthermore, Soyoung and Sungchan (2017) noted that the expectancy theory facilitates focus on the exact and conscious motivational aspects that influence the decisions made by individuals to engage at the workplace. The expectancy theory has been found to have limitations in situations where the same rewards are offered to different employees who present various reasons for their improved performance.

According to Lloyd and Mertens (2018), applying the expectancy theory is ineffective when employees lack significant preference for intrinsic or extrinsic rewards. This implies that it might be challenging when the idea is employed where intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are integrated.

From another perspective, Soyoung and Sungchan (2017) conceptualize that the expectancy theory is ineffective in research and practice that entails predicting how motivational factors influence the work performance of individuals disengaged in simple,

typical routines and lower-level positions in the organization setting. Nevertheless, the expectancy theory has effectively investigated and understood motivational aspects in USA-based organizations that present substantial differences compared to similar organizations in other countries. This makes the expectancy theory appropriate for investigating work performance in the USA military

To address the limitations of the expectancy theory, this research adopted the LMX theory to establish a comprehensive understanding of how leadership in organizations influences performance. In this study, the LMX theory is taken to be a mediator of the leadership approaches and workforce performance to achieve the desired organizational objectives with the application of the reward system. The trust developed between the leaders and subordinates is essential in improving the outcome of the organization. This includes cognition and affection that emerge in the LMX. This integration of this theory in the conceptual framework ensures an understanding of subordinates' value on different rewards offered by their leaders based on their established relationship.

## **Literature Review**

### **Reward Management**

HRM departments are responsible for developing the incentives and reward systems employed by different organizations. Despite this, the evaluation of the workforce and the organizational performance are aspects addressed by the financial departments (Azeez, 2017). According to Nguyen et al.(2020), developing motivation in the workforce to improve work performance entails strategic measures taken by various

departments in an organization, which implies that it takes more than the extrinsic rewards for increased contribution to organizational objectives. Insights from Warr and Nielsen (2018) suggested that a gap exists in how organizations monitor work performance and the subsequent rewards offered to employees per the employment contracts or upon achieving the set organizational or group objectives. The isolation of the HRM and finance departments have impacted how managers utilize the reward systems to foster the achievements made by a company. Additionally, top management often designed the reward systems based on their perceptions about the business environment and implemented by the HRM and finance departments. Consequently, the reward systems increasingly fail to meet employee satisfaction and influence the attitudes and behaviors necessary to enhance organizational performance. Corporate and administrative management practices have impacted employees' attitudes and perceptions about their value to the organization.

The employee contribution is not appropriately appreciated; they develop the account that they are not inherent to its achievements. Consequently, they are less likely to participate in meeting the organizational objectives. Other studies claim that employee reward programs are among the strategies utilized in ensuring a motivated workforce in adopting changes in the organization by facilitating changes in the work habits and behaviors that can benefit the new approach to organizational operations. The dynamic and competitive business environment calls for change in how organizations operate, which requires high levels of employee engagement. The reward system is recognized as the strategic approach to transitioning the change by ensuring high employee engagement

levels. Despite this, the planning and management of the reward strategies remain a substantial challenge for the HRM departments, while its implementation is subject to numerous organizational factors. The comparison of factors that influence employee performance satisfaction achieved with implementing reward systems from similar job opportunities in other organizations. Notably, there are substantial variations in how people weigh their contribution to the organization and the subsequent rewards. Resultantly, these factors impact their willingness to perform and remain in the organization.

According to Murayama (2019), the willingness to perform influences the timing of when the rewards are offered, and it is tied to the ability of the employees to deliver on their responsibilities effectively. This is linked to the notion that the workers must believe that certain behaviors lead to rewards. This calls for effectiveness and fairness in the evaluation and implementation of the reward system. According to Wenzel et al. (2019), effective business practices include establishing if the rewards reasonably respond to the workforce's contribution and benefits to the organization. A fair reward system is fostered by effectiveness in recruitment and training initiatives, the point of the performance management systems, and appraisal strategies that consider the workers' talents, knowledge, and skills. According to Wenzel et al. (2019), an unfair reward system has an impact on employee productivity and organizational performance due to conflicts at the workplace and subsequent reduction in productivity due to high tension in the relationships that emerge among workers and internal competitiveness that is undesirable for collaboration among workers, teams, and departments. This highlights the importance

of management practices that ensure the reward system is streamlined to develop healthy relationships and effective placement of employees to maximize their talents, skills, and knowledge in meeting the set objectives (Riasat et al., 2016).

Reward management shows the strategies, policies, and processes employed in the workplace to ensure that the value of people and their contribution to achieving the organizational, institutional, departmental, and team goals are recognized and rewarded. In this context, rewards entail the monetary, objects, events, and experiences that are offered to employees who have engaged in a particular task. Drawing from this perspective, prizes are provided following behavioral changes that influence the achievement of organizational objectives. From another perspective, rewards relate to subjective feelings that workers experience in things that can motivate them because they like, pleasure, or achieve satisfaction. This entails the hedonic functions that are associated with the rewards presented by the organization.

The conceptualization of using rewards in organizations is premised on the idea that workers in an organization engage in a particular task because they are compensated. Still, the dedication to meeting the study's aims in a voluntary approach is because the rewarding undertaking offers a pleasant feeling. Reward management shows the strategies employed by managers and leaders in the organization to utilize the reward system in motivating and encouraging the workforce to meet the set objectives to receive the associated rewards with the achievements made. As a process, reward management entails formulating and implementing strategic undertakings that ensure people with the organization are rewarded appropriately, fairly, and equitably. Constantly, according to



the value they exert to the organizational operations. From another perspective, reviews highlight that reward management is a process that entails designing, implementing, and sustaining the reward process and practices that are focused on improving the individual, team, and organizational performance.

Drawing from the conceptualizations associated with reward management, it is primarily employed as a motivational strategy, which facilitates employee efforts to meet organizational objectives. The rewards are used in the compensation or remuneration strategies that are synonymous with the value of labor offered by the workers.

Antoni et al. (2017) posit that the need for reward management in organizations is to create value and develop competitiveness from the skills and knowledge that exist in the organization. Resultantly, reward management entails how organizations design, implement and maintain the reward systems that guarantee the organization and employee interests are satisfied relatively, equitably, and consistently. Through reward management, organizations can evaluate the importance of workers and their roles based on the job evaluation strategies and market factors that impact how pay structures are formulated, performance management conducted, and workers' contributions determined.

Reviews of an array of studies on reward management by Hoole and Hotz (2016) stated that the reward system is not focused on the pay offered to individuals but also on the non-financial rewards that motivate them to accomplish organizational objectives. From this perspective, reward management also entails the non-financial rewards designed for the workers, including recognition at the workplace, learning and development opportunities, and diversity in occupational responsibilities. This implies

that reward management focuses on planning, examining, and controlling how employees are compensated, remunerated and the various benefits they enjoy from participating in multiple tasks in an organization.

The strategies employed in reward management are intended to foster increased proficiency in the reward structures used within organizations. The reward structures implemented by organizations are part of the payment policies and practices, the salaries and payroll administration, total rewards, minimum wages, executive pay, and rewards offered to teams. Notably, reward structures and frameworks focus on specific objectives to motivate workers to achieve strategic goals.

The commitment to reward systems and their subsequent improvement ensures that workers engaged in accomplishing organizational and group objectives are valued, recognized, and rewarded appropriately. From this perspective, reward management is premised on the philosophical concepts and guiding principles aligned with the organization's values. For most institutions and organizations, the philosophies and beliefs are premised on the need to achieve fairness, equity, consistency, and transparency in how workers are compensated or rewarded.

These factors are inherent in the actions of the HRM, which is the part of the company that is primarily involved in how the entity invests in human capital and how they are compensated based on their contributions. The philosophies adopted in reward management are based on the ideology of a strategic approach in addressing the long-term factors that relate to how individuals are valued, how they engage at the workplace, and the achievements they make.

The role of HRM within organizations is diverse. Still, it often includes the strategies employed to keep individuals engaged, contribute to professional development, and streamline actions to meet the set objectives. Resultantly, reward management in modern organizations focuses on employing a total reward system, which entails considering all the essential factors of the reward system integrated with HRM initiatives. Integrating the reward and HRM strategies is primarily linked to the process and undertakings supporting employee development.

Nevertheless, monetary rewards remain an inherent aspect, mainly due to the cultural factors that influence the attitudes and perceptions that motivate individuals to engage at the workplace with the expectation that the rewards offered will enable them to meet their personal needs and objectives (Perkins, 2018)—associated with the bonuses offered. From this perspective, Rusu et al. (2016), the HR departments have the role of managing labor and implementing strategic initiatives that lead to increased employee performance in the period set to achieve specific objectives.

Hoole and Hotz (2016) posit that reward management is critical to any organization because it links management practices to the impact of internal and external environments on individuals. In this light, the influences from the internal environment are related to the HRM activities. In contrast, the external environment entails the trends in the labor market such as the overall cost for positions, the government policies that shape labor relations between workers and the organizations, economic aspects, and the competition that exist with the potential to attract workers that are critical for organizational success

## **Reward Systems**

Drawing from various studies, reward systems shows the integrated processes and practices implemented through the reward management to benefit employees due to their roles in the organization. In this light, the reward systems are premised on reward strategies and structures adopted by an organization. These include the HRM strategies used to develop a productive workforce (Beltrán-Martín & Bou-Llusar, 2018). Effective HRM practices ensure that the human capital is appropriately utilized to meet the organizational labor needs. There is inadequate compensation for the services rendered by the individuals and teams (Diaz- Fernandez et al., 2017).

According to scholars, all aspects of the strategy are influenced by the environment where the organization operates. The management utilizes the reward system as a strategic approach for coordinating labor in the organizational setting (Andreeva et al., 2017).

The effectiveness of the reward system is based on the policies and mechanisms that the organization utilizes to administer rewards among workers. For instance, workers can be offered benefits, commissions, or pay increases based on their contribution to meeting organizational objectives (Ahmed et al., 2016). It is inherent that the reward systems satisfy the goals linked to the business strategy. As noted earlier, the rewards effectively engage the workforce if they consider them attractive and fair. In the organizational context, meeting the objectives of the different stakeholders requires that the reward systems are cost-effective, and they contribute to enabling the workers to achieve the set goals.

The reward system presents various variations in how rewards are offered to employees. The rewards can be fixed, variable, and indirect. Additionally, for each system, there are different reward types and criteria. The reward types can be financial or not, fixed, or based on a particular standard. The reward criteria entail principles and strategies used to establish how the rewards are offered to individuals (Howard et al., 2016). For instance, the prizes can be provided for a team performance or an individual. Most employees across various organizations often prefer principles grounded on personal performance, occupational output connected to their tasks, and human capital linked to the experiences and knowledge to accomplish the set objectives. The pay offered to individuals enables them to remain devoted to the organization with the assurance that they can use the earning to acquire material things and experiences they value.

Additionally, the reward systems offer to mean to the role of the workers by highlighting the achievements, status, and appreciation associated with their responsibilities or those of the team. The relevance of the rewards in the organizations offers an opportunity for individuals to understand the significance of their roles in the organization and compare what is being provided with that of their peers in other organizations (Rusu et al., 2016). The differences that emerge in the rewards provided to employees within the organization helps to the level of efforts and the achievements an individual or the team makes for the organization. When the rewards are contingent on employee performance, the meaning associated with the rewards becomes more salient.

When the rewards are insignificant, the importance and value might become meaningless to the workers. On the same note, when the leads are substantially more significant, they might motivate the workers but become detrimental. Sustainability in the provision of execution of effective reward systems helps the organization retain workers and attract individuals with the experience and knowledge required to accomplish the set objectives as long as the workers' contribution is valuable compared to the costs incurred by the organization. This phenomenon is identified as the sorting effect, which assumes that workers with higher skills are attracted to higher rewards organizations

The reward system is the most critical management principle applicable to most organizations across the globe. In this light, the organization's efficiency in rewarding workers contributes to its capacity to shape employee behaviors to improve productivity. There is an agreement among investigators that all companies have some form of reward system. The reward systems might be outspoken or entrenched in the normal organizational processes.

According to Ahmed et al. (2016), the primary objective of offering rewards is to create incentives that can attract talented workers and motivate them to engage in personal growth, resulting in high levels of productivity and contribution to the organization. This highlights the efficiency of the reward system to contribute to the changes experienced in the organization based on the inclination of the persons involved in the company and personal needs. The motivation drawn from different reward aspects is linked to how the benefits or experiences gained by the workers are beyond the average remuneration or compensation if they are isolated from the salary. Additionally, the

rewards are weighted based on the efforts put by an individual in achieving exceptional performance independently or in a group. From this perspective, the conditions to acquire a particular reward should be established before the workers engage in the task to make the execution quantifiable in measuring outcomes and matching them with the results.

Also, showing how the rewards are quantified is essential to enabling workers to quantify their contribution at different levels in undertaking a particular task. Resultantly, by determining if their efforts are aligned to achieving the set rewards, they can be motivated to engage effectively. According to Bourgeois et al. (2016), reward systems are effective if they can inspire and systematically enhance productivity. On the same note, the characteristic nature of the rewards should guarantee that they are large enough to ideally motivate the workers, be reasonable, timely, durable, and cost-efficient.

Based on insights drawn from different organizations, the reward systems entail various interrelated processes and activities that shape the reward management to benefit both the organization and the workers. The factors that are inherent in understanding how reward systems are employed in different organizations include:

### ***Reward Strategy***

The reward strategy refers to the procedures that organizations utilize to achieve sustained development and implementation of policies, practices, and processes that facilitate rewards based on the business strategy and objectives that need to be completed. The system used varies from one organization to another, but the event on the workforce keeps them motivated.

### ***Reward Policies***

The reward policies refer to the inherent factors that emerge within an organization that influences how the organization values the rewards, relates rewards to the market context, the internal aspects that impact pay rates, and how external factors can influence the compensation. The reward policies offer guidelines on how rewards are quantified.

Additionally, the policies dictate the effectiveness associated with the reward strategies used. Based on the general notions about how organizations offer tips, the critical reward policies are premised on the need for achieving equal pay for all workers. They also influence the relative importance associated with the external competition experienced by the organization and internal equity. Reward policies dictate how the organization engages in total reward and the factors to consider about the employee's performance, competence, contribution, skills, or positions.

The policies also highlight the responsibilities of managers engaged in the evaluation and presentation of the rewards. Fundamentally, the reward policies are utilized for many organizations to develop trust among the workers by ensuring transparency in how the reward structures and processes are adopted and executed. This is inherent in building trust among workers and encouraging them to perform to guarantee that they will be effectively awarded.

### ***Total Reward***

This shows utilizing a reward system that incorporates both financial and non-financial rewards to the workers. According to studies, this is important because it



increases the diversity of the things that motivate the workers. Alhmoud and Rjoub (2019) state that total rewards are imperative for operations in large organizations due to the differences among the diverse workforces. This is exemplified in the military; there is a large diversity of people in terms of age, gender, cultural backgrounds, religion, sexuality, ranks, among other factors.

### ***Total Remuneration***

This is a critical consideration in the reward system because it determines the value associated with the extra effort by employees in the quest to increase performance. The total remuneration shows to the value of all monetary cash payments and benefits offered by the organization. Extra costs such as commissions and bonuses form part of the total earnings, founded on meeting the set objectives.

### ***Basic Pay***

The reward system considers basic pay, the base rates that determine the amounts offered for a particular contribution in organizational operations, or the fixed salaries or wages. The basic income is determined by the grade of the job or position held by the workers. Similarly, the skills and complexity of the job are also critical determinants of the compensation offered. In the reward system context, the base pay is influenced by the internal and external factors that relatively impact the performance. The internal relativities include the occupational aspects determined through job evaluations, while the external ones are those defined by analyzing the market rates. The operations of multinationals often involve the engagement of a large workforce, which is organized into teams, or in some cases involvetrade unions, which facilitate collective bargaining.

In this context, basic pay levels are determined by negotiations between the leagues or teams with the companies. Alternatively, the individual can engage in a contractual relationship with the company based on mutual understating of a particular pay level.

The base pay can be annual, weekly, or hourly. In this context, the time factors are imperative in the rewards associated with the basic income. This includes overtime, shifts, and working in unsocial hours. These aspects entail extra input by the workers, which can be coupled with rewards and basic pay. Other factors that influence the basic income include the working conditions, whereby many organizations offer incentives in the forms of rewards to engage individuals in challenging work environments or take up jobs that are not desirable to other people.

### ***Job Evaluation***

The reward system relies on job evaluations to guarantee an organized approach in defining the worth related to a particular job or task. Koziol and Mikos (2019) stated that organizations develop implemented policies to ensure fairness and equitability in how rewards are offered. This is accomplished by creating a reward structure and linking the managerial strategies to the reward system. The evaluations are analytical or non-analytical, which implies that they do not directly determine the pay offered. In this context, the evaluations are critical in understanding the various factors that impact job performance, making them effective in developing job descriptions and roles. Subsequently, based on the role's complexity that impacts demands, the appropriate rewards in that context can be determined.

### ***Market Rate Analysis***

With multinationals operating in different markets, there is a range of factors to consider due to the market's impact on the organization. The market rate analysis entails identifying the prevailing rates in the labor market for similar occupations or tasks. Based on the intuitions gathered from the market rate analysis, the rewards accessible from the organization can be adjusted appropriately to ensure that they remain attractive equated to the prevailing offers in the market. Additionally, the organization can utilize policy decisions to influence how external rates affect internal rates. This is critical for multinationals that might be subject to different market rates.

### ***Grading and Pay Structures***

The reward system is also influenced by the grading and pay structures that an organization adopts. Notably, graded designs are influenced by market rates. The importance of the pay structure is centered on the pay progression, which motivates workers to make more achievements. This is a rewarding notion of pay progression. It is based on performance, competence, contribution, and other factors connected to increased performance with an improved focus on occupational progression.

### ***Contingent Pay***

This refers to the additional financial rewards offered based on performance, competence, contributions, or skills. These payments highlight the uniqueness and value of the employee to the organizational undertakings. The contingent pay is added to the actual costs to form a consolidated amount. In some cases, the reward systems in the establishments focus on the achievements made in a specific period or objectives, which

implies that contingent pay is not always offered. This results in variable payment, which means that the basic income is fixed, but the contingent pay is conditional.

### ***Employee Benefits***

The reward systems are premised on various factors that include legal provisions that compel organizations to meet particular employee needs. According to Spisakova (2019), there is a range of benefits that employers can offer. These include offering pensions, transportation, insurance cover, facilitating transportation, improving the working conditions, and other initiatives designed to enhance individuals' contributions to the organization. Organizations can employ the benefits as a means of appreciation for specific achievements in the organization. In this context, the workers can be offered improved benefits or experiences such as vacations or long holidays upon achieving the extended objectives.

### ***Performance Management***

This entails focusing on the contributions made by individuals and teams based on the expectations, objectives, and assessments made. This is coupled with regular constructive feedback from the management and supervisors, facilitating the improved performance, learning, and personal development.

Resultantly, the reward system can be embedded in how performance is managed through strategies focused on enhancing how an individual engages in the workplace and developing their skills and knowledge. The initiatives for improving productivity within organizations entail offering workforce development opportunities through training, workshops, further education, among other undertakings (Fu et al., 2019). This highlights

the non-financial approaches to building motivation that is embedded in the reward systems.

### ***Nonfinancial Rewards***

Some of the rewards enjoyed by employees emerge from their engagement in specific responsibilities. In this context, there are no direct financial benefits that are offered to the workers. Instead, the opportunities provided by the organization in the workplace result in high levels of achievements, increased autonomy, recognition, the chance to maximize skills, engagement in training and career development, and engagement in leadership responsibilities.

### **Types of Rewards**

The objectives of the reward systems are influenced by the kind of interests that motivate the workforce. In this context, various aspects emerge among workers, which affect how they appreciate multiple rewards. Resultantly, the reward systems can present intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. The inherent reward system focuses on initiatives that allow the employee to enjoy the workplace and increase efficiency in meeting the set goals (Riasat et al., 2016). The extrinsic reward system shows the provision of tangible items as a form of appreciation for the role played by the employees. The extrinsic rewards are regarded to be external to the responsibilities of the worker. Pay, good working conditions, benefits, security, promotion, employment contracts, salaries, incentives, bonuses, payments, and job security. Malik et al. (2019) contributed that there is an increase in the demands among workers in modern work settings, which has made rewards imperative in enhancing job satisfaction and creating motivation among workers.

Resultantly, understanding the significance of the different forms of rewards enables organizations to improve worker engagement in the company in a strategic manner. At the organizational level, the two forms of reward systems are employed as follows:

### ***Intrinsic Rewards***

These rewards are associated with the psychological aspects of employee development. Subsequently, they are intangible benefits that workers enjoy based on the provisions made by the organization. They foster an emotional appeal among workers to enhance their contribution and support company objectives. These include employee empowerment, increased autonomy, offering feedback on performance, and engagement of employees in the decision-making process. From this perspective, these psychological aspects motivate workers by expressing that they are significant to the organization and that their contribution to tasks and responsibilities is valued.

Organizations formulate and implement intrinsic rewards based on the capabilities and talents that exist within the workforce. The intrinsic rewards are utilized to purposely appreciate employees and raise their self-esteem by engaging in various responsibilities related to organizational growth. Workers feel more satisfied when they engage in a particular role, and they are recognized and appreciated for their contribution.

### ***Extrinsic Rewards***

The extrinsic rewards are essential for most workers because they facilitate meeting the basic needs through the income offered. It entails the compensation provided by the organizations to workers to enable them to survive. For instance, they meet the basic human needs of food, health, clothing, and shelter. The extrinsic rewards also offer

the workers a feeling of stability and consistency, which is achieved through job security and recognition due to their skills and knowledge. Extrinsic rewards can be defined as the outcomes supplied by organizations following the engagement of workers' organizational operations. These include salaries, status, job security, and benefits. These rewards are connected to the hygiene factors identified by Herzberg.

### ***Combination of Intrinsic and Extrinsic Rewards***

Staff are more satisfied and engaged in organizations when offered a mixture of both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. An effective balance of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards has been found to foster success among different workers. Many employees welcome the application of cash rewards in the modern workplace. Nevertheless, this should not be the only strategy to keep the workforce motivated to improve organizational performance. The logic behind this argument is that the utilization of cash rewards can eventually erode the essence of the reward system. This results in a phenomenon of non-rewards, where the workers forget the importance of the rewards compromising the motivation gained from such strategies.

Resultantly, many researchers and practitioners recommend that cash rewards should be used sparingly. Arguably, when cash rewards are not offered all the time, their significance within an organization increases. From another perspective, the use of cash rewards exclusively makes them passive, implying that they often do not result in positive behaviors among the workers in the long term. According to Miao and Cao (2019), the rewards offered can be used to develop a positive perception about the responsibilities, the work environment, and the management practices used in the

organization. Based on these insights, a balance of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards is more effective in making the employees feel valued in an organization. This results in increased contribution and commitment of the workforce towards the organizational objectives.

### **Psychological Meaning of Rewards**

Workers dedicate their time and energy to organizations to earn pay that has instrumental value besides buying goods and services they require for their survival. The payment made to an individual is significant based on the psychological interpretations or meaning that the employee holds. From this point of view, there is a lack of a straightforward approach that can be deemed effective in the payment strategy, employee evaluation, and HRM strategies that meet all aspects of the personal meaning an individual holds. Murayama (2019) notes that the differences among people and the varying organizational interests make reward systems controversial in many workplaces.

Most of the debate within organizations is centered on individual pay-for-performance, which is highly influenced by psychological factors. Notably, researchers stress the need to consider the psychological factors that influence the sense of the rewards offered when formulating and implementing the reward systems. Managers need to take to account the quantifiable economic costs connected with the employee's productivity as well as the psychological costs that are linked to social comparisons. Farooq and Shafique (2016) found that the lack of intrinsic rewards in creating motivation among workers can reduce performance compared to similar workplaces where such rewards are offered.



According to Murayama (2019), some organizations use rewards to control the workforce, which might have an impact on their autonomy, which might be demotivating, resulting in reduced employee productivity and organizational performance. Employee performance can also be low when the equity principles are violated, leading to a situation where the rewards offered make an individual feel mistreated. Also, rewards that are perceived to be short-term gains by workers might lead them to take irresponsible risks compromising their productivity in the long term.

### **Rewards and Motivation**

Researchers and practitioners in the HRM field highlight that motivation is a challenging and complex aspect that impacts employee work performance and organizational productivity. Shirey (2017) state that leadership and managerial practices are important aspects of motivating individuals and ensuring strategic engagement in meeting corporate objectives. From this perspective, motivation is a driving force that leads individuals to act, perform, and engage in their responsibilities without pressure or unwarranted manipulation. This implies that motivation has both psychological and managerial meaning among workers.

In the psychological context, motivations show the emotional aspects that drive specific behaviors. The psychological aspects of motivation are the internal mental factors linked to the initiation, direction, persistence, intensity, and the termination of a behavior. In the organizational context, it shows the capacity of the manager and leaders to engage strategies that can drive the workforce to produce set objectives. Kuswati

(2019) state various theories have emerged designed to explain how motivation results in increased employee productivity and subsequent organizational performance.

Drawing from the content theory, motivational factors are addressed about the needs that should be satisfied by the reward system. These include Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Herzberg's Two-factor theory, and McClelland's achievement theories. From another perspective, the process theory shows the integrated factors to influence motivation within an organization. These include the equity theory, expectancy theory, goal, and attribution theory. Based on these theories, the inherent factors considered in adopting motivational theories in the workplace are premised on the need to improve the work environment and encourage workers to be more productive.

Rewards are not a substantial aspect of employee motivation. The use of incentives and rewards can help managers manipulate increased productivity in the short term, but such strategies lack effectiveness in meeting the long-term objectives (Farooq & Shafique, 2016). Workers lose interest in what they do, resulting in inferior outcomes when managers use rewards and incentives to entice them to work. Human resources are inputs required for developing products or services and factors in meeting organizational objectives.

The study established that workers are not solely motivated by money but also the attention they get from their superiors or managers. This shows the feelings they get, such as being cared for and recognizing their contributions to the organization. Such aspects increased their interest in the gift they have to the organization. Based on the Hawthorne

Studies, financial incentives are necessary, but social issues are also a key consideration in improving organizational efficiency.

Moreover, money is a poor motivator, and it hurts the intrinsic motivation aspects because it is only effective for a limited time. Some researchers advocate for total abandonment in the utilization of rewards and incentives to motivate workers within organizations. Nevertheless, researchers highlight that motivation remains an imperative aspect to be considered in any work environment.

The success of organizations relies on how managers guarantee that workers engage efficiently, effectively, stay focused, and committed to the organizational objectives. The levels of motivation are highly correlated to employee performance. This is because motivation is the driving force that influences the level of performance among the workers.

Therefore, increasing performance requires implementing the right motivation strategies depending on the characteristic nature of the work environment (Andriani et al., 2018). Notably, the reward system utilized within the motivation program impacts the outcomes of the organizational objectives.

Motivation is a crucial tool employed in organizations with the intent of attaining high performance, inspiring workers, and retaining high performers. According to Asaari et al. (2019), a motivated workforce increases productivity by encouraging individuals and groups to participate and engage in meeting organizational objectives.

Fundamentally, motivation is centered on ensuring a total commitment of workers to their responsibilities efficiently and effectively. Also, good motivational practices require

meaningful work, achievable goals, and the implementation of an effective reward system. Making such considerations results in the establishment of an environment that is desirable for work and the development of an organizational culture that contributes to increased efficiency in meeting objectives and meeting the workforce needs (Thokozani, 2017).

With the dynamic and challenging modern work environment, it is imperative for staff to remain motivated for the profitability and sustainability of the organization. A motivated workforce tends to be more productive, which implies that employee work performance is sustainably increased. Based on insights emerging from various studies, the reward system and motivation are substantially linked, and financial rewards are not necessarily influential in the modern-day business environment. Despite this, employers still tend to focus on applying financial incentives compared to non-financial incentives or blend the two approaches.

Rewards are often used as incentives that keep the workforce motivated. Still, while the managers who bestow them can utilize them as motivators, the motivational aspects emerge from within the individual. Riasat et al. (2016) stated that employees are highly motivated with a combination of or rewards in most cases. Resultantly, the onus lies with the employee to choose to perform. From this perspective, motivation through the reward system requires input from both the managers and employees, which implies establishing a partnership that fosters interactive participation in the motivational process.

Managers across all organizations realize that their mandate entails engaging the workforce in responsibilities based on organizational objectives and mission.

Subsequently, leadership skills play a critical role in creating a motivated workforce that can attain high productivity. Law et al. (2017) noted that numerous challenges impact how managers develop effective rewards and strategic measures to motivate the workforce.

These challenges emerge from the lack of an understanding and the general misconceptions about how workers should be encouraged and employee satisfaction. Arguably, most of the managers lack good judgment on what motivates the workers. Drawing from this perspective, the following misconceptions are related to how rewards are executed to drive motivation within organizations:

In this context, many managers employ the one-size-fits-all approach in recognizing, rewarding, and motivating the workers. The challenge with this approach is that it lacks to acknowledge the differences that emerge among individuals, which results in the lumping of all workers into a homogenous group. Despite this, people present varying motives and act differently in response to motivational programs. This can be accredited to the diversity among people founded on their culture, education, religion, background, and sexual preferences. Subsequently, researchers imply that it is essential for a personalized approach in reward systems, which entails tailoring the rewards and recognition processes. Such a strategy is achieved by focusing on and understanding the unique qualities that exist among different people.

There is a persistent perception that money is the ultimate or the sole motivator among workers. According to Kuvaas et al. (2017), the focus on monetary rewards results in a disregard for psychological aspects that are associated with rewards in the

organizational setting. Such misconceptions have made some managers rely substantially upon financial rewards, which might be biased. Researchers have established that monetary rewards are a motivational force for a limited time. The workers perceive the lack of or low payment to be inequitable, making it a de-motivator. From the same perspective, when the pay is substantially high, it can also be a de-motivator. These aspects impact individual performance as individuals attempt to secure higher compensation. This includes using risky methods to accomplish the objectives, which can compromise organizational outcomes. Additionally, reviews imply that when the monetary rewards are predictable based on individual or group achievements, it becomes an entitlement rather than a motivator.

Many managers assume that the strategies employed within an organization result in increased motivation among workers. Contrary, the diversity and differences among workers imply that their cause is drawn from different aspects of the reward system. A standard approach in motivating the workers is not effective in achieving high productivity. This has made it imperative for managers to employ strategic methods in identifying and engaging the specific motivational factors that target individuals. According to Shah et al. (2017), using rewards offers an opportunity for managers to modify job-related behaviors leading to increased productivity and performance.

Reviews propose that managers tend to perceive motivation within organizations as being extrinsic or intrinsic, which results in substantial reliance on one of the approaches while ignoring the other. In this regard, managers and workers have developed a bias towards the use of extrinsic rewards. As noted earlier, monetary rewards

are the most preferred approach to creating motivation for increased productivity in many organizations.

According to Kuvaas et al. (2017), combining extrinsic and intrinsic rewards offers an opportunity for the organization to increase productivity because they have a more positive influence on motivation among the people. Combining the two reward approaches facilitates achievements in creating a productive workforce by meeting their monetary and psychological needs. Apart from the above misconceptions in many organizations, the challenge emerges from the dilemma of what factors lead to increased motivation among workers.

There is a lack of clear insights on how managers implement effective motivational strategies that can lead to increased productivity and how they are embedded in developing a positive work environment and organizational culture. Scholars highlight that manager should not assume that individuals feel valued in the organization just because their productivity increases.

Additionally, it is not a guarantee that rewards that include recognition can increase employee work performance. Bushardt et al. (2018) posit that many organizations often implement a single approach in motivating the entire workforce, with little focus on their personal needs. ineffective in motivating workers. Considering that rewards entail financial returns, tangible services, and benefits offered to workers as part of their relationship with the employer, it is evident that rewards are critical in meeting the expectations that exist among workers after engaging in a task or delivering on a particular responsibility.

Therefore, motivation can be termed as the reward offered after fulfilling an action, mission, or function. Although workers work primarily to get a reward that is a wage or salary, there are various ways of rewarding them based on the tasks or functions they perform. According to Howard et al. (2016), increasing employee motivation increases employee productivity and organizational performance.

### **Impact of Cultural Differences on the Reward System**

Culture has become an important aspect in management and leadership studies focusing on the modern work environment. According to Walter (2017), the globalization phenomenon is characterized by the increased movement of people and sharing of knowledge that has led to substantial integration and diversity in the labor market.

Walter(2017) posits that globalization has not only led to the transfer of cultures but also the emergence of new ones with the interaction of people from different backgrounds. Consequently, globalization and culture have substantial impacts on labor requirements and human resources in any organizational setting. This has influenced how organizational, motivational strategies are implemented to meet the needs of different stakeholders to guarantee high levels of productivity and organizational performance.

Understanding the workforce needs and gathering knowledge about how creative solutions can be employed in promoting employee productivity has become an important aspect of how organizations operate. Shanker et al. (2017) posit that cultural differences are essential considerations for managerial practices and how they engage in enhancing organizational performance. This conceptualization has justified the undertaking of



various studies across organizations operating in different industries. Issues concerning the behaviors and performance of the employees have become a driving force in improving organizational productivity.

According to Papa et al. (2018), corporate performance entails focusing on the returns to the resources invested as well as the well-being of the people. The corporate performance also focuses on how employees are developed for them to increase their performance. In this context, the well-being and behaviors that emerge among workers are linked to the reward system employed in the organization.

The reward and compensation efforts are determined by the abilities to achieve and surpass the set objectives. This implies that reward and compensation are strategic initiatives that should be effectively implemented through communication and preparation of workers, through training and other relevant measures that support their participation.

An issue of significant concern among the workers is its capacity to reward or compensate for their efforts effectively. In this context, the rewards entail all forms of payment and rewards that the worker receives upon achieving the objectives. This implies that the perceptions and attitudes associated with employee performance are inherent in how the reward systems motivate them to get involved in the workplace. The compensation offered that includes wages, salaries, incentives, bonuses, commissions, and benefits positively correlate with the positive attitudes and perceptions that motivate the workers to perform.

Magnano et al. (2016) posit that understanding emotional aspects of motivation is essential in keeping individuals engaged and enhancing their contribution to the organization. Nevertheless, this is a challenging aspect, especially for large organizations where the management lacks effective interaction with the workers to understand the emotional drivers associated with the reward system.

The relationships between managers and the subordinates are important in understanding what people expect in the reward system. Such associations include the delegation of responsibilities and interactions fostered by effective communication processes.

Culture signifies the unique characteristics related to groups and can differentiate them from other groups. According to Noe et al. (2017), there are different cultural backgrounds, which result in varying beliefs and values among the workers. The increased diversity among the people in organizations influenced by globalization and the expansion of businesses and institutions across different markets has made it imperative to consider the impact of culture on employee motivation through the reward system.

Sochor (2020) posits that the major theoretical approaches used to different cultures are Hofstede's cultural dimensions and the Globe project. Despite criticism of the two systems, they have been widely used in measuring and determining the differences experienced among various cultures. The two approaches had been widely used to understand varied cultural aspects and how people from different groups can be motivated through the reward system (Sochor, 2020).

There is little focus within organizations on the impact different cultures have on the reward system. According to Warrick (2017), the cultural characteristics among the people influence the organizational cultures and the rewards systems structured. The perceptions and attitudes linked to cultural beliefs impact motivation and the appreciation of the rewards offered.

From another perspective, the cultural differences among people are not the only aspects that influence the reward system. This can be accredited to the notion that cultural differences among people and the organizational culture can be confounded on the national culture or legal restrictions that determine how payment is offered or made to the workers.

Resultantly, a growing body of knowledge is focused on developing insights about the underlying impacts of cultural dimensions in the reward systems. In this context, culture is upheld as an independent or moderating variable. The systematic differences in how rewards are offered in different cultural settings are reflected by how the workers provide intrinsic tips. For instance, cultures that have collectivist characteristics have a significant focus on equality principles or have a high preference for them, while individualists focus on equity principles.

Cross-cultural research highlights that there is an increasing preference for pay among workers from diverse cultures. Noe et al. (2017) posit that western cultures significantly impact the pay structures adopted in the organization. Notably, based on western culture preferences, extrinsic rewards are more rewarding, resulting in a motivated workforce that can contribute to increased performance. Drawing from such

insights, it is conclusive that cultural dimensions have a systematic relationship with the variations experienced in the reward systems, types, and criteria preferences.

Furthermore, similar findings have been established in other factors related to employee motivation, including employee engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intents among workers, which are critical considerations in determining employee work performance.

Payment and rewards offered present different meanings among people from different cultures.

### ***Individualism***

This is exemplified in the case of Japan, where the input an employee puts in a role forms the basis for their pay. This is linked to the perceptions that people hold about their independence. Where an individual sees themselves as being independent of others increases the need for a more personalized approach in how they are rewarded.

### ***Power Distance***

In many European nations, power distance has a negative correlation to individual pay determination.

### ***Uncertainty Avoidance***

Countries that present a high degree of uncertainty avoidance tend to have rewards and pay structures based on the seniority that emerges among the workers rather than focusing on individual performance outcomes (Bussin et al., 2017).

### ***Competition/Masculinity***

Cultures with high levels of competitiveness have a strong masculine influence. In these cultures, financial rewards are more valued compared to social rewards. Bussin et

al. (2017) posit that social tips are more desirable in cultures that experience strong feminine influences and tend to be non-competitive. There are other contextual differences beyond the cultural factors that impact the motivation drawn from rewards. The phenomenon is reflected in the centrality of work and the standards of living.

### **Team-Based Versus Performance-Based Rewards**

The reward systems employed vary from one organization to another, and they often change from time to time based on the company objectives and inspirations from various factors in the business environment. This has made employee motivation a complex undertaking within organizations across different industries.

There is no specific approach that an organization can employ to engage the reward system effectively. Instead, the formulation of an effective reward system is based on the ability of the organization to evaluate workers, understand their interests, and draw insights from the organization and business environment. Such factors have attracted technological solutions such as extensive data analysis to establish the most effective approaches in employee reward programs based on data-driven decision-making.

However, many organizations lack the financial and technical capacity to undertake such processes, which has increased reliance on best practices that have been mainly adopted in different sectors. These practices are premised on the notion that effective reward systems are meant to foster benefits for both the business and the workers.

According to Bussinet al. (2017), the reward systems are further made complex due to the different needs, perspectives, and thoughts that emerge among the people. This

has increased the demand for individualized approaches in developing the reward systems, which are also impacted by the fairness aspects that need to be met in the organizational setting.

### **Team-Based Reward Systems**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century business environment, teams' performance is a vital aspect of achieving organizational success. Teamwork and being a team player are among the imperative factors considered in the development and implementation of HRM strategies. Despite this, developing rewards that can satisfy all people in a team can be challenging for managers and HRM practitioners due to the varying interests and needs that emerge among the diverse population (Harsch & Festing, 2020). This phenomenon is mainly prevalent in organizations where performance management is not effectively defined.

Additionally, the workers' personal goals might not be aligned with the team objectives and vice versa. To foster increased contribution in teams and the organization, managers offer group-based awards that are premised on the performance measurements done on groups based on the quality and quantity of work they can deliver.

Alves (2017) posits that group-based rewards have a substantial impact compared to offering individual tips. Additionally, Dickel and de Moura (2016) state that performance evaluation is easier in the case of teams compared to assessment of individuals. This implies that a team-based structure is complementary and requires less time and resources to monitor and measure performance and rewards. Despite this, engaging in teams can be challenging for an individual to adjust to the compensation or reward systems based on the group effort.

High team performance is appealing to organizations but forcing people to adopt new remuneration and reward arrangement to comply with how groups are evaluated and rewarded can face resistance and affect the individual contribution to organizational achievements. Nevertheless, it is more advantageous in some organizations to offer a collective reward for the performance achieved.

According to Dickel and de Moura (2016), group rewards positively impact the promotion of collaborations among the workers and increasing focus on achieving a shared objective. Also, the use of collective incentives increases employee obligation to the organization compared to when the rewards are offered to individuals. Team-based rewards could be integrated with individual performance-based reward systems (Dickel & de Moura, 2016). This can be ascribed to the individualistic approach of payments and rewards which is the primarily accepted compensation strategy. In this light, the move to include team-based rewards should be strategic for the workforce to support the initiative.

Organizations are likely to face challenges in the implementation of change that concerns the move from the traditional and know reward systems that are primarily based on an individualistic approach to a system that utilizes a team-based structure.

Subsequently, the combination of the two is deemed more desirable, especially in organizations under transition. From another perspective, challenges can emerge where the evaluation of performance is team-based, but the rewards offered for continuous performance improvement are provided individually.

The team dynamics in the reward system affect how the individual prizes are offered because differences emerge among the members. Individuals tend to compare

what they are offered to the rewards of other members (Rahbi et al., 2017). This highlights the need for including incentives that can motivate an individual to perform within the team-based reward system.

The aspect of equal allocations of the team-based reward system is premised on the need for fairness, considering the gains made by the team. Rahbi et al. (2017) posit that collective efforts of the team are characterized by the engagement of each member and their development to improve organizational performance. Transparency in evaluating the team member's contribution is critical to making other employees conscious of the role played by an individual. This increases the fairness necessary in situations where the team-based reward systems do not offer equal allocations.

A focus on employee empowerment and rewards leads to an effective reward system that can enhance employee productivity with the increased autonomous engagement of groups. Incremental rewards such as bonuses contribute to an increased feeling of empowerment among individuals, which leads to improved organizational performance (Malik et al., 2019).

Team-based rewards do not correlate with higher performance but highlight that such a reward approach can increase cooperation and communication within teams. Effective employee involvement and recognition within the group contribute to improved outcomes. The improved outcomes are higher in organizations that have formal strategies for employee recognition, and there is limited influence by the management on the reward systems (Hoole & Hotz, 2016).



Fundamentally, researchers highlight that the rewards and recognition approaches should be unbiased and fair to lead to increased team productivity and organizational performance. Drawing from these insights, the increased use of team-based work strategies must be coupled with effective reward systems.

Additionally, constructive behaviors among team members should be addressed. This can be accredited to the notion that rewards founded on equality positively impact team productivity and increase efficiency in sharing individual competencies compared to an equity system where each person is rewarded bestowing their contributions to the team

Fostering the success of the team-based performance is reliant on the behavioral responses that are affected by the team-based reward structure. Rewarding team-related behaviors contribute to increased effectiveness within the team over time. Additionally, this results in the increased inclination of individuals in higher positions to help others within the group, even in cases where they are no personal gains to be acquired.

According to Rahbi et al., (2017), increased productivity in the team-based approach requires focus on the behavioral aspects that contribute to increased cooperation among the members to increase their contribution to the organization. This also creates an opportunity for modifying employee behavior based on the knowledge of the aspects that motivate people to work as part of a team effectively. Resultantly, behavioral modifications can be achieved by instructing workers and implementing effective reward systems.

Hoole and Hotz (2016), posit that understanding workers' personalities is essential in developing effective rewards for increased motivation among the teams and

subsequent increase in organizational performance. Additionally, initiating teamwork from a small-scale context can encourage individuals to work in groups to maximize their talents and output. This can be credited to the opportunities that emerge from career development resulting in career advancement. In this context, rewards that result in career advancement increase employee motivation, which adds substantial value to the organization.

According to Pradhan et al. (2016), there is a positive correlation between commitment to the organization, employee productivity, and the quality of the work/life balance. The effectiveness of team-based reward systems is affected by the industry an organization operates.

Additionally, the sector also influences how individual and group rewards are combined with formal and informal reward strategies. The significance of the sector in this context is influenced by the capacity of the employee to develop in-role and extra-role behaviors. For instance, employees in the retail sales industry can be motivated by group rewards to develop in-role and extra-role behaviors. At the same time, individuals in the military are limited to engaging in roles that are influenced by their job description.

According to Rahbi et al, (2017), the effectiveness of team-based rewards has an impact on individuals that are characterized by an increased desire among individuals to engage in extra responsibilities or volunteer with the intent of contributing to the team performance. Highlighted are issues identifying how various reward systems can foster increased personal performance while contributing to improved team performance. While the combination of the reward systems has been recommended in many cases, there are

factors such as the environment where the organization operates and the organizational culture that exists.

According to Nguyen et al. (2017), the management needs to consider the factors such as the country of operation, the cultural factors, and how these factors interact to influence how individuals are motivated when engaging in teamwork or organizational responsibilities. In a strategic approach, incentives to encourage an individual within the team can be aligned with other group rewards to boost positive behaviors, team dynamics and productivity.

Another challenge linked to team-based rewards is the phenomenon that many companies are slowing the implementation of team rewards as well as other extrinsic team rewards. This can be ascribed to the amplified focus on individual performance-related tips and the notion that team-based rewards increase the costs incurred in compensation. Such organizations have a chance to improve their performance through the implementation of team-based performance management and reward systems.

In the context of motivation, there are shortcomings in how reward and recognition within team tips contribute to increased employee work performance. This can be attributed to the difficulty experienced by employees in seeing how their efforts are translated into results. As noted earlier, the lack of transparency results in a demotivated workforce, especially where the reward system is unfair.

According to Conroy and Gupta (2016), equality-based reward systems are effective in some sectors, work environments, and cultural backgrounds but require recognition with the team for their increased productivity. Conroy and Gupta (2016)

further state that there is a lack of consistency in research outcomes, which has made it difficult to design team-based rewards based on the characteristics that emerge in the organizational setting. Fundamentally, the design of the team-based rewards should ensure that there are no negative impacts on motivation, which might result in increased challenges for the organization in achieving set objectives.

According to Fawcett et al., (2016), the expected levels of organizational performance require effective collaboration within the organization. Additionally, the achievements emerging from collaborations in the organization require highly motivated individuals, which can be accomplished by developing healthy relationships and developing the necessary skills and knowledge in the organization (Abubakar et al., 2019).

Further considerations include increased accountability, effective communication, and flow of information, interactions between teams to develop productive relationships, and the necessary skills such as social skills and teamwork. From this perspective, the reward system can strategically foster positive interdependence and increased accountability among workers in teams. These insights imply that identifying the correct reward among groups in the organization should be coupled with an effective implementation design. This is reflected in the increased adoption of flattened hierarchies within organizations as they adopt the team-based models focusing on rewarding and increasing organizational performance.

Aligning the organizational aims with the rewards offered to the teams should be shaped by the culture and value associated with the tips in the organization. The

efficiency of team-based rewards in organizations is centered on the strategies' ability to influence people's increased engagement in teamwork (Pimlott, 2020).

The teams should be comprised of various personalities and capabilities to ensure that the experience and knowledge required to achieve success are available. The skills of one individual complement the others, which offers an opportunity for the company to benefit from the close work-related relationships that exist among the teams. Subsequently, the management can establish if offering group rewards to the team can increase workforce productivity using the equality-based approach.

Organizations are adopting different approaches to determine the efficiency of the reward systems, but there are substantial shortcomings in the context of team rewards. The reluctance in evaluating team-based reward systems can be ascribed to the different notions that exist among workers. Changes in the reward system can improve performance when employees are engaged in designing and implementing the plan.

According to Apoorva (2019), employees' interests are incorporated in the decision-making, which reduces the resistance that might emerge among the workforces. An operational reward system should motivate the worker and the team at any time or situation that the company faces. Furthermore, the rewards offered can be significant to the individual or the group at specific periods or conditions in the organization. Also, different cultures call for diversity in the designs, which can only be accomplished by understanding the needs of specific workers and the teams they are members of.

Therefore, the diversity of the cultures experienced in organizations is important because it influences the criteria for measuring how the rewards are offered. What might

work in one organization or team might not be effective for another. This increases the need for each organization to strategically design the reward systems based on the characteristics emerging from the workforce rather than duplicating what has been successful in other organizations. These insights also highlight the lack of a standard approach in team-based rewards that can guarantee success within organizations.

### **Individual-Based Rewards**

Many organizations have adopted performance-based strategies to reward workers and encourage a focus on organizational objectives. Reviews highlight that there is an increased correlation between compensation and performance, with most organizations utilizing individualist strategies to design payments and rewards.

According to Ceschi et al., (2017), financial rewards are essential in any organizational setting, although there is growing debate over the effectiveness of such tips. There is a consensus among researchers and practitioners that performance and motivation are influenced by numerous factors within and outside the organizations, which increases the need for a personalized approach in the reward system. In this context, Performance-related pay (PRP) or other strategies related to the customized process of compensation and rewards has emerged as an essential aspect of driving success. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of PRP is influenced by an array of factors linked to employee preferences and the opportunities that exist within the organization to foster increased productivity of the individual workers.

Ayege (2019) posits that performance appraisals are deemed effective if implemented using the performance evaluation criteria. In this context, there is an

increased focus on the factors that affect the motivation among workers in situations where unfairness and inequality in the reward system are identified. The failure of organizations to link merits to the performance rating system compromises the effectiveness of reward systems to foster increased employee performance. Notably, where the individuals in high positions such as managers and supervisors are rewarded highly due to outcomes where they have little input compared to the subordinates compromises the motivation among workers to increase productivity (Huselid, 1995).

It is imperative that the rewards offered to individuals be aligned and justifiable according to their contributions and achievements. These opinions are harmonized with the recommendations to ensure high levels of transparency in merit-based compensation and reward systems. A fair and transparent individual-based reward system can have a long-term impact on enhancing motivation and performance within organizations.

A challenge associated with the individual-based reward strategies is that the motivation to increase performance can be linked to the budget constraints that drive individuals to contribute to organizational achievements. This is related to resistance to change, where individuals reject the new reward approaches in favor of what they understand and trust. Nevertheless, the distortion that impacts the reward systems is inevitable in most companies.

According to Al Dari et al. (2019), communication is an essential aspect of developing appropriate reward systems. For instance, incremental pay raises based on the performance achieved by the organization can lead to increased motivation to perform in a situation where the process is fair and transparent. Contrarily, the introduction of

rewards for a particular group of workers without the consideration of the input made by others can result in demotivation and compromised employee work performance. Based on these insights, the HR departments in many organizations often review the reward guidelines to ensure that they align with employee interests. This involves changing and diversifying the organizational culture to ensure that the workers recognize the significance of the rewards across the organization (Andreeva et al., 2017).

Fundamentally, a review of the reward policies helps align the reward systems used based on the situation experienced in the organization. For instance, the attainment of organizational objectives should result in high rewards in cases where the employee's contribution is associated with the utilization of limited corporate resources or in cases where they work under substantial challenges in the work environment.

Organizations in the modern day have invested substantially in training and employee development programs to improve performance. Contrary, organizations still utilize poor reward systems that lack a substantial impact on employee productivity. This highlights the indifference in the reward systems, which compromise their effectiveness in enhancing the employee work performance despite a growing body of research showing their importance in organizational success.

The lack of focus on individual-based reward systems can be attributed to the high-cost implications and the need to engage each in the evaluation programs, which can be challenging, especially for large organizations. In this light, many organizations are more oriented to the team-based reward approach.



Al Dari et al. (2019) state that offering the right reward strategies is central to increasing value in the company through a focus on employee satisfaction and increasing employee retention. The focus on intrinsic rewards is important in large organizations because they help meet the needs of the diverse population of workers.

Riasat et al. (2016) posit that there is a need to integrate both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to meet the needs and expectations of all workers. Fundamentally, a combination of the two reward systems is critical in a large workforce in organizations that intend to maximize the value presented by the workers. Organizations that tend to spread rewards more evenly among the workers without consideration of individual employee contributions tend to lose high-performing individuals. Consequently, there is petite or average performance among employees, compromising the achievement of organizational objectives.

Financial remuneration should be premised on the value a particular employee adds to the organization. Job descriptions, employment contracts, and employee evaluations highlight this in developing payment and reward systems. Nevertheless, the significance of the rewards offered to the employees is a matter affected by both organizational and personal factors. For instance, pay-related bonuses lack a substantial impact on increased organizational performance. This is attributed to the psychological meaning associated with such rewards.

Asaari et al. (2019) posit that recognition and promotions are effective reward systems for a diverse, multigenerational workforce. Despite this, such tips lack to effectively influence increased performance among workers in the long run since they are

considered normality. Resultantly, there is a need for HR departments to strategically review reward guidelines to guarantee that they are aligned to the organizational objectives.

According to Riasat et al. (2016), there is a need for a non-hierarchical approach in the reward system that can empower the people and identify their needs for organizational success. This is also linked to the increased adoption of team-based reward approaches associated with even distributing responsibilities, improved communication, and trust. Consequently, this raises the challenge of whether workers should be rewarded collectively or individually, as well as the significance of individual-based rewards in an organizational setting that is team-based.

In individual-based reward systems, employee motivation plays an imperative role in enhancing employee motivation and contributing to improved performance. Notably, there is an agreement among scholars that intrinsic rewards substantially boost employee motivation. High work outcomes exemplify this in areas where individuals are offered an opportunity; they to enjoy their work and maximize their talents and skills. The phenomenon that intrinsic rewards are more effective than extrinsic rewards such as pay and bonuses in individual-based reward systems can be attributed to two factors: meaningfulness and choice. The meaningfulness of intrinsic rewards is linked to employee satisfaction and the ability to retain talented employees. Achievement of these factors is imperative, especially in situations where the organization experiences uncertainty or undergoing change. Iqbal et al. (2017) posit job satisfaction and employee retention are accomplished with increased effectiveness in developing the reward system.

Subsequently, intrinsic rewards are central to job satisfaction and how each contributes to organizational success.

There is growing evidence that links both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to varying impacts on employee performance. Despite this, inherent rewards are vital factors that foster increased employee contribution to the company. This is due to the sense of worth and empowerment achieved by employees offered such rewards. Nevertheless, there is a need for rewards to be presented in a systematic and fair approach.

According to Azeez (2017), HR departments face numerous challenges in accommodating all people in their reward system to keep them motivated. While intrinsic rewards become popular in multinationals, employees from companies based in the West show a high preference for Per-for-performance strategies, which implies that they are motivated by monetary rewards. Despite this, there is an increased need for addressing an individual's specific needs to the reward systems to be effective and improve performance. This includes the incorporation of intrinsic rewards to ensure that all employee expectations are addressed. By establishing effective communication strategies, the workers' needs can be identified, and the reward system developed and implemented effectively.

### **Employee Work Performance**

Employee work performance refers to the ability of the employees to attain the goals that are set by the organization using the limited resources available. According to

Singh (2019), reward systems should be designed to keep the workforce motivated and ensure increased engagement in meeting organizational objectives.

The interaction between employee performance and reward system presents a multi-dimensional construct that varies due to influences linked to individual employees and their organizations. The performance of an individual employee or a team in the organization is considered a record of the outcomes in a particular task or the accomplishments made. The process employed in measuring the performance and evaluating the contribution is utilized to determine the rewards offered to the team or individuals.

Tirta and Erika (2020) posit that the reward system's sustainability relies on the behaviors that emerge within the workforce in developing organizational productivity. Drawing from these insights, managing the work performance for individuals and teams with organizations is premised on the inputs that include the behaviors that emerge among the workers and outputs, which are the outcomes of the given task being undertaken.

Work performance management entails focusing on the competency levels and achievements of the objectives set and the evaluations conducted. Focusing on performance management facilitates sustainability on organizational competitiveness, while the reward systems' efficiency improves organizations' capacity to attract and retain talented, skilled, and motivated workers. This helps organizations to remain profitable and sustainable in a competitive labor market.

Singh (2019) posits that rewarding workers in large organizations offer an opportunity to understand if the workforce can increase organizational performance based on their contributions. The conclusions made in the investigation will be imperative in identifying knowledge gaps that require handling and enhancing HRM activities across diverse populations. The gift of the research will also strengthen the role of managers and leaders in hiring, recruitment, and managing labor in organizations.

Every organization achieves its objectives and mission with the help of individuals, machines, materials, and capital. Unlike the other non-living resources, the workforce is alive and is the most imperative asset for any group. Workers in organizations use their skills and knowledge to turn the other resources into outcomes that underwrite their success.

According to Dalkrani and Dimitriadis (2018), the lack of appropriate and enough human resources is detrimental to organizational performance. This has made the role of employees a top priority and the most significant aspect of productivity and quality. This is highlighted by the costs incurred by organizations in acquiring and maintaining qualified workers and implementing strategies designed to promote their contribution to organizational performance. With increased competition among organizations in all industries, the role of staff in performance, productivity, sustainability, and profitability has become an essential aspect because their skills and knowledge that contribute to competitiveness cannot be replicated. Furthermore, many multinationals have access to the same non-living resources, making the workforce an essential source of competitiveness.

According to Rakhra (2018), improved performance in an organization requires high levels of employee retention, which is fostered by effectiveness in HRM. The diversity among workers and the budgetary constraints experienced by organizations increases the difficulties in managing human resources.

The challenges in managing employees and fostering strategies that can increase their performance can be attributed to human behavior, which is highly unpredictable. Human behaviors differ from one individual to another and are subject to the factors of time and environment.

Kurdi et al. (2020) posit that although people have many similarities, substantial differences such as background, education, training, and experience impact the achievements and contributions individuals make in the organization. The management of individuals to foster success in the organization is premised on using a strategic process to ensure that they use their inherent abilities, acquired knowledge, and skills.

According to Harsch and Festing (2020), there is the need for effective deployment of talents in organizations to ensure the skills necessary to keep teams motivated in meeting set objectives. This entails focusing on interrelated, interdependent, and interacting factors of human behavior. These factors are physiological, psychological, and ethical, which increases the complexity faced by managers. Multinational workers are substantially diverse in gender, age, socio-religious aspects, literacy standards, and cultural backgrounds. Canedo et al. (2017) posit that although people different, behavioral patterns can be shaped to increase their contribution to the organization. These

factors determine the contributions made by each how the organization fosters success by influencing human behavior.

Employee work performance is linked to the quality of products, quantity of products, timeliness of products, engagement in the workplace, and efficiency in executing tasks. Employee performance can be perceived as the successful execution of tasks by employees or teams based on the specifications offered by the organization or supervisors based on pre-defined standards by applying the available resources efficiently and effectively to achieve the best results.

According to Warr and Nielsen (2017), performance is influenced by an individual's behavior in meeting expected organizational outcomes. Employee work performance is linked to the behavioral aspects that lead employees to contribute to achieving organizational success. The key factors that impact employee work performance are declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, and motivation. HRM roles have been found to have a substantial impact on worker performance.

According to Kurdi et al. (2020), this entails offering desirable and competitive compensation, developing training and development programs, employee performance appraisals, recruitment strategies, and maintaining high morale among workers. The execution of these HR strategies and their success in promoting employee work performance is linked to the perceptions and attitudes associated with rewards among the employees. In this light, there are various factors related to dividends that affect employee work performance.

### ***Leadership***

Leadership highlights the processes employed within organizations and teams to influence individuals or groups in focusing and achieving shared objectives. Researchers have identified various leadership styles developed through a combination of attitudes and behaviors that emerge among individuals in leadership positions. Nguyen et al. (2020) posit that leadership styles employed within organizations impact the patterns, perceptions, and attitudes that appear among followers and how they remain motivated to meet the set objective. Resultantly, the styles of leadership influence the factors that encourage or inhibit employee performance.

### ***Coaching***

Coaching impacts the capacity of employees to contribute to the organization based on the skills and knowledge that they acquire in the process. Fundamentally, coaching is not a one-way communication approach for improving the employees' contribution but involves interactions that foster an understanding of the inherent factors that promote performance. According to Weller et al. (2020), coaching offers an opportunity for organizations to transfer the necessary skills and knowledge from experts to novices. Coaches can identify where there is a requirement for improvement and influence behaviors that support organizational objectives. This is achieved by addressing the beliefs and behaviors that might compromise employee performance. It is also essential in promoting teamwork by enabling other individuals who team members to improve their performance.



### ***Empowerment***

Empowerment entails offering individuals an opportunity to engage in attaining success (Miao & Cao, 2019). This is exemplified by the one individual success achieved by employees play in the organization. Secondly, it is evident in organizational success achieved through the collective contribution of all people in the organization. Thirdly, empowerment entails people meeting both social and personal development and growth needs within the organization while maintaining a mutually beneficial and satisfying experience at the workplace. Drawing from these aspects, empowerment has a positive correlation with employee performance and satisfaction.

### ***Participation***

Employee performance is impacted by the participation of different stakeholders in the decision-making procedure. Where employees are more involved, they have opportunities to highlight the challenges faced in enhancing their productivity. Subsequently, management can develop strategic initiatives to address such issues. Participation is linked to empowerment in the context that empowers individuals to have a high intention to achieve the set objectives (Miao & Cao, 2019). The logic behind the increased performance is premised on the idea that employees are more motivated when they are considered partners in contributing to organizational success rather than the management treating them as subordinates. This prevents counterproductive behaviors that impact their performance, leading to the achievement of corporate objectives and mission.

### ***Organizational Culture***

Organizational culture shows to the behaviors and values embraced by people within an organization as tools that result in achieving set goals. The mindset exists among people, which can differentiate individuals from one organization to another outside the organization. Ibrahim et al. (2017) posit that organizational culture is shaped by the values, beliefs, and behaviors that emerge among the people in the organization. A strong corporate culture is essential in enhancing and maintaining employee work performance to achieve the overall performance objectives of the organization.

According to Fareed et al. (2016), norms and values shaped by the organizational culture could directly or indirectly affect how an employee is engaged. Although many factors, such as norms, might be invisible, they considerably affect employee work performance and other factors that contribute to organizational productivity. A strong corporate culture is central in developing and implementing strategic measures for improving employee performance. This includes initiatives such as implementing motivational programs designed to influence employee behaviors towards accomplishing organizational objectives. Accounts from scholars and practitioners highlight that the performance of employees is controlled to a certain degree by the cultural values shared in the organization. Fareed et al. (2016) posit that the organizational culture influences shared ideals and values, which offers an opportunity to predict how individuals might react to rewards. Subsequently, organizations' strategies focus on eliminating the values that are desirable for increased performance while eliminating those that impact improved performance.

### ***Working Environment***

Their creativity influences productivity among workers in using limited resources to achieve organizational objectives. This highlights the need for an effective working environment to foster creativity, safety, cooperation, and access to resources, skills, and knowledge. Kurdi et al. (2020) posit that job satisfaction and employee retention influence the work environment. Additionally, the creativity linked to having an excellent competitive environment has been recognized as a central factor in increasing and maintaining competitiveness through increased innovation. There are physical and behavioral work environments (Shirey, 2017). The physical environment shows the aspects that relate to the physically connected setting to the workers through tools, machines, types of equipment, furniture, and space. The behavioral environment shows the components associated with how the people within the physical setting connect and the subsequent impact the relationships have on personal behaviors. The physical environment influences the comfort of the individual at the workplace, while the behavioral environment determines the interaction and distractions that affect the performance of an individual.

### ***Motivation***

Motivation is a significant determinant of job performance in an organization. A poorly motivated workforce is characterized by factors linked to reduced performance, such as high employee turnover, increased costs, reduced morale, and time wastage. Kuswati (2019) posit that leaders must understand the issues affecting or motivating individuals to implement strategic measures to improve work performance. Motivational

strategies should be proactive when dealing with workers who are high performers to ensure that their performance does not decrease. Additionally, motivation is a prerequisite for increasing the contributions of low performers in the organization. Notably, motivating the low performers is essential since they will stay in the company. After all, they are undesirable in the labor market and might continue to compromise organizational productivity. Kuswati (2019) posit that a motivated workforce increases productivity and improves performance even in challenging work environments. When workers are motivated, they can channel their efforts towards achieving organizational objectives, including engaging in activities that span beyond their formal responsibilities. A motivated workforce is likely to have a higher capacity to understand, accept, and remain committed to organizational objectives (Ogunleye & Osekita, 2016).

### ***Training***

Training offers an opportunity to advance the experience and knowledge that exist among workers in the organization. Hidayat and Budiartma (2018) posit that the primary approach to developing employee performance is education and training, which should be embedded in the organizational culture.

Subsequently, training is a strategic initiative that boosts the intents of an individual to perform. Training can be perceived as a planned, systematic, and result-oriented approach to developing skills, knowledge, and competency inherent in ensuring effective work performance. Effective training programs provide that employee competencies are consistent with the performance needs of the organization. According to Hidayat and Budiartma (2018), a positive correlation between practical training and work performance

in organizations. This can be attributed to the positive behaviors that emerge among workers when engaged in effective training initiatives. Drawing from these insights, training is conducted to increase employee work performance, meet organizational objectives, and motivate workers using the progress of skills and knowledge for them to perform effectively in unpredictable and turbulent business situations.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

The literature review focused on various factors associated with the rewards systems used in organizations. The review drew from multiple studies to offer an in-depth account of how rewards are managed, the rewards systems, types of bonuses, and the factors that impact the systems. Subsequently, the literature addressed the different approaches used in the rewards systems. The study also addressed the aspects of employee work performance. The literature review focused on drawing insights from real-life situations. This was achieved through the gathering of primary data from respondents working in various working settings and from different professional experiences near a military installation in southern United State.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

The general objective of this study was to investigate how employee reward systems impact employee work performance and organizational productivity. To achieve this, research required reviewing the experiences of employees who worked in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States through gathering data and analysis. This included describing the interpretivism research philosophy and inductive research design. The researcher highlighted that purposeful convenience sampling methodology was used to identify the sampling technique, data collection, recruitment of participants, and data analysis. Sampling was achieved via convenient selection to minimize the challenges of inconsistency encountered in research data collection challenges. Data were gathered via interviews, which was appropriate for a sample size of twenty participants. The researcher employed a qualitative research method. Subsequently, thematic data analysis on employee rewards systems data was conducted to highlight critical experiences among employees who work in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States and participated in the research. This was followed by addressing trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

### **Research Question**

The purpose of this research was to address the following questions:

*RQ:* What are employees' lived experiences with rewards systems involving their work performance in undesirable locations?

*SQ1*: How do intrinsic benefits offered via rewards systems contribute to organizational performance in undesirable locations?

*SQ2*: How do extrinsic benefits offered via rewards systems contribute to organizational performance in undesirable locations?

### **Research Paradigm**

The researcher intended to investigate the experiences of veterans and non-veterans who worked in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States involving employee rewards systems and work performance. Investigating the lived experiences of the participants required a focus on reward systems and personal experiences in the working environment of the participants. The researcher developed the research methodology based on the understanding of the research paradigm's purpose.

According to Saunders et al. (2016), interpretivism is a research worldview that requires scholars to understand differences among individuals regarding their roles as social actors. Interpretivist researchers create new knowledge by analyzing the rewards systems and work performance through research participants' perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences. The phenomenological research design focused on behaviors influenced by reward systems in a remote location near a military installation in the southern United States. Subjective interpretations of phenomena under study are the expert knowledge of the participants and the rewards systems in relation to working in undesirable locations thus developing new or improving existing knowledge.

### **Research Design**

According to Saunders et al. (2016), there are two approaches to conducting research: inductive and deductive reasoning. Inductive reasoning is a systematically establishing a general proposition based on observations or certain facts. In contrast, deductive reasoning is a logical process of deriving conclusions from something that is known to be true in qualitative data analysis. The focus of this investigation was perceived opinions among veterans and non-veterans who work near a military installation in the southern United States regarding reward systems, which entails focusing on both negative and positive aspects of employees' experiences involving rewards systems and work performance in undesirable locations. To effectively address the research questions and objectives, an inductive approach was adopted.

### **Role of the Researcher**

I developed research procedures and engaged research participants who offered relevant data that was used to develop new knowledge. I created data collection materials such as in-depth interview questions and focus group discussion used in this research and analyzed them to develop information relating to the research questions. The qualitative research approach enables researchers to access thoughts and feelings of study participants. Through this approach, the researcher developed insights that informed how behaviors occurred in the research setting, including perceptions held by veterans and non-veterans who worked in rural areas and their employers. It was imperative for the researcher to avoid personal biases that might compromise the quality of the investigation. This implied that the researcher was reflective in a way that included



articulating participants' positions, worldviews, opinions, and perspectives. The researcher was able to understand the thoughts and feelings of research participants, which increased the legitimacy of the study. To achieve this, the researcher also, had to ensure that the research participants were engaged in discussions highlighting the participants' experiences working in rural areas that might be personal to them. Subsequently, the researcher needed to uphold ethical considerations such as the right to consent to participate in and a study and the ability to withdraw from the study at will, and other ethical guidelines provided by the Institution Review Board (IRB) that were appropriate when meeting research objectives.

In this research, it was the researcher's role to gather data by administering interviews with the selected research participants. This focused process led to the generation of a large volume of data, which required the researcher to record and make notes of the interviews. The researcher transcribed the data and identified the important points emerging from the study to facilitate scrutiny of the data. The field notes supplemented the audio-recording in a way that was easier for the researcher to develop an informative account from the large and sensitive information gathered from personal experiences.

It was also the role of the researcher to conduct data examination and management. This was important to put the research in the context of the research population and see the world from their point of view. The researcher had the mandate to interpret the data based on the theoretical standpoint taken in the research. The researcher transcribed and checked the information to ensure that it was relevantly premised on the

research objectives. This included reading between the lines to get a feeling of the participants' experience concerning the phenomenon under investigation.

With clear insights of the information gathered, the researcher engaged in coding, compiling the data from audio recording and the shorthand notes. This facilitated the study to establish themes that presented the outcomes of qualitative research in an in-depth and meaningful way. Another role of the investigator was to conduct data synthesis, which focused on guaranteeing that the outcome made reflected the meaning intended by the participants according to their lived life experiences. Finally, the researcher engaged in planning and writing the report, which was the final presentation of the entire research process and the knowledge developed in the research.

## **Methodology**

### **Participant Selection Logic**

Researchers who employ the interpretive approach can utilize various methodologies. For this study, a qualitative phenomenological study was applied. Through this approach, the research facilitated the exploration of a particular phenomenon in the contexts where it happens by drawing from various sources of data. The qualitative phenomenological study ensured that the research problem was investigated from one lens, but through a focus on multiple facets to draw relevant insights about the research. According to Saunders et al. (2016), a phenomenological study offers an opportunity to engage in real-life investigations based on the feelings and behaviors that emerge among research participants. This was consistent with the interpretivist research approach, which highlights that, multiple realities exist when

investigating a certain phenomenon. Resultantly, these ensure that the issue of interest is substantially explored, and the significance of the phenomenon is revealed. Saunders et al. (2016) show that the application of a phenomenological study entails the engagement of participants from diverse backgrounds, which increases the diversity of the data collected. This was aligned with the interpretive research approach that offers methods for researchers to explore real-life human experiences. Resultantly, the strategies adopted in this research were effective in studying the reward systems through an inductive approach. Gathering insights that represented different forms of realities required engaging different individuals to ensure diversity in the information gathered as well as ensure the collection of a large volume of data. This required identification, selection, and engagement of appropriate research respondents.

Sampling was important to identify and select the individuals that were involved in the research. Researchers conduct sampling considering that some studies have a large potential group of respondents, but not everybody can effectively contribute the relevant data, or the research cannot engage the entire population. The sampling process was essential to ensure a strategic way of identifying and selecting the relevant participants that could add to the necessary information to achieve the objectives of the study. From this perspective, it was vital to define the target population to guarantee that the aspects of the participants selected were within the identified sample. This research focused on workers who worked near a military installation in the southern United States. From this perspective, the research population was the military and non-personnel who were currently engaged in the identified workplace. The research focused on individuals who

receive payment or rewards from the military, which implies that volunteers were not included. The sample was drawn from different professionals working in or had worked in the military. This increased the diversity of the experiences investigated, improving the research outcomes. Various sampling approaches could be utilized in this research. The sampling technique could be probability sampling or non-probability sampling. The probability sampling approach is that where all subjects in the population have a chance of being selected, while non-probability sampling is where the issues have a zero chance of being selected or the probability of being included in the selection is not accurately determined. This implied that in non-probability sampling, the subjects are selected in a non-random criterion. The interpretive approach advocates for the application of non-random sampling, which increases the ability of the researcher to specifically gather information from a particular group that can offer the relevant insights required to meet the research objectives.

The purposeful sampling approach is one of the popular sampling approaches used in qualitative studies. According to Etikan et al. (2016), purposeful sampling entails engaging individuals who can offer appropriate information to address the issue under investigation due to their knowledge and experience. Purposeful sampling entails the researcher handpicking responses from the research population to form a population sample. The sampling will involve gathering data from persons that work or worked within the identified organizations that present the phenomenon under investigation. This was significant to ensure that the information that can respond to the research questions and objectives was collected. Considering that the units are non-random, there is no

estimation of sampling errors or generalization of the information corrected in the research. There are various forms of purposeful sampling. For this phenomenology research, it was important to collect data that was relevant to meet the aims of the research. This was achieved through convenience sampling.

The convenience sampling approach is also known as opportunity sampling. It is a sampling technique where the researcher draws the research sample from part of the population that is close to hand, convenient, or readily available. In this context, the sampling entailed engaging the first available primary data for use without additional requirements. To ensure many participants all potential subjects were invited to engage in the research. Despite the potential of the study to gather information relevant to the study, convenience sampling is discouraged by researchers due to its inability to offer insights that cannot be generalized, the information might be biased, and a high sampling error. Nevertheless, this research had access to a convenient sample of existing contacts, which made it an appropriate approach to gathering data for this research. Furthermore, convenience sampling is a straightforward approach for engaging participants compared to other sampling methods. It also facilitates simplicity and ease in conducting research. The data collection process can be achieved in a short period of time advantageously. The convenience sample identified in this research involved twenty respondents from various professional lines in and outside the military. The diversity of the respondents ensured a large volume of data that highlighted the various lived experiences of the individuals in the organization.

## **Instrumentation**

Data collection is one of the most essential processes for conducting any research. Data collection entails gathering and measuring information about the variables or phenomena under investigation. The data collection is a systematic approach that allows one to draw insights based on the research questions and assess the outcomes. An accurate data collection approach is important in any kind of research to ensure that its integrity is maintained. In this light, it is significant to guarantee that the data collection instruments are effective and are designed in a manner that limits errors in the information gathered and analyzed for research. For this phenomenology, the data collection strategy was vital to guarantee a clear understanding of the personal experiences of everyone engaged in the study. This was to certify that the research questions were addressed accurately, the research had validity; there was minimal wastage of time and resources, and there was a comprehensive understanding of the information gathered. The data collection procedure was also important in ensuring that the ethical considerations were upheld in the research. The methods used in data collection were in-depth interviews and focus groups.

The in-depth interviews were implemented using an open-ended questionnaire. These unstructured questionnaires offered an opportunity to gather rich information from the participants and are not restricted by the questions' structure. In this light, it offered an opportunity for probing for more information that contributes to meeting research objectives. These interviews were flexible, which enabled them to accommodate a range of questions based on the capacity of the respondents to offer relevant information. For

this research, the in-depth interviews facilitated the collection of qualitative data that offered insights into the phenomenon under study. The in-depth data collection entailed direct or one-on-one engagement with the research respondents. Through in-depth interviewing, the respondents could understand the significance of the research and the relevance of offering accurate information. Through one-on-one interactions, the researcher could derive information based on the interview guidelines as well as non-verbal communication. This was achieved by establishing rapport with the participants, which made them comfortable when responding to the issues under research. It also ensured that the respondents offered more insightful responses even when dealing with sensitive topics. By conducting in-depth interviews there was an opportunity to ask follow-up questions that facilitated probing for more information based on the issues emerging in the research. Additionally, it facilitated understanding the attitudes, perceptions, and motivations that were associated with certain aspects of the study. This was achieved by monitoring the tone and word choices made by the respondent to develop a deeper meaning. The application of convenience sampling and in-depth interviews ensured that there was high-quality data gathered from the study with only individuals who could offer the relevant data being engaged in the research. This prevented the collection of irrelevant information and distractions that could have affected the quality of the findings. Nevertheless, the in-depth interviews are time-consuming considering that the data required to be transcribed, organized, analyzed, and reported appropriately. The researcher must also have an in-depth understanding of the

issues under research and have an incentive for the researchers to offer the required information.

According to Cyr (2016), the focus groups are purposeful discussions that can be used to complement and confirm information gathered through other approaches of collecting primary data. These were conducted among groups of workers in the identified organizations. The focus groups helped to eliminate biases that might emerge from the in-depth interviews because they are subject to the participants' personal opinions. The focus groups entailed gathering data from individuals who were deliberately selected to engage in the research due to their capability to discuss and contribute to the topics of interest. The focus groups were held in a conducive environment that was non-threatening and receptive for all participants engaged and the researcher. The focus group allowed individuals to interact and influence each other in the discussions, while the researcher was able to record appropriate information under the issues under research. The focus group approach offered an alternative way of collecting data from a group perspective compared to the interviews that might present little insights due to personal interests.

The design of focus groups is flexible and ensures the insights offered are from the organizational perspective. In this context, the participants engaged in the focus group varied but were interested in addressing similar issues. Despite this, the focus groups were not focused on establishing a consensus but some level of agreement to ensure appropriate insights were established in the study. To accomplish this, their researcher ensured that the contributors were comfortable to ensure that all participants interacted openly. The interview questions were also used as guidelines for a systematic approach to



data collection. Additionally, the researcher engaged as a moderator in the discussion to ensure that the issues discussed solely reflected the participants' experiences. Using the two methods facilitated the collection of credible and reliable data that guarantees value for the study.

### **Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection**

Through purposeful sampling, research participants from different organizations that included the military, retailing, and health were identified based on personal links between the researcher and the individuals. The potential participants were contacted and requested to participate in the investigation. The recruitment of these participants was carried out in two strategic ways.

The first approach to recruit the participants was through a meet and greet process that facilitated the distribution of flyers to potential participants. This was accomplished by visiting the research setting and distributing flyers to people on the streets. This was a more straightforward approach with limited events being carried out after new health regulations were put in place to combat the Coronavirus pandemic. With the knowledge that many people in the region had a military background or had family and friends in the military, there was a high possibility that the flyers would facilitate reaching out to the right respondents in the research. The leaflets contained the researcher's email address and phone number, which would establish communication for those willing to contribute to the study. The distributing the flyers included engaging the potential participants in a chat that highlighted the importance of the study and a request to share the information on the flyer with friends and family. This was important to ensure that the potential

respondents were purposefully selected due to their experience and knowledge that added valuable information to the study.

In the alternative for increasing the number of participants in the research, the researcher also used Survey Monkey to recruit respondents. Survey Monkey is an online tool used to conduct various types of survey projects. The platform is reliable and reputable and has been used in numerous studies to facilitate access to research participants based on the characteristics defined in the study. The automated and advanced features of Survey Monkey reduce the time required in search and recruiting individuals who purposefully fit the research.

The platform is also easy-to-use, and it allows tailoring surveys, including the use of consent forms, to ensure that all ethical aspects of the research are upheld. The platforms can reach a large population, which implies that large volumes of data can be easily collected and analyzed. Nevertheless, considering that there was a different recruitment approach used in this research, the data gathered from Survey Monkey was combined with that emerging from other respondents.

The research commenced with approval from the IRB (Institutional Review Board) as presented in Appendix A. The IRB reviewed and provided the ethical justification for this research. The IRB number assigned to this research is 04-23-21-0041194. This number will expire on 22 April 2022. Also, this number is referenced in this document and inserted on the consent forms. Additionally, the IRB will be referenced in future research funding(s) or publication submissions.

The research process involved developing rapport to ensure that the research was voluntary, and the participants were comfortable offering the relevant information to meet the research objectives. Building rapport provided an opportunity to inform the participants about the research and what was expected of them in responding to the issues under investigation. This was achieved through the Flyers for the in-depth interviews and focus groups presented in Appendix B and C, respectively. To encourage participation, the researcher promised a \$20 Amazon Gift Card to the respondents.

The ethical aspects considered in the research were also explained, focusing on the issues of privacy and confidentiality. The clarifications made to the participants include the purpose of the study to ensure that the participants had substantial insights about the importance of the study and why they should contribute truthfully and to the best of their knowledge. Also, information about the respondents' duration would be engaged in the research process to ensure that individuals were well prepared and comfortable in engaging in the study. This was coupled with communicating the procedures of the study, which enabled the participants to understand the role of the researcher in the process.

Fundamentally, building rapport showed the respondents that they had the right to decline or withdraw from the research at any point in the research process. In the same context, the researcher was able to discuss the foreseeable consequences of withdrawing or declining from the study, which was essential to establish the data required to meet the research objectives. The researcher also informed the respondents about the potential and prospective benefits of the research to keep them motivated in participating in the study.

This also offered an opportunity for the respondents to ask any questions about the research and their contribution. Upon coming to a consensus with the participants, the researcher provided consent forms that legitimized their participation in the study. The communication between the researcher and the respondent was achieved through phone calls and emails. The consent forms were sent to the respondents via email, which gave the respondents enough time to read and process the content. The consent forms were returned by the respondents at the privacy of the interviewing sessions. Appendix D and E presents the consent forms used for the in-depth interviews and focus groups, respectively.

The data from the interviews and the focus group meetings were set based on a consensus and the convenience of the respondents. The discussions from respondents recruited through flyers and focus group meetings were conducted via phone with the respondents, respectively. The focus group meetings were carried out telephonically via a toll-free number at a convenient date and time for all the participants. Participants recruited through the Survey Monkey platform were engaged through emails and phone calls to create rapport and in data collection.

The interview guide for the in-depth interview is presented in Appendix F and H, while the guide for the focus group is presented in Appendix G and I. The data in the discussions and focus groups were used to respond to the research questions presented. The data was collected from veterans, retirees, and people with no military affiliation working in the health and retail sectors among people living in and around a military installation in southern United States. The primary data collected focused on the personal

experiences of the respondents and groups. Subsequently, it was instrumental that the data gathered reflected the respondent's sentiments and remained within the scope of the study.

The investigator conducted the interviews and the focus groups. By ensuring that only the researcher engaged in the data collection, the research gathered information that was not biased. There was an increased focus on the objectives and scope of the study. The researcher was also able to collect important information about the attitudes and behaviors associated with the questions and discussions among the respondents.

The interviews were conducted once with the ten research participants, while the focus group meetings were performed twice with groups of five people. The discussions took between 15 and 25 minutes, while the focus group meetings took at least 40 minutes. The engagements were brief to guarantee that the contributors were not bored, and they remained active in addressing the issues under investigation. The engagement was also important to certify that the data gathered was manageable and appropriate to the study's objectives. This also offered an opportunity to prolong the interviews where there was a need for probing of more information or where there was a need for clarification of different aspects under research.

Data collection was achieved by administering unstructured questionnaires during the interviews and posing relevant questions during the meetings. The responses offered by the respondents were recorded using digital audio recorders, which were transcribed later during the analysis. The researcher also took shorthand notes, which were used as guidelines during the transcriptions, and utilized to highlight the critical aspects that

enable the identification of patterns and trends in the data gathered. The two approaches used in data collection complemented each other. While the audio recording captured all research aspects, the shorthand notes offered an opportunity to highlight the most essential points that could be included in the research. Using the notes, the researcher focused on transcribing particular sections of the audio recording, limiting the burden of transcribing long hours of information, which might not have been important or relevant to the research. The shorthand notes were also instrumental in developing themes that are in line with the respondents' sentiments.

The participants were offered interpretations of the data collected to confirm that the researcher had acquired the relevant information based on the information they had submitted. Probing for more information was conducted, but the respondents were informed that they could be consulted for clarifications. This was important to guide the participants who could clarify the information collected even after the research.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

The data analysis was accomplished through a qualitative approach. This included a critical review of the secondary data gathered through the literature review and primary data collected through in-depth interviews and focus groups. The data was triangulated to establish an inclusive report that will be thematically structured to meet the study objectives and address the research questions. The data were analyzed through a thematic approach, and triangulation with various data sources ensured that discrepancies in one form were addressed through insights emerging from the other methods. The secondary data was used to examine the impact reward systems have on employee performance.

This was complemented by investigating the attitudes and perceptions that exist among workers, which was achieved through the interviews and focus group meetings.

Additionally, the primary data was used to respond to the improvements necessary in standardizing the employee reward systems. The thematic analysis was conducted to develop a link to the research questions by making them the basis for developing the themes.

The thematic analysis facilitated a focus on qualitative data in an in-depth approach. The thematic analysis was employed in drawing insights about the interview transcripts, information from focus groups, and texts. This was achieved by closely examining the data and identifying the themes, topics, and patterns in the raw data. In this light, the analysis effectively understated the lived experiences of the research participants in the phenomenology study. In this context, the thematic analysis facilitated the organizing, describing, and reporting the themes emerging in the raw data. This analysis was also appropriate for this research by developing trustworthy and insightful findings founded on the actual sentiments expressed by the study participants.

The thematic analysis offers a highly flexible strategic approach that is led to a rich and detailed account from a complex data set. Furthermore, the thematic analysis does not require any sophisticated theoretical and technological knowledge, such as what is required in quantitative analysis. The thematic analysis also offers a strategic approach for examining different perspectives emerging from the other research participants. In this context, the researcher can establish the similarities, differences, and insights appropriate to the study. Despite this, there are various disadvantages associated with the

thematic analysis. This attributed to the lack of a substantial volume of literature about thematic analysis and the lack of a consensus on the most appropriate approach to developing themes.

Despite this, the thematic analysis in this research was achieved through three systematic phases that offered a strategic process of engaging with the data, triangulating the information, and integrating the opinions from different respondents. Nevertheless, there are no rules that have been established to follow in each phase. Subsequently, it was important for the researcher to engage in a rigorous understanding and defining the insights emerging from the data.

#### ***Familiarization with Data***

This phase entails reading and re-reading the data to develop familiarity with the information gathered. In this context, the researcher engaged with the transcribed information, reading it and establishing the link between the different ideas. This included establishing the connection between the information gathered in the focus group and the individual interviews.

#### ***Coding***

This was the next phase of the thematic analysis that involved the establishment and generation of codes. The codes were developed grounded on the research questions to ensure that the research outcome presented relevant insights into the issues under investigation. The coding was done manually, considering that the volume of data collected was manageable and could be addressed appropriately by the researcher without



using sophisticated software. The coding was accomplished using color labels that helped to identify the patterns in the data.

### ***Generating Initial Themes***

During this phase, the researcher focused on establishing the initial themes emerging from the codes based on the broad pattern emerging from the data. This set the basis of the potential themes that could be addressed in the research. This was achieved by collating the data gathered to the identified themes, which offered an opportunity to understand the link between the data and the study's aims—subsequently offering a chance to establish the pieces in the study.

### ***Reviewing Themes***

During this phase, potential themes were determined from the simplified dataset to ensure a comprehensive account that can respond to the research questions. By reviewing pieces, the information can be split, combined, or discarded. In this context, there was an opportunity to develop a shared meaning that highlights a single shared idea among the respondents in the research.

### ***Defining and Naming Themes***

This phase entailed conducting a detailed analysis of the selected themes, reviewing the scope and focus of each piece, and developing the story behind each piece. This entailed naming the themes established in the study and the subsequent new insights emerging in the study.

### ***Writing the Report***

This was the final phase of the analysis, which entails developing a narrative and contextualizing the insights evolving from the research with what has been found in different studies.

### **Issues of Trustworthiness**

The trustworthiness of qualitative research is a crucial aspect due to the lack of statistical evidence employed to determine the quality of the study. The quality criteria used in quantitative studies that include internal validity, generalizability, reliability, and objectivity are not effective in qualitative studies. Saunders et al. (2016) posit that the quality of research findings is reliant on the trustworthiness of the research process. This helps to develop trust. This study ensured that reliability was achieved by employing the following criteria.

### **Credibility**

The credibility of the research highlights the confidence that can be linked to the truth emerging from the research findings. Saunders et al. (2016) stated that the interpretations of the primary data contribute to credibility through the processes of gathering and analyzing data.

### ***Prolonged Engagements with Participants***

This was aimed at collecting as much data as possible from the respondents through long-lasting engagements. It entailed probing for more information on responses that were not clear, as well as seeking clarification on issues that emerged in the research process. According to Saunders et al. (2016), credibility can be attained by ensuring that

individuals engaged in the study are familiar with the research problem and the strategies used to gather data. This guaranteed that rich data was collected with the voluntary engagement of the respondents.

### ***Persistent Observation***

This was focused on determining the important characteristics such as non-verbal communication and the attitude of the respondents as they engaged with the questions administered. This was conducted about the issues under research. Through this approach, there was a keen focus on detail, which facilitated a clear understanding of the participants' perceptions and behaviors.

### ***Triangulation***

Triangulation discussed the application of different sources of data in other contexts. From this perspective, different data collection strategies that included interviews and focus groups were used and gathered information about the same phenomenon from multiple sites. Triangulation was also achieved by collecting data from a diverse population in professions and positions at the workplace.

### ***Member checking.***

This was accomplished by feeding back data, interpretations, and conclusions of individuals engaged in the study. Saunders et al. (2016) posit that member checking allows research participants to verify that the information included in the study is what they intended to communicate based on the questions posed by the researcher. It also strengthened the data. Considering that researchers and research participants view data

from various points of view, the member check was critical in preventing biases during the analysis

### **Transferability**

Transferability is how the qualitative research outcomes can be transferred to another context or setting where there are other participants. It is linked with the applicability of the research. In this research, transferability was achieved through a thick description of the participants in the study and the research process. The thick description facilitates assessing whether the results achieved in the study can be transferred to another setting. According to Saunders et al. (2016), the transferability aspect of the research is determined by individuals who read the work. A thick description is achieved through clear discussions of the research setting, sample, sample size, the logic behind the sampling, demographics, participant inclusion and exclusion criteria, interview procedure, changes influenced by literature review, the research process, and how the data was analyzed. Focus on these research aspects guarantees that the research experience is meaningful to the reader.

### **Dependability**

Dependability involves the stability of findings made over time. It is centered on the engagement of the respondents in the evaluation of the results, interpretation, and recommendations to ensure that the insights gathered are supported by the information offered by the research participants. Achieving dependability is premised on checking if the analysis is aligned to the accepted standards of the design employed in the study. Saunders et al. (2016) state that dependability is centered on the interpretations made for

the data collected and through an audit trail that illustrates the systematic approach towards developing the research findings. This included notes on the decisions made in the research process, reflective thoughts, meetings with different stakeholders, research materials used, and data management. The records of the research process were kept throughout the project.

### **Confirmability**

Confirmability is the degree to which other researchers can confirm the outcome of the inquiry. It ensures that the data gathered, and the interpretations made are not figments of the researcher's imagination. Instead, the insights emerging from the research are based on the ideologies drawn from the data. Through confirmability, the neutrality of qualitative research can be assessed. The strategy used to ensure there was confirmability ensuing use of the audit trail, which an individual accessed with expert knowledge who offered an audit report.

## **Ethical Procedures**

### **Ethical Considerations**

I focused on dealing with human subjects and corporate organizations. The diversity of the issues has to be respected for the research process together pertinent data. Ethical considerations are imperative when conducting such a study. Resultantly, the study upheld all the binding moral principles and values to achieve and maintain integrity throughout the research. According to Saunders et al. (2016), ethical consideration was important in ensuring data credibility and effectiveness in meeting research objectives. In this regard, the study upheld all the common ethical considerations required for a

qualitative inquiry. These include obtaining the consent of participation from the organizations where applicable and participants in the research before data collection. In this part, the respondents were informed about the purpose and nature of the investigation. The engagement in the study was voluntary, and individuals could opt-out of the study at a stage of the study. Additionally, the data collection was done based on the respondent's communication, face-to-face, via phone, or video conferencing. The entire research process considered the privacy and confidentiality of the contributors, and, to some extent, the organizations involved. Keeping the participants' information confidential was imperative to protect the participants from any consequences for the organization or legal proceedings. Confidentiality in this context shows keeping the information about the research participant private and only accessible by the researcher. The data gathered will be password protected and placed under lock and key. The data was purposefully collected for this research, and it was not shared with third parties. The ethical considerations were premised on the recommendations offered in the Belmont report.

### **Summary**

Chapter 3 includes insights regarding how the research was conducted and ethical considerations were upheld. The qualitative phenomenological research methodology was employed to foster primary data collection from veterans and non-veterans who worked near a military installation in the southern United States with regards to their experiences involving the rewards systems and work performance. The participants were purposefully

selected to engage in the study. I justified the qualitative approach used during data collection and analysis.

## Chapter 4: Results

### Introduction

The researcher aimed at investigating the impact of reward systems on work performance. This was achieved by focusing on the following research questions:

*RQ:* What are employees' lived experiences who engage with rewards systems and work performance in undesirable locations?

*SQ1:* How do extrinsic benefits offered via rewards systems contribute to organizational performance in undesirable locations?

*SQ2:* How do intrinsic benefits offered via rewards systems contribute to organizational performance in undesirable locations?

This chapter includes information about the research setting, including the location of this research and how it impacted issues under investigation. This was important to understand the impact of work environment on the nature of work and how employees engage with their responsibilities. I highlighted important participants' characteristics such as experiences, engagement, collaborative of important characteristics respondents, and how they engaged with the work environment, and how they completed their assigned tasks. In this study, the data was collected from the participants through interviews and discussions was analyzed. The results included a comprehensive account of themes emerging from research to address research questions and objectives based on raw data obtained from the in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and literature reviews.



### **Research Setting**

This study was conducted in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States where veterans and non-veterans worked. The research participants were also substantially diverse in terms of age, level of education, social status, race, ethnicity, industry, gender, religious and cultural backgrounds, and years of experience. The study also included participants from different nationality and work in different industries and job descriptions. The military installation near the study setting was comprised of active-duty military personnel and their families, DoD civilian employees and their dependents, and defense contractor employees and their families. The contractor employees augmented the military by performing the non-inherently governmental contracted services such as base, medical, ground and air operation

The setting had two Wal-Mart retail stores. People in the area include active-duty military personnel, veterans, and nonveterans. Employees sampled in the study are veterans and non-veterans working in different sectors around a military installation in the southern US who have had lived experience working in remote or rural locations. Despite the potential for growth considering many workers in the region and financial flow linked to it, many businesses and populations have moved out. The research setting is undesirable, which has made it hard for the military to operate effectively due to challenges in meeting specific needs and filling certain critical positions in the workforce and supply chain. The engagement of employees who work near a military installation in the southern United States increased, as measured by rewards systems, the effectiveness of this research in understanding the lived experiences of veteran and non-veteran

employees, factors that impact their performance, and the nature of rewards associated with the employee motivation, work performance, and organizational productivity.

In addition to the challenges that were encountered during the research, there were perceptions held by the research participants working in rural area near a military installation in the southern United States. The perceptions were that the leadership in the organizations near this military installation were poorly managing the employee rewards systems. The absence of strategic rewards systems negative impact employee motivation leading to lack-luster attitude towards work performance and organizational productivity. Additionally, most of the research participants were not natives of the region. Also, some of the participants had worked in other parts of the world, such as war zones that present substantial challenges compared to opportunities in this military installation. This posed the threat of a preconceived notion or bias towards the research setting by some of the participants. To address this concern, the researcher encouraged the participants to offer insights based on their experiences working in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States.

### **Demographics**

Business organizations operating in and around a military installation in the southern United States included diverse workforce who were employed by the multinational companies. The diverse workforce presented demographic challenges such as diverse participants population. The researcher addressed demographic differences by engaging respondents to ensure that findings reflected their general perspectives. The type of organization where the participants worked, current occupational positions, ethnic

background, gender, age, and experience in the workplace were most important in the context of a diverse workforce. Each of these factors was considered to have an impact on the lived experiences, and the perceptions individuals hold in meeting organizational objectives concerning the rewards offered.

**Table 1**

*Demographics of Research Participants*

Respondents	Organizations	Current Occupation/Position	Ethnic Background	Gender	Age	Experience (Years)
Respondent 1	Retail	Colonel	Caucasian	Male	40	13
Respondent 2	Retail	Recruit	Caucasian	Male	19	1
Respondent 3	Retail	Sergeant	African American	Female	23	3
Respondent 4	Retail	Mid-Level Manager	Mexican	Male	35	6
Respondent 5	Retail	Cashier	Asian American	Male	24	3
Respondent 6	Health	Doctor	Caucasian	Female	19	1
Respondent 7	Health	Doctor	African American	Female	47	24
Respondent 8	Health	Doctor	Mexican	Male	36	7
Respondent 9	Health	Doctor	Cuban	Male	44	17
Respondent 10	Health	Nurse	Caucasian	Male	34	12

**Table 2**

*Demographics of Research Participants in the Focus Group*

<u>Respondents</u>	<u>Organizations</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>Ethnic</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Experience</u>
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		Occupation/Position	Background			(Years)
Respondent 1	Retail	Colonel	Caucasian	Male	40	13
Respondent 2	Retail	Recruit	Caucasian	Male	19	1
Respondent 3	Retail	Sergeant	African American	Female	23	3
Respondent 4	Retail	Mid-Level Manager	Mexican	Male	35	6
Respondent 5	Retail	Cashier	Asian American	Male	24	3
Respondent 6	Retail	Stocking	Caucasian	Female	19	1
Respondent 7	Health	Doctor	African American	Female	47	24
Respondent 8	Health	Doctor	Mexican	Male	36	7
Respondent 9	Health	Nurse	Cuban	Male	44	17
Respondent 10	Health	Nurse	Caucasian	Male	34	12

### Data Collection

Table 3 includes a summary of the participants involved in the research.

**Table 3**

*Summary of Participants in In-Depth Interviews*

Respondents	Organization	Previous Job Description or Military Rank
Respondent 1	Retail	Colonel
Respondent 2	Retail	Recruit
Respondent 3	Retail	Sergeant
Respondent 4	Retail	Mid-Level Manager
Respondent 5	Retail	Sergeant
Respondent 6	Health	Doctor
Respondent 7	Health	Doctor
Respondent 8	Health	Doctor
Respondent 9	Health	Nurse
Respondent 10	Health	Nurse

**Table 4***Summary of Focus Group Meetings*

Respondents	Organization	Previous Job Description or Military Rank
Respondent 1	Retail	Colonel
Respondent 2	Retail	Recruit
Respondent 3	Retail	Sergeant
Respondent 4	Retail	Officer
Respondent 5	Retail	Sergeant
Respondent 6	Health	Health
Respondent 7	Health	Doctor
Respondent 8	Health	Nurse
Respondent 9	Health	Nurse
Respondent 10	Health	Nurse

I focused on specific respondents that were purposefully selected in the research settings. The purposeful sampling strategy effectively ensured that the demographics of the people involved achieved the diversity necessary to develop comprehensive insights about employee rewards and employee work motivation. The participants had a military background and were engaged in different military, retail, and health sectors. Ten respondents were involved in the interviews and were grouped into two groups that participated in the focus groups. Most of the individuals in the area were White Caucasians, but other people from other ethnic backgrounds that including African Americans, Mexicans, Asian Americans, and Cubans were engaged. All participants were above 18 years of age, with the youngest being 19 years and the oldest 44 years old with an average of 8.7 years of experience.

The interviews were conducted for 15 and 25 minutes, while the focus group meetings took at least 40 minutes. The researcher recorded the interviews and discussions via a recording device. The length of time was appropriate to gather a substantial volume of data aligned to the issues under investigation. The data collection in both interviews and focus groups was achieved through audio recording and shorthand notes as a guide in transcription. The interviews were carried out through phone calls where the respondents called a toll-free number. The respondents were recruited online and were not available for face-to-face interactions with the researcher.

The data demonstrated that veterans from the installation work in the professional lines they used to work in the military. This is reflected by workers in the health sector who have largely transferred to civilian careers as nurses and doctors. Many respondents were running businesses in the retail industry. These ventures were diverse from food stores, liquor stores, to fashion lines. While some were employed, most of the respondents in the retail industry were business owners. Nevertheless, these businesses lie in the small and medium sector (SME), with employees ranging from 2 to 25 workers. The participants also had varying experiences in the military and had varying reasons to leave the army and venture into the civilian business lines. In this light, the fact that many of the participants left the military in their early years of the military career informs about their interest in seeking better opportunities.

Respondents engaged in the retail sector attributed their success to the military experience that has contributed to advancing managerial and leadership skills in business. Exploiting opportunities in the retail sector has limited the challenges associated with

military responsibilities while offering a chance for them to maximize the business sector that is more conducive. Similarly, those in the health sector had an opportunity to work in the civilian sector without the challenges presented by the military setting. The fact that many individuals are moving from professions they use to perform in the military to similar ventures in the civilian setting highlights challenges in their previous working environments. The demographics implied that the change from military employment to civilian and private experiences was influenced by personal interests and other issues that might have discouraged them from continuing to work in the military. The individuals who had acquired high military ranks are among those who had ventured into businesses holding managerial positions and other inherent leadership roles.

Additionally, individuals in the health sector were primarily engaged in leadership roles, with many of them heading teams of nurses. Some doctors were involved in private practice-owned clinics, while others worked in the public health care system. The engagement of the veterans in the civilian world was experienced where they are effectively absorbed, and their success in the sector reflected on their ability to be productive and meet objectives. Drawing from the data collected, it was evident that challenges in the military working environment can be attributed or linked to the decision of the respondents to leave the military and seek employment as civilians in both private and public organizations.

### **Data Analysis**

The data collected from the respondents included audio recordings and shorthand notes. The audios were transcribed and linked with the shorthand notes to develop a

comprehensive account that highlights the patterns and trends in data through thematic analysis. The insights drawn from the research were analyzed based on the research goals and questions and the inherent aspects that emerge in the study. The research drew insights from veterans currently working in the private and public sectors who previously worked in a challenging military environment. The two different working environments that the respondents had lived experience offered an opportunity to compare the experiences of workers in other settings. In this light, the research drew insights to understand the experiences of working for the military and working as civilians in the private and public sectors.

These organizational settings were located near a military installation in the Southern United States, which made the participants engaged in the study substantially diverse, facilitating focus on different conceptualizations based on different experiences in their specific workplaces. The research involved participants from the health and retail sectors, which offered a trace in the professional development from the military setting to business and employment ventures as civilians. It was evident that these individuals were motivated by different rewards, and their specific organizations utilize diverse approaches in motivating the workforce to enhance employee productivity. The insights emerging from the interviews reflected the personal experiences and preferences in the employee reward systems. At the same time, the focus group highlighted the communal notions and addressed the biases that exist among respondents.

The data was gathered using semi-structured interview questions that ensured the respondents could offer important information about particular issues to the best of their



knowledge. In this light, the responses provided by some respondents were substantially detailed, including the information that was provided upon probing in the in-depth interviews for clarification about some issues. The discussions in the focus group provided offered an opportunity for the research participants to explore various issues without restrictions unless the questions administered by the researcher established those. Both approaches to the research were informative, and the insights collected highlighted substantial conceptualization about rewards among workers in the different organizational settings. Similarly, organizations utilize diverse approaches in keeping the workforce motivated.

The information gathered was thematically analyzed through a systematic approach that involved six steps as described below:

- ***Familiarization with the data.*** Familiarization with the data. This involved listening to the audios and comparing the short notes to familiarize and integrate the data from the interviews and focus groups.
- ***Coding.*** The codes were generated by highlighting the information gathered using different colors to establish themes in the patterns and trends.
- ***Generating initial themes.*** Based on pieces of colored themes, the researcher established specific themes related to the research issues while eliminating unnecessary information.
- ***They were reviewing themes.*** The themes established were examined to verify their appropriateness to the research outcomes.
- ***They were defining and naming themes.*** The themes developed were defined t

ensure that all information available was included appropriately.

- ***The Researcher was writing the report.*** A final report was developed to present the findings in a comprehensive and critical approach.

The differences between the work environments implied that there are variations in how the workers are rewarded. Fundamentally, insights from the research participants indicated awarding in the military, and civilian work contexts had varying objectives. Both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards were offered in organizational settings. Offering rewards is not exclusively focused on improving employee performance but also on other strategic responses to personal interests in the compensation system. Nevertheless, the findings in this research confirmed insights are emerging in the literature review that perceived rewards can increase workers' productivity by keeping them motivated, appreciated, and committed to the company. Contrary to this general petipn that rewards result in increased productivity and performance among workers and the organization, the respondents raised some unintended outcomes. The codes led to the identification of the following themes that were grouped into organizational and personal factors:

### **Organizational Factors**

- **Inefficiency in allocating effort.** In this context, the research participants showed that the rewards presented can influence how workers give their effort in performing particular tasks within the organization. This is prevalent when the reward systems fail to consider all output dimensions in evaluating and administering rewards. One of the respondents stated, "the workers might prefer to put more effort only on the measure or work aspects that are more likely to be rewarded, compromising their

effectiveness to meet the organizational objectives through their contributions as stipulated in job descriptions or the instructions offered by managers and supervisors.”

- **Influenced evaluations.** The research participants raised concerns that sometimes supervisors can have an impact on the evaluation strategies and processes. This does not necessarily imply that the process is unfair. The employees might take advantage of management and supervisors in the assessment process for their selfish gains through the reward systems. The respondents in the interviews and focus groups suggested that “in situations where the performance evaluations included a substantial focus on subjective work aspects, the employees might invest too much time in influencing how the evaluations were conducted.” Such efforts are misplaced, which compromises employee productivity.
- **Favoritism and preferences among managers and supervisors.** The impact of reward can be impacted by favoritism and choices that emerge among people regulating the system. The respondents showed that the lack of fairness in the process demotivates workers, especially when those who lack substantial contributions are rewarded instead of those who are committed to improving performance. One of the respondents highlighted “promotions as a major cause of conflict within organizations due to favoritism.” Additionally, there was a consensus that a lack of effectiveness in evaluating individual performance limited the realization and maximization of the employee’s talents. Consequently, employees might remain in positions where they

lack substantial contribution to the company due to a lack of effective leadership and demotivation linked to how rewards are offered.

### **Personal Factors**

- **Risk-taking behavior.** While the organizations engaged in the research have developed strategic reward systems that keep the employees motivated and can influence increased performance, the personal intentions of the workers are difficult to address. A statement in the focus group discussion started with “rewarding systems do not influence risk-taking behaviors in some organizational settings.” In this context, the respondents implied that the workers could either engage in risky undertakings or limit their risk-taking behaviors. Based on these arguments, the participants agreed that even with effective reward systems, the intent to perform and contribute to organizational growth is essentially an employee’s personal decision.
- **Periodical intent to perform.** The rewards offered in most organizations are based on evaluations and the achievements made by employees in achieving team and organizational objectives. The focus group presented “the expectations that exist among workers that they are likely to be awarded following increased performance implies that there is a substantial shift of efforts between the evaluation periods.” Resultantly, the employee efforts are largest when they are about to be assessed but reduced after that. Upon probing for more information among the individuals interviewed, this phenomenon is prevailing in situations where the workers are not committed to the company. The rewards offered have lost value to the employees.

Additionally, the respondents highlighted that this is more likely to be experienced in circumstances where monetary rewards were offered.

- **Negative impacts might emerge from individual performance rewards.**

Respondents working in the military and the health sector raised concerns that individual-based rewards were great incentives. Still, they can compromise the performance, especially where teamwork was inherent for success. Upon probing, one of the respondents in the retail sector stated, “individual interests could compromise team performance, and the situation can be aggravated where individual-based rewards are utilized to motivate people.”

- **Negative impacts of monetary incentives.** It was evident that the research participants supported monetary reward systems alluding those financial rewards were recognized and highly motivating, especially for workers in low positions. Nevertheless, the financial rewards were linked to various negative impacts. For instance, there was a consensus from the interviews and the focus groups that “monetary rewards often compromised the evaluation process and limiting the effects of non-monetary rewards among workers.”

Based on the insights offered, it is difficult for the reward systems developed to enhance employee work performance to eliminate the unintended outcomes. The research participants showed that designing and understanding the reward systems used in the organization needs to take the above-unintended consequences to account. Both the interviews and the focus groups exhibited that the purpose of using the reward systems in the organizations was to influence desirable behaviors among the employees to improve

organizational performance. In this context, there are various factors addressed through the reward systems that can amplify performance. These include making employees feel appreciated and part of the organization, increasing employee engagement and satisfaction, increasing employee retention, maximizing the contribution of talents, skills, and knowledge available in the organization, and achieving a reputation that can attract high-performing workers. By meeting these factors, organizations can strategically utilize the reward system to increase productivity and performance sustainably. There was an agreement among the research participants that the effectiveness of the various reward approaches used in organizations to influence individual employees to improve work performance is subject to both internal and external factors. The impact of these factors was evidence of the behaviors that emerged among the employees.

Different intuitions from the respondents highlighted that the motivation and commitment to remain in a challenging work environment, such as that represented by the military installation in this research, is apparent in the differences between military and civilian organizational objectives. There was an agreement among the respondents that the army working environment presents a strong hierarchical, command, and control organization. This corporate background offers the veterans an intuitive understanding of management and leadership of large and small operations as well as organizations.

A discrepancy that emerged in the data is the different perceptions people hold concerning public and private organizations. In this context, the respondents noted there are often differences in how other government agencies and corporate employers operate, even where the organizational structures might seem to be the same. The focus group

submitted that while the military is strict in all aspects, including how the person engages in communication across the different levels of management, other organizations or businesses tend to be less formal. For instance, workers in SMEs can skip the order of command, where an employee engages the top management without engaging the middle management. The participants reasoned that the different functions, expectations, and responses to organizational roles can impact the productivity of individuals in a particular work environment. The respondents highlighted this sentiment, stating that there was a drive to contribute to the aims and objectives in the military work environment even in situations where the work was challenging. In this context, the military operations are guided by a code of honor that requires all personnel to remain committed to the organization. Contrary, in the corporate sector, employees enjoy freedoms that are limited in the military setting.

### **Evidence of Trustworthiness**

#### **Credibility**

The credibility of the research was achieved by ensuring that there was prolonged engagement with the respondents in the in-depth interviews and focus group meetings. The information gathered from the interviews was triangulated with that from focus groups based on the accounts of the different professions drawn from other organizations. The data was collected through audio recording and shorthand notes, which increased the assurance that the key insights were established in the analysis. The research ensured credibility by employing tactics that ensured that the respondents were honest in their responses. This included the use of focus groups that facilitated data collection from a

group of individuals who monitored the reactions of the other members and comparing the information offered by each individual with sentiments expressed by other research participants. Establishing rapport at the beginning of the interaction with the respondents also encouraged the participants to be truthful in the information they offered in the interviews and focus groups. Iterative questioning was also used to uncover information that was deemed unclear or deliberate lies provided by the respondents. The credibility of the research was also achieved through frequent debriefing sessions with the research supervisors, which ensured that the research followed the relevant guidelines and limitations were addressed appropriately. The analysis also involved member checks, which involved engaging the respondents to confirm that the insights present by the researcher reflected what the respondents were implying in the interviews and focus group meetings.

### **Transferability**

The transferability of qualitative research is a significant aspect that researchers should be preoccupied with the insights emerging from the current research.

Transferability focuses on the notion that the results arising from the qualitative research need to be understood within the context of the organizations being investigated and the geographical area. For this research, transferability focused on the organizations near a military installation in southern United States, where the veterans and non-veterans worked or are currently working. By determining transferability, the researcher can assess the extent to which the results emerging from this study can be considered to be true for people engaged in similar settings and environments as those involved in the



research. From this perspective, transferability offers insights on how the insights emerging from this study reflect the experiences of other veterans that have worked in challenging environments and their subsequent engagement in civilian organizations and other government agencies. To guarantee transferability, this research offered information about the research setting and where the participants involved could be found. The number of participants was also offered for both the interviews and focus groups. The research only focused on veterans and non-veterans who could provide appropriate information in their lived experience working for the military and other work environments. The research methodology offered a detailed account that can be used to draw insights into different organizational settings across the country. Nevertheless, the results of the study were not generalizable, considering that although the military operations might be similar across the country, there are substantial differences that emerge in the corporate sector.

### **Dependability**

Quantitative research address reliability issues by including the techniques that can be used to repeat the research in the same context and with the same method, participants, to deliver similar results. For qualitative research, these aspects were addressed in dependability, which highlighted the processes employed in researching the results to enable future researchers to effectively and in a manner that can lead to finding the same results. This research can be perceived as a model that can be adopted in researching and understanding the experiences of military personnel and civilians working in hardship areas. This research offered in-depth coverage of the different

research aspects that can be used to assess the extent to which the appropriate research practices were executed in the research. The research offered detailed insights that can be used by other researchers to establish a clear understanding of the methods employed and their effectiveness in the study. This was reflected in the detailed research design and its implementation. This section offered the planning and execution of the research methodology to meet the research objectives strategically. The study also provided operational details about how the data was collected in both the interviews and focus group meetings. This included the data collection process and analysis that reflected the actual sentiments expressed by the research participants. Throughout the methodology and analysis, the researcher also offered a reflective account that illustrated the effectiveness of the processes employed in the research process and the challenges experienced. Additionally, the researcher documented the research process, and an audit trail had been confirmed based on the proposal developed for this study. The approval to conduct this research confirmed that there was transparency in how it was completed and analyzed.

### **Confirmability**

Conformability in qualitative research is perceived to be the equivalent of objectivity in quantitative analysis. In this context, the researcher made it a priority to ensure that the findings made were a product of the actual experiences and ideas of the research participants. In this light, the researcher avoided any biases that might highlight the researcher's preferences over those of the respondent. This research adopted interviews and focus groups for data collection. The triangulation of information

emerging from the two strategies reduced bias that is associated with the use of interviews exclusively. Being a veteran, the researcher was focused on not being influenced by the military past to create a bias centered on the effectiveness of the working environment, even where challenges existed. The research also established the beliefs underpinning the choice of research methodology in the research philosophy. There was also a critical approach in developing the method that recommended a qualitative approach is more favorable than the quantitative or mixed-method approaches. The detailed method also would allow the readers to determine the acceptability of the data collected in the research. Conformability was also reflected in the audit trail that facilitated the tracing of the research process step-by-step, including the decisions made and a description of the procedures adopted. The audit trail included the research proposal that supervisors approved to ensure that the research followed a credible approach.

### **Study Results**

This research intended to investigate the impact of employee reward systems on employee work performance. The study found that various factors impact how reward systems shape employee work performance in different work environments. Drawing from the analysis conducted in this research, the following are the study results based on the research questions employed in this research. The research question (RQ) and sub-questions (SQ1) and (SQ2) were presented in the below paragraphs.

The reward system was identified as an essential organizational strategy that impacts how employees engage in the organization. From a general perspective, the organizations considered in this study utilize reward systems to improve employee

performance and achieve organizational objectives. The study established that the rewards are embedded in the organizations' strategies, which makes them an imperative factor to consider in how workers are influenced to engage in various undertakings. From this perspective, the rewards have a psychological influence on individuals. It can have a negative or positive impact on workers. The negative impact of the reward system is associated with the unintended outcomes which compromise the employee performance, such as unfairness in how employees are evaluated, and the subsequent rewards offered. This results in reduced performance due to the demotivation experienced by the workers. The positive impact is associated with the benefits drawn from the tips. When the employees feel that they have an opportunity to benefit, they are motivated to link personal goals with organizational objectives.

The respondents stated that there is a positive attitude associated with the rewards offered. There is a value associated with the impact of the rewards and the perceptions that exist among the employees. Nevertheless, the attitude is subject to many factors related to the internal and external aspects of the organization. Based on the responses, rewards enhance the excitement associated with the workplace and their responsibilities to the organization. In this light, employees perceive rewards to be essential factors in establishing a lasting relationship with the organization. The diversity experienced in the workplace requires substantial motivation among the people, which can be achieved by offering the appropriate rewards. The choice of prizes is subject to the approach the organization uses in offering the tips. Resultantly, developing an interest in the rewards contributes to how workers are committed to the organizational objectives. For instance,

the interest in promotion and recognition in the military increases commitment by the personnel driven by passion. The positive attitude and perspective in organizations influence the productivity among workers by guaranteeing that their psychological and material needs are met.

The study demonstrated that there is a non-holistic approach on how rewards systems are employed in organizations. The rewards offered are substantially different across organizations. Still, the impact and needs among workers are similar, which implies that the reward systems can be standardized as strategic initiatives in fostering increased performance in organizations. Based on the insights emerging in the study, this could be achieved by ensuring a consensus among workers in the organization about the reward system. Effective communication of the research objectives is critical in ensuring that workers understand what is necessary to achieve certain rewards. The study found that the reward systems used in organizations are standardized in offering both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. From this perspective, achieving a balance between the two tips offers an opportunity to balance the needs of different people, especially where cultural differences might impact the meaning associated with the rewards.

Drawing from the respondents, they were influenced by different factors to engage in a particular work environment. These factors can be internal or external.

### **Internal Factors**

Internal factors were identified as the critical aspects of the organization that impacts behavior.

- **Leadership.** Most of the respondents pointed out that the leadership styles across

different levels of the organization were a key aspect to consider. The organizational cultures and objectives shape the leadership that emerges in organizations.

Respondents from the military stated that leadership in the organization was substantially structured, which resulted in a traditional approach. This was characterized by a unidirectional flow of information with little feedback between the seniors and their subordinates. The communication entails giving orders and specified work descriptions. Although other respondents in the focus groups perceived this approach to be undesirable. Their military personnel argued that the organizational culture and nature of the organization justified such an approach to leadership.

Resultantly, this has led to employee behaviors that are influenced by leadership interests rather than employee behaviors. Consequently, organizational performance is an aspect primarily enforced even when there are no rewards, or the tips are minimal. Although the military personnel highlighting that the leadership's rewards are inherent in their dedication to serving. Respondents in the health and retail sector highlighted that effective leadership fostered their increased engagement and commitment to the organization. The respondent indicated that transformative leadership was the most desirable approach to motivating employees through the reward system. The respondents attributed this to the characteristics presented by the approach as a democratic approach in making decisions, engagement of the leaders in the workplace where they get to know the workers, and a guarantee of fairness in how workers are treated. In the focus groups, the respondents from the health sector stated that leadership was more desirable if the individual could engage based on the

situations being faced by the organization. The health personnel showed that situational leadership was effective because it facilitated a proactive engagement of leadership qualities to drive performance. For instance, transformative leadership was effective in implementing change, but transactional leadership was more desirable when dealing with large emergencies.

- ***Organizational objectives.*** Another internal factor impacting the impact of the reward systems is the objectives the organizations offer for the employees to work on and show commitment to over a particular period. The organizational goals can be short-term or long-term. The respondents stated that the reward system should be aligned with the organizational goals. Fundamentally, the objectives should be communicated effectively and the resources necessary offered to the workers. The availability of the resources is essential to ensure that the motivation drawn from the rewards can be used to influence change in performance. The participants agreed that the commitment of resources to the reward systems should balance the costs and benefits. The rewards offered should not exceed the benefits the organization gets from increased employee performance. The respondents implied that the inclusion of workers in setting organizational objectives, especially in the retail and health sector, was important for the reward system to drive performance effectively. The participants highlighted that the nature of the corporate objectives should be realistic in the context that they can be simple so that they are understood, measurable for practical evaluation of outcomes, achievable for them to be accepted, and time to

ensure that they can be accomplished within a period that the employees expect the rewards.

- ***Reward systems.*** The responses implied that there are substantially different reward systems adopted in organizations. This confirmed that the reward systems were linked to organizational strategies. Additionally, both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards were evident in organizations to some extent. For the military personnel, the reward system was more intrinsically characterized by recognition and promotions, while in the health and retail sector, there was a combination of the rewards. The combination of rewards used in the health and retail industries were attributed to organizational features such as working overtime or responding to specific emergencies. For instance, all respondents involved in the research from the retail and health sector had once in a while worked overtime to cover for other employees, which justified rewards such as bonuses. The intrinsic rewards were also prevalent in the health sector, with the medical personnel implying that they looked up to promotions and recognition to remain motivated. Respondents from all organizations highlighted the significance of monetary rewards. Still, they argued that undertakings such as delegation of responsibilities, engagement in decision-making, and a conducive work environment was inherent in motivating them to achieve organizational objectives. These factors were linked to increased commitment to the organization, the intent to remain in the company, high job satisfaction levels, and alignment of personal career goals with the organizational objectives.
- ***Skills and knowledge within the organization.*** All participants confirmed that



teamwork was an essential factor in achieving organizational goals and improved employee work performance. In this light, the skills and knowledge available within the organization influenced how an individual made particular achievements. Knowledge transfer emerged as a critical aspect of improving performance, which was linked to the reward system. The military and health personnel revealed that the opportunity to work with experts in particular fields where they could learn new knowledge or improve on what they already know was central to the achievements they made. The respondents stated that the organization's capacity to offer motivating rewards contributes to increased employee retention, which ensures that the skills and knowledge remain within the organization. Additionally, the transfer of knowledge among workers is fostered by the opportunities created by the organization for workers to interact. As part of the reward system, the respondents stated that they could improve their skills and knowledge through training, workshops, coaching, and mentoring. The respondents argued that the sustainability of the military and the health sector was premised on the transfer of knowledge from one generation of workers to another.

### **External Factors**

External factors were presented as the aspects that impact the employee behavior that is not related to the organization.

- ***Interpersonal factors.*** The respondents highlighted those behaviors are premised on how individuals perceive various aspects that affect their livelihood outside and the work environment. In this context, an individual's attitudes and perceptions about

the organization or the reward system influence their commitment and interest in performance. All respondents showed that their emotions had influenced how they engage with workplace at least once or twice. Additionally, the emotional states were influenced by various factors that include the relationship with other people outside the organization, the reputation associated with the workplace, ethical work aspects, and other aspects such as stress, fatigue, and opportunities in other organizations. In this light, the respondents showed that interpersonal factors are influenced by a combination of emotional conditions and motives that can either lead to increased performance or compromise their capacity to perform. Particularly, fatigue and stress associated with other responsibilities such as parenting were identified as detrimental in how people remained committed to organizational objectives, even where the rewards were substantially higher.

- ***Economic factors.*** There was an agreement among all respondents that the motivation to work is premised on the compensation offered, which enables them to acquire other things they need in life. Nevertheless, some respondents highlighted that their interest in engaging in the organization was driven by a passion for the profession. This was largely prevalent among the military and health personnel. Notably, rewards based on recognition in the organization were among the important factors motivating these individuals due to their passion for the profession. The economic factors influence the contribution of the reward system from various perspectives. The respondents argued that a good economy where their compensation can meet their personal needs limited their intention to substantially contribute to the

organization even when appropriate rewards were offered. From another perspective, the participants argued that a bad economy, coupled with an appropriate reward, system, motivated to acquire the rewards offered. In this context, the participant stated that a bad economy could also impact the reward system, which in such a case might lack the monetary incentives that might motivate them due to constraints in meeting their objectives. Also, a good economy implies that organizations have the financial capacity to implement a highly rewarding system in short terms as well as increased opportunities such as career development, leadership opportunities, and sustainability that guarantee job security. This ideology was largely supported by respondents in the retail sector who showed that a good economy is good for business and motivates them to increase performance seeking better opportunities and compensation from the employer.

- ***Social factors.*** The respondents were from different cultural backgrounds and had varying beliefs and values concerning work, family, and other social aspects. Nevertheless, there was a consensus among the participants that there are converging aspects in HRM and participation in the workplace. According to Canedo et al. (2017), such HRM practices are instrumental in addressing the diversity that emerges within the workforce. Resultantly, cultural differences were not perceived as substantial impediments in individual contribution to the organization, but they emerged as an issue impacting how individuals engaged in teamwork. Drawing from the responses, the respondents have adapted to the American approach to work. This is reflected by the high preference for monetary rewards and a passion for work,

driven by individual interests such as high career achievements. Upon probing the respondents show that they were willing to compromise their personal cultural beliefs for them to the participant and contribute to the team achievements. For instance, the medical personnel were willing to work on a Sunday despite it being designated as a holy day among Christians. Another prevalent social factor influencing how people are willing to improve performance is linked to the work-family relationship. In this context, the respondent argued that challenges at home could impact how they engage in the workplace. This is linked to the stress and fatigue aspects, whereby work can compromise the family, and the situation at home can affect the performance. In this context, the respondent highlighted that performance is driven by the individual rather than the conditions that exist in the organization. For instance, one of the respondents stated that they were able to control the stress from home and engage effectively in the workplace. Contrary, another respondent noted that stress from home had compromised their capacity to go to work and engage effectively. Notably, the focus was linked to high turnover rates even in situations where the rewards for improved performance were considered substantially high.

The insights emerging from the analysis of the interview and focus group meeting data indicated that various factors are influencing how the reward systems adopted in other organizational settings impact employee work performance. The reward system structure, distribution of rewards, employee positions, opportunities for career advancement, the effectiveness of evaluations, occupational characteristics, organizational structure, and skills and knowledge within the organization are some of

the interacting factors that influence the impact of the reward systems on employee work performance in a workplace characterized by employee diversity. These aspects correspond to an array of studies that have attempted to understand the multinational organizational setting of employee work performance in the US. The diversity among respondents involved in this study is representative of many organizations operating across the world. Conclusively, the themes emerging from this research implied there are unintended outcomes in the implementation of reward systems that must be considered when designing such strategies. The results indicated that there is a convergence on how workers engage in the workplace and how organizations manage workers. This convergence has contributed to a standardized approach that the respondents show best practices in using the reward systems to increase employee work performance and influence workers to remain motivated and committed to the organization.

The research also presented insights that highlight the differences between the different working environments they had engaged in during their professional careers. The differences between the military and the civilian workplaces influence the factors that motivate the workforce to be engaged and committed at the workplace and the ability of the workers to be satisfied and inspired by the rewards offered. These differences are presented in the following themes:

### **Command and Control**

The command-and-control aspects are associated with the leadership strategies that are adopted in different organizational settings. The information offered by the respondents expressed that there are major differences in how the military and civilians

operate. The participants stated that the hierarchical and vertical structure of the military is predefined and intended to facilitate the effective flow of orders and information. Subsequently, every person knows their roles and works to meet specific objectives strategically. The success of the military is fostered by the strategic flow of orders and information necessary for effective operations. The organizational structure is coupled with the rules of conduct that are appreciated by all military personnel. Premised on the defined rules, the research participants showed that this gave them the capacity to work in defined roles within the organizational setting. This is linked to the ranks and status. In this context, the respondents stated that progressing in the workplace required individuals to make certain achievements over time and acquire the relevant knowledge and skills to perform in specific ranks and status. In this light, one can only advance in the assigned military career if the organizational setting offers a conducive environment for effective performance. The focus group claimed that a demotivating work environment that presented challenges in meeting the organizational objectives was detrimental to advancement in their careers. The military was also associated with consistency across all units in the organization. The respondents argued that there was no difference from one unit to another. Most of the participants implied that this consistency was effective in continuation at the workplace by limiting the need to learn new skills or acquire new knowledge to perform upon moving to a new unit effectively. Nevertheless, some respondents argued that this consistency made the workplace boring. According to the participants, the respondents lacked diversity since their roles were predefined, and the employee expectations often did not change. Subsequently, the respondents argued that

advancing in the military was competitive and required ultimate dedication to meet the requirements for advancement. With the perception that the workplace was boring, the lack of necessary resources to be productively coupled with high levels of competitiveness for the limited positions in the organizational structure demotivated them as well as their intention to remain in the workplace. The participants argued that the military would always have negligible retention rates as long other sectors such as private practice in medicine and employment in the private sector offered better working conditions and competitive reward packages. Although there is a clearly defined career progression in the military setting, not all individuals can progress to the highest levels of the organization. Nevertheless, the veterans stated that being in the military is a different aspect of work from other contexts. The focus groups highlighted this stating that the military work environment influences abound among members based on beliefs, traditions, and values. Additionally, there is high respect for rank and structure. Due to this conceptualization, military men have to maintain high performance levels even in undesirable working environments.

In comparing the military to the civilian occupations, the respondents had a major distinguishing concept. The difference in the two contexts was premised on the notion that civilians rarely lack to be their ranks. There is a substantial difference between the military and the civilian workforce concerning power. According to the respondents, orders in the military have to be executed according to individuals in the higher ranks, with little or no input from their subordinates. In most cases, this is not a demotivating factor due to the beliefs and codes that exist among the military personnel. Nevertheless,

the respondents agreed that not all tasks dictated by leaders are appealing to the workforce. In this light, the respondents argued that there was more prevalence for working in the civilian contexts for professionals whose productivity was limited in the military context due to hierarchy and power. Drawing from their current workplaces, the participants stated that the civilian corporate structures were more interesting and offered them a diversity of responsibilities due to the fewer consistent structures. Additionally, the respondents argued that the role of power in civilian corporate structures lacks a significant impact on their roles compared to the military context. The rules of conduct in the civilian contexts are also not stricter compared to the military. This offers an opportunity for increased independence in how individuals engage in their responsibilities. According to the respondents, this increases their ability to interact with the workplace. Working in civilian workplaces was also deemed to be more desirable due to their flexible structures and roles. The participants argued that these civilian organizations offered an opportunity for creativity and innovation to address the challenges faced in the workplace. Resultantly, the participants argued that with the limited control in civilian workplaces, they had more flexibility in adapting to the workplace. Additionally, workers were more motivated to work in areas with variations between teams and departments because it offered more opportunities to engage in a diverse work environment.

### **Career Progression**

It is evident that career progression is an imperative factor of the reward system, and it differs substantially between the military and the civilian workplaces. This context



was largely discussed in the context of leadership. According to the participants, military leaders advance to top ranks based on the career ladder that has traditionally been employed in the military. They also expressed dissatisfaction that the raise in leadership can take a long time, with some making substantial achievements after twenty years in service. This limited the ability of an individual to raise in the same career fields with many remaining in the same position for a long time within the same department. The participants showed that there was the likelihood of favoritism compromising the rise of leadership positions or promotions at the military workplace. This was linked to the roles played by family members within the service and the role of boards that influenced the selection process. Military personnel also have varying opportunities for personal development. For instance, individuals might be enlisted but leave the military, attain higher education, and rejoin as officers. Enlisted candidates that lack such opportunities might spend many years without promotions or significant advancement in the career ladder. Contrary to the military, the civilian workplaces offer a corporate matrix where the chain of command is substantially diverse presenting a situation where the organization has more than one boss. Employees can respond to different leaders, and they can play a diverse role in the organizational setting. This diversity offers an opportunity for promotions and career advancements. Furthermore, the respondents argued that the civilian workplace provided an opportunity to learn and engage in self-development due to the flexibility provided in engaging in the workplace. Resultantly, they felt that they had more efficiency in engaging in an undesirable work environment in the civilian context compared to the military. Furthermore, the purported that working as

civilians offered a better balance in the family-work relationship, which was a motivational factor due to the support one could get from family members when engaged in challenging work environments. The respondents stated that in the military, there was limited time to spend with family, which sometimes led to stressful situations compromising their productivity. Furthermore, when working for companies, employees can move from low-level management to higher positions based on merit and networking, a phenomenon that is not emergent in the military service. The insights from the focus group highlighted that the more flexible work environment in companies allows workers to transfer to a new position with ease after gaining the necessary experience, training and expect career success.

In both interviews and focus groups, the participants highlighted that not all veterans find it easy to adopt in civilian workplaces. The argument was based on the notion that the working environment tends to be more ambiguous in how it operates and how individuals engage with their employers. Subsequently, the success of veterans in civilian companies is based on their ability to learn the new cultures and differentiate the work setting from that of the military. In this light, the achievements made by an individual in observing, learning, and communicating in a non-military language in civilian organizations. Furthermore, the participants argued that some of their employers preferred to employ veterans because such workers could perform effectively under a rigid leadership approach that reflects the strategies employed in the military.

### Summary

Chapter 4 presented data that was collected from participants through semi-structured interviews. This chapter included findings in research and analysis based on information gathered from respondents. Outcomes of rewards systems in organizations differ substantially and are influenced by factors such as leadership, organizational objectives, rewards systems, organizational employee skills and knowledge acquired through training, interpersonal factors, economic factors, social factors, organizational command and control, and career progression concerns.

These factors can be internal or external and impact employee work management. Such factors are level of motivation, employee work performance, organizational productivity, recruitment and retention, brain drain due to a more robust employment alternative, leadership and subordinate professional relationship, and employee loyalty. There is a consensus among respondents that there are signs that the rewards systems have a brighter future of strategic structuring and management because of its attention-grabbing that the employees' concerns are triggering. This optimistic horizon will standardize the employee rewards systems. The knowledge emerging from research can be interpreted to understand rewards systems and how they can contribute to employee work performance. The researcher also highlighted differences between military and civilian workplaces which were instrumental to understanding factors that impacted the research participants' perceptions and ideologies that drive performance of employees who worked in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this research was to investigate the impact of reward systems on employee work performance. Research was accomplished using a qualitative approach that entailed gathering data measuring the participants experience involving the employee rewards systems and work performance in rural area near a military installation in the Southern United States. The gathered data were from secondary sources from literature review and primary data from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The researcher established that both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards contribute substantially to improving employee work performance. The researcher found that rewards systems are effective in terms of employees improving their contributions. Rewards systems might result in unintended outcomes, which can compromise the capacity of employees to meet organizational objectives.

### **Interpretation of Findings**

#### **Interpretation of Key Findings**

This research was focused on investigating the impact of rewards systems on employee work performance. The researcher established that rewards systems are essential aspects of workforce productivity. The organizations near a military installation where the participants worked, had different approaches to developing and designing reward systems. This non-standardized approach to the rewards systems led to the disparity in the implementation and awards of the employee rewards systems causing dissatisfaction among employees. The researcher used the expectancy and LXM theories

to understand the experience of the participants involving the rewards systems and work performance in rural areas. The LMX theory states that respectful professional relationship between leadership and subordinates create organizational culture where the employees are treated equitably leading to fair implementation of the employee rewards systems. Leadership tends to categorize employees in the context of in-groups and out-groups based on relationships they establish with the subordinate employees. The expectancy theory states that employees expect their work performance to be is recognized by management and appropriately rewarded for the contribution they make to the organization. The employee expectation, when adequately addressed, lead to increased employee motivation and organizational productivity, Compensation can be intrinsic, extrinsic, or a combination of both rewards.

Employee rewards systems are employed by organizations with the intent of motivating workers individually or in groups. According to Jalagat (2016), employees are happier when they are satisfied with the role they play in their employment. A happy employee is a motivated to increase work performance leading to increased productivity. Jalagat (2016) further stated that both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are important reinforcement agents in organizational work settings. Monetary rewards can have a substantial positive or negative impact on organizations depending on how equitably the cash awards were assigned to the employees. Employees who felt that the monetary awards issued to them were proportionate to their work contribution felt happy but those who felt cheated were not happy and this could affect the morale in the organizations. Participants also highlighted that because of the intrinsic derivatives of non-monetary

rewards such as working conditions, communication, degree of professionalism, and benefits were important in motivating them to engage in the workplace. Lokesh et al. (2016) stated that monetary rewards are important but should be kept separate from salaries because basic compensation might not influence incremental organizational performance via employee motivation strategies. The researcher found that rewards should be formulated to accommodate all people in the organization. This can be achieved through strategic approaches involving the input of employees to ensure their particular needs are addressed. The success of rewards systems in terms of meeting goals of organizations involves alignment of personal goals and organizational objectives. Notably, workers should contribute to the employee evaluation process that was designed to ascertain employee's periodic work performance and leadership feedback. The employee work performance appraisal was to ensure that the appraisal systems and rewards systems were effective, fair, and trusted by the workforce. Fairness during the employee evaluation process and rewards systems was critical, considering that it ensured workers rely on their leadership competency and fairness thereby develop trust in appraisal systems necessary for the rewards system to substantially impact employee motivation. Practical employee evaluation helps in terms of identifying individuals with the best talents and effectively positioning them to maximize their contributions to organizations.

The researcher found that the employee rewards systems in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States should be designed to incorporate employee recognition strategies. The employee recognition strategies incorporate steps

taken by organizational leadership to recognize its employees privately or in the presence of coworkers. This recognition could take the form of individual or group awards, congratulatory messages on the organization's streaming banner, portal, or bulletin boards. The employee rewards systems can ensure that the organizational employee recognition offers the employees satisfactions through the appropriate rewards that are attractive and necessary for sustained improvement of employee work performance and organizational productivity. According to the expectancy theory by Vroom, employee's performance is dependent on the possible rewards the employee is expected to receive from the leadership. Therefore, small rewards can motivate people in the short term, while other approaches such as promotions linked to recognition can be used in the long time. A mixture of reward approaches is important to ensure that the interests of diverse workforce with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds are taken into consideration when designing and implementing the employee rewards systems. The effectiveness of the reward mixture determines the level of motivation among workers. Understanding the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of the rewards systems that motivate workers helps management to strategically design and implement the employee rewards systems averting a demoralized workforce, distrust in organizational policies and processes that are related to the employee rewards systems. This can also prevent challenges faced by managers in terms of keeping employees engaged. With an effective reward approach, organizations can reduce costs associated with keeping workers engaged. In this context, organizations should strive to offer competitive rewards and compensation which is critical to achieving organizational objectives. The employees who worked in

organizations near a military installation in the southern United States were more committed to their employers when they felt appreciated by the leadership and treated as assets to the organization.

The impact of rewards on employee work performance is premised on the fact that rewards lead to positive reinforcement of good attendance and timely completion of tasks leading to employee motivation and increased work performance. Also, rewards empower the employee creating job satisfaction. Additionally, strategically designed and implemented rewards systems lead to reduced work-related stress level, creative and innovative employees, and a sense of belonging to an organization in an employee. Good rewards systems also make employees feel valued through their contribution thus a culture of performance excellence, profitability and resource discipline is established leading improved productivity.

The working environment could substantially create pride and motivation in employees and could demoralize and frustrate employees if the rewards systems were not effectively and efficiently utilized to incentivize the workforce leading to unmotivated, employee underperformance and organizational output. This is due to experience and perceptions that existed among participants working in organizations near a military installation in the southern United States. Military personnel who participated in the study did present a higher work performance than the civilian participants as measured by level of motivation and rewards except for pay structure and pay was not a predictor of work performance. This perception contradicted the notion that military personnel are richly rewarded for performance. According to Springboro (2017), the nature of rewards



offered to military personnel is a crucial determinant of their dedication and commitment to leadership and responsibilities. These demonstrated the fact that poorly implemented strategically executed employee rewards systems that is absent of disparity makes a difference in the contribution of employees and provides feedback to leadership the kind of rewards that motivate the workforce to remain dedicated to organizations.

According to Olsthoorn (2017), military personnel are more likely to be motivated by the rewards awarded to them by their leadership than their civilian counterparts. Despite the military culture of order and discipline, those who enlisted in the military understood that their dedication to serving the country might be detrimental to their health and even lead to death. “That is motivation” as stated by the study participants who declared that the “military work is one of those professions that is a calling involving taking risk to protect the country, preserve peace and security by supporting national policies and objectives, and responding to aggressive acts that might compromise national interests, peace, and security in the US. The military leadership uses the awards and promotion rewards systems to motivate its personnel who work in undesirable locations and working environments and will be prepared to use force if required in response to violent acts that pose substantial risks to their wellbeing. The study participants stated that joining the military was a choice with the high risk sacrificing their lives in line of duty.

According to Affandi et al. (2019), motivating soldiers requires military personnel becoming aware of the dangers that they could face in their new assignment or work environment but continued to embrace the challenge regardless of the possible outcomes.

Deploying military personnel, DoD civilian and contractor employees were aware of the dangers in relocating to dangerous work environment and would take up the challenges regardless of the challenges faced during conflict and in war zones. The challenges would include lack of infrastructure, challenging climates, diseases, and the possibility of injuries or death. Other challenges that the participants encountered in their experience included toxic leadership and toxic work environment rendering a military installation a demoralizing work location that an employee was not able to find a replacement or authorization for a new duty station. Therefore, the toxic leadership or work environment became a nightmare for the employee. According to participants, the ability of individuals to engage in such work conditions is associated with effective integration of rewards and leadership in organizations.

The intent of the military personnel to perform in any work environment presents a perception that intrinsic rewards are essential, but extrinsic rewards are more important. In this context, the respondents argued that the induction to the military culture and the subsequent dedication to the military profession is associated with the ability of the military organization to offer effective training and development that can enable the workforce to engage in different operations other than armed conflict or death. According to McAllister et al. (2019), education and training in the military offer skills and knowledge that enables individuals to engage in more than warfare but to contribute substantially to the community. McAllister et al. (2019) further posit that motivating military personnel requires offering numerous specialization and personal development opportunities. This is instrumental in motivating the workers to engage in any kind of

military operations as well as maintain high levels of employee retention in the military or the society. From this perspective, workers are motivated when they can effectively engage in their responsibilities. This highlights the need for leaders to identify the talents and capabilities among the workers in the selection and training processes to ensure that they are positioned in roles where they can maximize their potential. Segal et al. (2019) posit that the impact of extrinsic factors is linked to developing knowledge and skills that an individual can use after a career in the military. As individuals develop the relevant skills in specific fields, they become experts and interest in further career advancement. Despite this, the respondents noted that individuals might take a long time in the military before being promoted. The processes of promotion are also not effective, which implies that it is often detrimental for some members rather than playing the role of reward systems in the organization. Unlike civilian companies, the military lacks substantial positions for promotion in the workforce. The civilian companies offer numerous opportunities due to the corporate matrix that increases the diversity of roles played by employees in different capacities. In the military, each individual's organizational roles are substantially defined, which was perceived to be a boring aspect of the workplace. This marks a distinction between the military and civilian sectors.

The bureaucratic structure of the organization also limits the motivation drawn from extrinsic rewards in the military. Military personnel lack independent control, and their operations are dependent on the orders, information, or instructions offered. This implies that the details of service are strict and substantially regulated across all organizational operations. This is evident in the fixed rank structure of the military.

Individuals join the military at the lowest levels and work to advance the competitive career ladder, which might take a long time. In civilian organizations, individuals can join the organization laterally. The fact that the leaders must grow on their own in the military makes it difficult for workers to remain motivated, especially when pursuing better professional opportunities. The extrinsic aspects associated with promotion at the workplace are less likely to be experienced among workers in the military. Furthermore, military personnel are employed in fixed terms of service. This implies that the ability of an individual to advance in a career during the term of service does not guarantee further achievements with continued services. According to Cox (2019), that military training presents numerous challenges for the first term of service. Cox (2019) further stated there are major challenges faced by undergraduate military nursing students who were transiting from the civilian nursing programs, which educate most of the nurses in the military. The findings infer there are educators in the military who are culturally incompetent when working with some student populations, which demotivates some to effectively engage in the training. Nevertheless, the dissatisfaction of workers in the military is unlike that of the civilian sectors. For the military, there is no immediate resignation due to occupation dissatisfaction due to the contractual requirements between the individual and the forces. The military personnel also lack the collective bargaining options that workers in other civilian sectors enjoy. Resultantly, they have to persevere the working conditions, pay, and benefits without complaints.

In the context of intrinsic rewards, the pay structure of the military is fixed, and it is determined by the ranks and time in service. The fact that promotions are competitive

and rare implies that individuals might be demotivated to remain in the organization where they do not experience career advancement nor improved pay based on changes in personal interests and lifestyles. Although there are supplementary payments and bonuses offered, not all individuals qualify in such reward systems. According to Murayama (2019), the military reward system is designed to keep individuals engaged even in the most challenging work conditions rather than act as incentives to influence increased performance. In this context, merits are rewarded through recognition in extrinsic rewards that include awards and medals. This includes rewards offered due to superior performance in the long-term that include special honors, selection for promotion to higher ranks based on the rank pyramid. Nevertheless, compensation in the military includes many aspects that are not experienced in the civilian sector, including different allowances, benefits, and supplementary pay. Despite the challenging work environment, the individuals qualify for retirement benefits at a minimum of 20 years of service unless an individual goes through a special release program.

There is no doubt that both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards have an essential role in improving work performance in the military. According to Locke and Schattke (2019) and Asseburg and Homberg (2020), motivation is the driver of the behaviors and activities in organizations. From this perspective, the application of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards in the military as a public organization can be attributed to how they contribute to motivation that leads specific organizational behaviors. Suggestively, the intrinsic and extrinsic factors can be manipulated by leaders through the relationships they establish with the followers to influence different levels of motivation among different groups or

individuals. Locke and Schattke (2019) suggested that the integration of both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards has been found to have positive impacts on work performance, focusing on organizational sustainability. These sentiments are aligned to findings in this research but there are considerations made by leaders in the military to ensure that each kind of reward has the desired impact on behaviors. Based on the findings, the intrinsic rewards are used in the military to shape the organizational structure by determining who are in positions of power. For instance, recognition achieved through promotions is motivating for individuals who gain power in the organizational structure. The extrinsic rewards are used to offer a sense of security that keeps the workforce engaged. Bonuses and benefits associated with the difficulties experienced at the workplace are among the extrinsic rewards that contribute to increased engagement and retention among the military personnel. Additionally, extrinsic rewards such as medals offered for the accomplishment made in the military career contribute to the pride and honor the military personnel develop. This is also a motivation for the military personnel to remain at the workplace and focus on specific goals that offer outcomes that justify the medals or similar rewards.

The military personnel are subject to an array of laws and policies that impact how they engage in the organizational setting. These are the Uniform Code of Military Justice as well as the U.S. criminal and civil codes. Although the military codes are considered to be strict, they are essential legal provisions that differentiate how the military personnel and civilians engage at the workplace (Williams et al., 2018). The violation of company policies in the civilian companies results in individuals being fired

but, in the military, the failure to uphold the code of conduct leads to formal charges, trial, imprisonment, and other forms of punishment through a court-martial. The military work environment is substantially strict with the limited ability of the workforce to bargain for improvements or changes even where the working environment is detrimental to the ability of an individual to engage in the organizational setting. Furthermore, the military has its own judicial and penal systems that ensure its standards are maintained.

According to the respondents, this phenomenon presents a sharp contrast in how civilians are treated in organizations. The military also has substantial control over the personal life of the personnel. For instance, they undergo mandatory drug tests, sexual conduct, participation in fraternization, and other requirements. Consequently, there is substantial control of the members' private life, which does not reflect on how civilian organizations operate. The fact that the military functions as a community of workers that are deemed to be self-sufficient imply that the social norms are not like those of the civilians. This makes it difficult for veterans to integrate into the civilian work environment. Nevertheless, the military upholds high levels of discipline, and teamwork, which is instrumental to success, can benefit if effectively executed in the civilian workplaces.

Furthermore, the respondents in this study implied that some employers tend to focus on employing veterans due to the skills and knowledge they gained in the military work setting. These insights confirm that the greatest distinction between the military and civilian organizations emerges from culture. These cultural differences impact how the reward systems function for the benefit of the workforce. The discipline associated with

the military implies that most of the workforce does contribute to the formulation of the reward system. Contrary, in the civilian sector, workers can demand more pay, better working conditions, and other aspects of the reward system. From these insights, the employee performance in the military is dictated by policies and codes compared to the incentives offered in the reward system.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study was accomplished through a qualitative approach that involved the use of primary and secondary sources of data. The secondary sources are literature review sources, which are critical in informing previous studies and the changes associated with the phenomenon. Nevertheless, the credibility of the authorities and the data used by the researchers is difficult to justify. The information gathered from the secondary sources might have transferred the limitations of the particular papers in this research. To address this, the research draws insights from different literature sources, which guarantees that the quality of the information is balanced

The involvement of respondents in the study might compromise the quality of the study due to the lack of consistency in how the information is offered by the participants, the fact that the participants might lack substantial knowledge about the issue under research. This was addressed through the triangulation of data sources to ensure that the biases emerging from one form of data collection were eliminated based on the insights from the other. The researcher also ensured that the participants involved were credible individuals who could effectively address the questions posed and offer more information that could be used to develop new knowledge.



## **Recommendations**

This research drew from the personal experiences of veterans and non-veterans who have engaged in undesirable military working conditions and the civilian corporate sector. These insights offered a comparison that highlights the role reward systems have in motivating individuals who experience challenges that impact their perception of the workplace and their intention to remain in the organization. The research found that the hierarchical structure of the military, coupled with the strict policies and codes, limits the input the workforce has on the reward systems and other incentives at the workplace. From this perspective, it is difficult to influence change in the military organizational setting to dictate how reward systems are implemented and how different incentives contribute to the organization's outcomes. The insights emerging from this study are that there are some improvements that can be made to influence the impact of the reward systems on the outcome of the workforce. The recommendations considered in this study are centered on the concept that the reward system can be implemented with increased flexibility of the management personnel and the alignment of all rewards with the risks experienced in the military work environments.

The research findings demonstrated that the reward system in the military sector functions similarly to civilian organizations. The incentives offered were focused on motivating individuals to perform, increasing retention, and skill acquisition. The sustainability of the military proves that, to some extent, the reward system works. Nevertheless, there is no guarantee that it influences the necessary motivation in the

organizational setting. The incentives offered through promotions are deemed to be the most important aspect of the military reward system.

Despite this, the respondents in the research agreed that promotions are not a guarantee for the workforce. Additionally, it might take long before an individual is promoted. The organizational structure in the military is designed to have a few people having substantial influence in the flow of information and orders throughout the organization (Cooper et al., 2018). Consequently, this organizational structure leads to creating a pyramid that limits the number of individuals promoted to higher levels of leadership. While this is an effective approach to teaching and managing the military, it is also a source of demotivation leading to reduced employee performance, where there is a lack of effective promotion and compensation strategies (Binks & Cambridge, 2018). The failure of promotions as an incentive to increase employee performance can be attributed to issues associated with skills and abilities. Limited opportunities for individuals to improve or learn new skills or engage in higher education reduce their chances of promotion. Consequently, some individuals might take a long time to develop the skills and experience necessary to be considered for promotion. To address this, there is a need to establish a reliable approach that can offer equal opportunities for people seeking promotions in the military. With promotions come better pay, which can motivate individuals to engage and remain committed at the workplace.

According to Grissom et al. (2016), high turnover in the public sector can be attributed to better opportunities in other sectors. This details that the lack of better options or pay that can motivate the military personnel leads to reduced engagement and

high turnover. The military can use training programs and professional development as the basis of promotion, which can also contribute to positioning individuals in roles where they can maximize their skills and capabilities for increased productivity and organizational performance.

The compensation system used by the military can also be effective in improving how employees engage in their responsibilities. A well-formulated payment system that adequately considers the risks faced in the organization can effectively influence workers to work hard. Nevertheless, any rewarding plans for military personnel present different costs incurred by the organization. Monetary rewards are the most significant form of intrinsic rewards offered by organizations.

Farooq and Shafique(2016) noted that the costs incurred in this context range from wages to overhead expenses incurred in administrative duties. In this context, the reward systems can result in unintended outcomes due to the perceptions and attitudes emerging among the workers. In situations where the personnel feel that the reward system is unfair compared to the risks associated with their roles and responsibilities, there might be little incentive for the workforce to be productive. Resultantly, there is a need for transparency in how the reward systems operate and how the rewards are aligned to the roles played by each individual in the organizational setting.

The unintended outcomes include the inefficient allocation of efforts to different tasks where the reward system does not cover all dimensions of work. This implies that there should be effective measures to monitor and determine the contributions made by an individual in various roles to ensure all aspects of the occupation are rewarded

appropriately. In the military setting, the reward system can also influence how individuals engage in risk-taking behaviors. Furthermore, the respondents in this research highlighted that enrollment in the military presents a situation where individuals might ultimately sacrifice their lives in the line of duty. Where the rewards offered lack to reflect the challenges faced by an individual in the organizational setting, the workforce might be demotivated to engage in their specific roles.

According to Lokesh et al. (2016), the changing work environment and employee demographics make it imperative to review the reward system to ensure it effectively offers incentives and generates motivation that can result in increased performance. Without an effective approach to determine the risks and the equivalent compensation that should be provided, the effort of the workforce can shift within the measuring period. To address this, military organizations should adopt a practical approach that can be used to demonstrate that the risks experienced in the course of work are covered in the reward system. This requires the workforce's engagement in formulating the reward systems to ensure that they are satisfied with what is offered.

A challenge highlighted by the respondents in how the reward system functions in military organizations are favoritism. This implies that workers need information that guarantees that some individuals do not benefit from the relationships they have with seniors in the military. According to Wenzel et al. (2019), fairness and transparency in the rewards systems as crucial sources of motivation for workers. It encourages individuals to engage in initiatives that lead to increased work performance. This can also help to address how individuals focus on rewards rather than their performance. For

instance, an individual might invest much of their time and effort in influencing the supervisors' evaluations rather than meeting the organizational objectives. From this perspective, there is a need to guarantee that the monitoring and evaluations are effective and appropriately reflect on the workers' pay and reputation that can influence their promotion. Additionally, by eliminating favoritism, the supervisors can identify the skills and talents that emerge among workers facilitating improved placement and the contribution individuals have to the organization. Fairness in the reward system also reflects how individuals engage in teamwork and focus on organizational objectives.

According to Chimhutu et al. (2016), increased focus on individual compensation can compromise teamwork and team performance due to the increased internal competition and compromised trust among the people. Intrinsic rewards are high for an individual; they might also limit the impact of nonmonetary rewards on performance. This implies that workers should be subject to similar tips to maintain team cohesion and increase their contribution to set objectives as a team. There should also be a balance between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to ensure that one form of incentive does not mute the impact of the other.

It might be challenging to eliminate the unintended outcomes that emerge from the reward systems. Nevertheless, these factors can be limited by effectively designing the reward systems and taking the employee performance outcome in mind. Improving employee performance in this context requires considering the behaviors that are influenced by the different kinds of rewards offered in the organization. The effectiveness of both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards is subject to the external and internal factors that

influence the employees' behaviors. According to Riasat et al. (2016), the reward system should be designed to ensure that the costs and resources consumed are compensated by the roles employees play in the organization. Additionally, the reward system needs to take to account factors that contribute to the development of high-performance teams such as recruitment strategies, retention, and skill development. These considerations can help the military use the reward system as a tool for achieving the desired personnel, team, and organizational outcomes. Insight from this research showed that there should be increased efficiency in how reward systems are designed, implemented, and improved to ensure that they are aligned to the personal objectives among workers and the organizational objectives. The rewards should not be a constraint to the organizational resources.

According to Barik and Kochar (2017), all organizations need to ensure that the organizational output increases with the resources utilized in rewarding the workforce. Managers should strategically engage the workforce in developing the reward system to ensure it relates to the employee's needs and expectations. An effective employee system can facilitate improved employee performance in situations where people know that the work outcome will result in certain rewards at the end of a particular task. The HRM and the leadership in the organizations should ensure that there is fairness in how the rewards are offered. This includes increasing efficiency in how the organization evaluates employees and ensuring that there is transparency for the workers to develop trust in the organization.

The insights emerging from this research were limited, which highlighted the need for further analysis. There is a need to conduct a quantitative study that can offer empirical evidence about the issues addressed by this research. Further investigations should be directed at the specific environmental factors that influence the ability of employees to engage in the workplace concerning the reward system. Also, there is a need to investigate how personal factors such as age, career choices, experience, ethnicity, and other demographic factors impact the perceptions individuals hold about the reward system when engaged in challenging work environments. These studies can be qualitative, quantitative, or employ a mixed methodology to a comprehensive account.

### **Implications**

This research focused on the impact the reward system has on employee performance by drawing insights from the lived experienced veterans and non-veterans. They are currently engaged in an occupation in the civilian sector. The experience of veterans in the military and the transition to civilian career offered insights that help to define the relationship between the work environment and the contribution of the reward system to employee performance. Understanding the differences between the military and civilian work environments helps to understand the impact of the incentives offered in the determination of an individual to perform.

The insights from this research have organizational implications. In this context, the research supported the notion that effective reward systems result in increased employee performance. The military is governed by strict laws and codes that impact the ability of the employees to contribute to how they are led or how the reward systems are

implemented. Promotion in the military ranks emerges as one of the important career incentives in the military work environment. According to Kuswati (2019) enhancing work performance in organizations requires focusing on the employee needs and strategic measures designed to engage the workforce in meeting the organizational objectives. This is an empowering aspect that contributes to how individuals engage in completing the set objectives. In this light, the promotion strategies set the basis for hiring talented individuals in positions where they are empowered. The promotions are associated with the increased pay based on the position of the individual in the rank pyramid.

According to Kuswati (2019), a motivated workforce requires an effective pay structure linked to their roles in the organization. The compensation should increase with the promotion of the personnel to higher levels. This is important to prevent situations where the individuals in the lower levels are offered more pay than those at higher levels. From this perspective, there is a sense of fairness in a rewarding process. The pay structure should be skewed, which is premised on the fact that there is a decrease in the number of workers in the higher levels after promotions. The increase in pay accounts for the reduction in the number of workers.

The implications of the findings at the personal level imply that the promotion process in the military implies that once a person has attained a particular position there are a few remaining promotions they can achieve in their career. This leads to a reduced incentive to work. Consequently, the organization must diversify the reward system to achieve a balance that keeps the workforce motivated. According to Hoffman and Tadelis (2021), promotions at the workplace should also reflect an increase in pay and benefits.



Additionally, the rise in compensation should be associated with an increase in the responsibilities an individual has in ensuring improved organizational performance. From this perspective, there is a need to ensure that promotions are based on merits to ensure that individuals at the top of the hierarchical structure can make better decisions to ensure that the rest of the organization performs effectively.

According to Schumpe et al. (2017), nonmonetary rewards are effective in empowering and influencing individuals to focus on organizational objectives. The authors add that offering individuals an opportunity to engage in leadership increases their capacity to engage in the organizational operations so that individuals are motivated to follow in the leader's steps. This is effective where the individuals who attain leadership positions can maintain effective communication with other team members. This phenomenon highlights the need for a balance in the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards which can ensure that talented workers are motivated to seek the higher ranks that are more valued in terms of pay and contribution to the organization.

According to Eisenberger et al. (2016), reward systems offer organizations an opportunity to increase employee engagement and guarantee that all stakeholders work on the organizational goals with improved operational efficiency. According to Chen et al. (2019), the LMX leadership approach illustrates that managers should identify the key players in tasks and ensure that they are appropriately rewarded based on their contributions.

Further implications at the individual level indicated that the military, like many other organizations could determine the retirement benefits that, individuals in service

receive. In this context, the high reliance on retirement pay exhibited by veterans shows that during service, there might be constraints that limit risk-taking behaviors among individuals in their mid-career and at the end of their careers. This can be attributed to conformism, which Atuel and Castro (2018), highlighted that it is the intent of the employees to comply with the organizational policies for them to be eligible to get some benefits such as pensions. This might impact the performance of the workforce as they mitigate the challenges that might compromise their retirement eligibility. This includes reduced creativity and innovation or participation in problem-solving. Additionally, their personnel might seek to develop a reputation that is in line with the measures that determine eligibility for retirement benefits.

Additionally, the need for 20 years of service to be eligible for retirement pay implies that some individuals might separate from the organization prematurely seek alternative sources of income and sustainability. Atuel and Castro (2018) informed that some individuals might remain in the military due to the various benefits while working in the sector. The behavioral patterns impact organizational performance while increasing the cost of the rewards. This implies that changes in the reward system should be accompanied by shifts in how the retirement benefits are formulated and offered.

According to Alhmoud and Rjoub (2019), the reward system plays a vital role in ensuring high levels of employee retention. Drawing from these insights, individuals who stick in the workplace to enjoy retirement benefits are detrimental to the achievements in the organizational setting.

The societal implications of this research were linked to how organizations and government agencies take advantage of the talents, skills, and knowledge available among the people in society. The strict nature of the military in how individuals engage in the workplace implies that the reward system does not react substantially to the ability of individuals to contribute to the organizational outcomes. There is little focus on creativity, innovation, risk-taking, entrepreneurship, and other aspects that can promote increased performance in civilian companies. This implies that there is a lack of flexibility in the reward system to identify and support career development among talented individuals. Unlike civilian organizations, military personnel are not paid based on performance but based on their ranks. A pay-for-performance approach can be challenging to implement in the military due to the lack of effective measures to measure the relevant outcomes in different tasks. The military present various performance dimensions, including behaviors, and most activities are carried out in teams making it hard to measure individual performance.

The implications associated with the family in this research were centered on the organization's ability to meet personal and family needs. In this context, the research implies a need for increased efficiency in how reward systems are used to influence employee work performance. This can be achieved by eliminating the undesirable outcomes of the reward systems and strengthening the factors that enhance the contribution of the approaches used to the organization's objectives. Where the reward system is appropriate, the employees can meet their family needs, which leads to increased productivity.

The research implied that there is a need for effective leadership practices to be adopted in organizations to foster the successful engagement of employees in the workplace. The leadership should ensure that there are fairness and satisfaction associated with the reward system. In this context, the leaders must understand the employee needs including the family-work relationship, to establish if the compensation offered and the opportunities created are appropriate to meet the employees' family needs.

According to Gürerk et al. (2018) effective leadership is required in ensuring the effectiveness of the reward system in meeting organizational objectives. The rewards should be meaningful and effective in motivating workers to be more productive. Managers should ensure that the talents, skills, and knowledge available within the organization effectively facilitate transformation necessary increased performance. In this context, the family can be satisfied that the individual is offered an opportunity to maximize their potential, while the improved family-work relationship leads to increased productivity. The effective positioning of workers should be coupled with rewards that match the employees' level of input.

The methodological implication established in this investigation is that a qualitative approach is effective in conducting investigations on reward systems and employee performance. This can be attributed to the ability of this approach to gather the information that is hard to quantify, such as feelings and perceptions held by the respondents. It also facilitates an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences and the various factors that come to play at the workplace concerning the environment, reward

systems, organizational structures, leadership, among others. These factors might be difficult to connect when using a quantitative approach. Nevertheless, a mixed-method approach can also be practical by offering a comprehensive account with qualitative and quantitative data. This is also aligned to the theoretical statements that express that the integration of the expectancy and LXM theory was appropriate in understanding the different factors associated with the reward system used by the organization and employee performance.

The implications for practices emerging in this research detailed that the reward systems used in the organization must be effective in a manner that guarantees increased performance results in more rewards for people in the military, veterans, and civilians are working in undesirable locations. Also, the reward system should use evaluation measures that allow the segregation of workers into different job groups based on their ability to contribute to organizational outcomes. Furthermore, individuals have a higher performance when they are rewarded according to their performance. In this context, team performance should be considered to ensure that improved performance is coupled with rewards and create healthy competition within the different teams to meet organizational objectives.

According to Yu, Matta, and Cornfield (2018), this approach to teamwork fosters increased engagement of leadership in partnership to facilitate increased performance. Furthermore, motivation to engage in the organizational objectives is premised on the notion that rewards are associated with increased effort. This implies that the performance and appraisal metrics employed in the organization should be influential in determining

the compensation that should be offered to teams and workers. Nevertheless, this can be a complicated issue in the military, considering that the organization's goals are not premised on monetary interests. This makes it difficult to quantify the value of services offered by an individual. According to Güreker et al. (2018), with effective leadership, there is an opportunity for organizations to utilize rewards in improving operational efficiency and increased engagement of individuals and teams in meeting organizational objectives.

### **Conclusion**

This research was focused on investigating the impact of reward systems on employee work performance. The reward systems have an imperative role in fostering success by keeping the workforce motivated. The research was premised on the expectancy theory, highlighting that people engage in certain actions with expectations for a reward. The study was conducted qualitatively based on the interpretive research paradigm. In this context, the research employed unstructured interviews and focus group meetings among workers in the military, retail, and health sector among professionals near a military installation in the southern United States. The respondents were purposefully sampled to ensure that the responses offered effectively addressed the research objectives and questions. A thematic analysis was conducted to highlight the insights emerging from the research. Drawing from the research findings, the study established that the reward system in the organizations sampled in the survey plays an imperative role in advancing employee work performance. The study found a converging aspect of how workers perceive rewards and how employers offer tips. In this context, the

cultural elements that influence the kind of reward systems used in organizations have little impact on individual employees. In contrast, organizations with high employee diversity utilize a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards to foster increased employee engagement. The result of this study determined that effective leadership and the designing of reward systems can address the challenges within organizations. This study established that understanding the individual employees was critical in determining the factors that would create effective and efficient employee rewards systems that meet the employee's needs and expectations.

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## Appendix A: Permission from the Institution Review Board

**Permission from the Institutional Review Board****IRB Materials Approved – Valentine****Ukandu**

**Date:** Friday, April 23, 2021, 8:26 PM

**From:** IRB <irb@mail.waldenu.edu>

**To:** Valentine Ukandu <valentine.ukandu@waldenu.edu>

**Cc:** David D. Bouvin <david.bouvin@mail.waldenu.edu>

**Attachments:** **Valentine\_Consent\_Forms.pdf Save to My Files**

Dear Valentine Ukandu,

This email is to notify you that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved your application for the study entitled, "Exploring Employee Experience of Reward Systems and WorkPerformance in Undesirable Location."

Your approval # is 04-23-21-0041194. You will need to reference this number in your dissertation and in any future funding or publication submissions. Also attached to this e-mail are the IRB approved consent forms. Please note, if these are already in an on-line format, you will need to update those consent documents to include the IRB approval number and expiration date.

Your IRB approval expires on April 22, 2022 (or when your student status ends, whichever occurs first). One month before this expiration date, you will be sent a

Continuing Review Form, which must be submitted if you wish to collect data beyond the approval expiration date.

Your IRB approval is contingent upon your adherence to the exact procedures described in the final version of the IRB application document that has been submitted as of this date. This includes maintaining your current status with the university. Your IRB approval is only valid while you are an actively enrolled student at Walden University. If you need to take a leave of absence or are otherwise unable to remain actively enrolled, your IRB approval is suspended. Absolutely NO participant recruitment or data collection may occur while a student is not actively enrolled.

If you need to make any changes to your research staff or procedures, you must obtain IRB approval by submitting the IRB Request for Change in Procedures Form. You will receive confirmation with a status update of the request within 10 business days of submitting the change request form and are not permitted to implement changes prior to receiving approval. Please note that Walden University does not accept responsibility or liability for research activities conducted without the IRB's approval, and the University will not accept or grant credit for student work that fails to comply with the policies and procedures related to ethical standards in research. When you submitted your IRB application, you made a commitment to communicate both discrete adverse events and general problems to the IRB within 1 week of their occurrence/realization. Failure to do so may result in invalidation of data, loss of academic credit, and/or loss of legal protections otherwise available to the researcher.

Both the Adverse Event Reporting form and Request for Change in Procedures form can be obtained on the Tools and Guides page of the Walden website:

<https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/research-center/research-ethics/tools-guides>

Doctoral researchers are required to fulfill all of the Student Handbook's [Doctoral Student Responsibilities Regarding Research Data](#) regarding raw data retention and dataset confidentiality, as well as logging of all recruitment, data collection, and data management steps. If, in the future, you require copies of the originally submitted IRB materials, you may request them from Institutional Review Board.

Both students and faculty are invited to provide feedback on this IRB experience at the link below:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=qHBJzkJMux43pZegKlmdiQ\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=qHBJzkJMux43pZegKlmdiQ_3d_3d)

Sincerely,  
Libby Munson  
Research Ethics Support Specialist  
Office of Research Ethics and ComplianceWalden University  
100 Washington Avenue South, Suite 1210  
Minneapolis, MN 55401 Email: [irb@mail.waldenu.edu](mailto:irb@mail.waldenu.edu)  
Phone: (612) 312-1283  
Fax: (612) 338-5092



## Appendix B: Flyer In-Depth Interview

**Flyer In-Depth Interview****Volunteer In a Student Research Study****Exploring Employee Experience of Reward Systems and Work Performance in Remote Location**

If you worked or are currently working in a remote location, volunteer as a private citizen in a Walden University student research study and get a \$20 Amazon Gift Card. I am specifically asking for an **INTERVIEW**. To ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms will be used when writing the report.

Send your response to:

[valentine.ukandu@waldenu.edu](mailto:valentine.ukandu@waldenu.edu)

**Valentine Ukandu**

**Doctoral Candidate**

**Walden University**

**Email:**

**[VALENTINE.UKANDU@WALDENU.EDU](mailto:VALENTINE.UKANDU@WALDENU.EDU)**

**C: 910-922-5175**

## Appendix C: Flyer Focus Group Discussions

**Flyer Focus Group Discussions****Volunteer In a Student Research Study****Exploring Employee Experience of Reward Systems and Work Performance in Remote Location**

If you worked or are currently working in a remote location, volunteer as a private citizen in a Walden University student research study and get a \$20 Amazon Gift Card. I am specifically asking for a **FOCUS GROUP**. To ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms will be used when writing the report.

Send your response to:

[valentine.ukandu@waldenu.edu](mailto:valentine.ukandu@waldenu.edu)

Valentine Ukandu

Doctoral Candidate

Walden University

Email: [VALENTINE.UKANDU@WALDENU.EDU](mailto:VALENTINE.UKANDU@WALDENU.EDU)

C: 910-922-5175

## Appendix D: Consent Form In-Depth Interview

### **Consent Form In-Depth Interview**

Dear Sir/Ma'am:

I am Valentine O. Ukandu and I am a Ph.D. Candidate at The School of Management and Technology, Walden University. I am conducting a research study entitled, "Exploring Employee Experience of Reward Systems and Work Performance in Undesirable Location." This study will include individuals with diverse professional background in a multicultural organization in a selected state within the United States who work in remote locations.

Please carefully read this consent form, and feel free to ask me any questions that may seem unclear to you in this document before signing it. I will make myself available to answer any questions you might have regarding participation.

#### **Background Information:**

The purpose of this study is to describe the significant events and lived experiences of employees on the reward system and work performance and to understand how these lived experiences may have helped their work performance improve organizational performance.

#### **Description of Procedures:**

Participants will be asked to take part in a 30-minute face-to-face audio-recorded interview. Participants will also be asked to meet with the researcher a second time to

confirm that I am accurately representing what you meant to say. This second meeting will take about 15 minutes.

**Volunteer Nature of the Study:**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you chose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so without any penalty or loss of benefits to yourself. Everyone will be respectful of your decision to participate or decline in this study. You may also skip any questions that make you feel uncomfortable, or you think are too personal.

**Number of Participants:**

I am seeking ten (10) participants in this study.

**Compensation:**

There is no monetary compensation to participants in this study.

**Confidentiality:**

This study will involve minimal relationship risks in the event that any of the participant(s) will happen to know the researcher and is acknowledged on this consent form. Any information that participants provide will be kept confidential and treated with respect. All participants' identifying information will be replaced by aliases and/or pseudonyms during the entire data collection and analysis processes to safeguard their confidentiality and ensure their safety. For any purposes outside of this research projects, I will not use any participants' information that could identify them in any reports of the study.

**Benefits to The Larger Community:**

The research will be beneficial to the public and private organizations that require an improvement in increasing employee performance through the reward systems. The result of this research will consider some of the poor working conditions that are experienced by employees in remote locations. Leaders and managers of organizations that operate in remote locations will understand and/or know their employees, the communities they people come from, the challenges they face, and the subsequent solutions that can be effective in meeting their needs via the reward systems. Organizations can achieve more benefits by developing reward systems that are aligned with the employee expectations, which are only realized with their increased participation in the formulation of organizational objectives and strategies.

**Contacts and Questions:** For any questions you may ask me or faculty mentor and dissertation chair, Dr. David Bouvin. You may contact me at 910-922-5175 and/or you can email me at [valentine.ukandu@waldenu.edu](mailto:valentine.ukandu@waldenu.edu). You may also contact my faculty mentor and dissertation chair, Dr. David Bouvin at (850-313-9765) and/or email him at [david.bouvin@mail.waldenu.edu](mailto:david.bouvin@mail.waldenu.edu). If you want to privately talk about your rights as a participant, you can call the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you at 612-312-1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is 04-23-21-0041194 and it expires April 22, 2022.

Participant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date of consent \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's Written or Electronic\* Signature

Valentine O. Ukandu

Electronic signatures are regulated by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. Legally, an “electronic signature” can be the person’s typed name, their email address, or any other.

## Appendix E: Consent Form Focus Group Discussions

### Consent Form Focus Group Discussions

Dear Sir/Ma'am:

I am Valentine O. Ukandu and I am a Ph.D. Candidate at The School of Management and Technology, Walden University. I am conducting a research study entitled, "Exploring Employee Experience of Reward Systems and Work Performance in Undesirable Location." This study will include individuals with diverse professional background in a multicultural organization in a selected state within the United States who work in remote locations.

Please carefully read this consent form, and feel free to ask me any questions that may seem unclear to you in this document before signing it. I will make myself available to answer any questions you might have regarding participation.

#### **Background Information:**

The purpose of this study is to describe the significant events and lived experiences of employees on the reward system and work performance and to understand how these lived experiences may have helped their work performance improve organizational performance.

#### **Description of Procedures:**

Participants will be asked to take part in a 60–75-minute focus group that will be audio recorded. Participants will also be asked to meet with the researcher a second time to

confirm that I am accurately representing what you meant to say. This second meeting will take about 30 minutes.

**Volunteer Nature of the Study:**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you chose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you can do so without any penalty or loss of benefits to yourself. Everyone will be respectful of your decision to participate or decline in this study. You may also skip any questions that make you feel uncomfortable, or you think are too personal.

**Number of Participants:**

I am seeking ten (10) participants in this study for participation in a Focus Group discussion.

**Compensation:**

There is no monetary compensation to participants in this study.

**Confidentiality:**

This study will involve minimal relationship risks if any of the participant(s) will happen to know the researcher and is acknowledged on this consent form. Any information that participants provide will be kept confidential and treated with respect. All participants' identifying information will be replaced by aliases and/or pseudonyms during the entire data collection and analysis processes to safeguard their confidentiality and ensure their safety. For any purposes outside of this research projects, I will not use any participants' information that could identify them in any reports of the study.



**Contacts and Questions:** For any questions you may ask me or faculty mentor and dissertation chair, Dr. David Bouvin. You may contact me at 910-922-5175 and/or you can email me at [valentine.ukandu@waldenu.edu](mailto:valentine.ukandu@waldenu.edu). You may also contact my faculty mentor and dissertation chair, Dr. David Bouvin at (850-313-9765) and/or email him at [david.bouvin@mail.waldenu.edu](mailto:david.bouvin@mail.waldenu.edu). If you want to privately talk about your rights as a participant, you can call the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you at 612-312-1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is 04-23-21-0041194 and it expires April 22, 2022.

**Benefits to The Larger Community:**

The research will be beneficial to the public and private organizations that require an improvement in increasing employee performance through the reward systems. The result of this research will consider some of the poor working conditions that are experienced by employees in remote locations. Leaders and managers of organizations that operate in remote locations will understand and/or know their employees, the communities they people come from, the challenges they face, and the subsequent solutions that can be effective in meeting their needs via the reward systems. Organizations can achieve more benefits by developing reward systems that are aligned with the employee expectations, which are only realized with their increased participation in the formulation of organizational objectives and strategies.

Participant's Signature

---

Date of consent

\_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's Written or Electronic\* Signature

Valentine O. Ukandu

Electronic signatures are regulated by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. Legally, an “electronic signature” can be the person’s typed name, their email address, or any other.

## Appendix F: Interview Questions In-Depth Interview

### Interview Questions In-Depth Interview

#### Research Questions for Face-To-Face Interview

1. What is the impact of the reward systems on employee performance?
2. What are the attitudes and perceptions associated with the employee reward systems in a diverse workforce?
3. What are the improvements required to standardize the employee reward systems effectively?

## Appendix G: Interview Questions Focus Group

### **Interview Questions Focus Group**

#### **Research Questions for Focus Group Interview**

1. What are your views regarding the reward systems in remote locations?
2. What are impacts of the reward systems on work performance in remote locations?

## Appendix H: Demographic Questions In-Depth Interview

### **Demographic Questions In-Depth Interview**

#### **Demographic Questions Interview**

1. How long did you work in a remote location?
2. Would you work in a remote location again?
3. Under what circumstances would you work in a remote location?
4. What are some of your accomplishments when you worked in a remote location?

Appendix I: Demographic Questions Focus Group

**Demographic Questions Focus Group**

**Demographic Questions Focus Group**

1. How long did you work in a remote location?
2. Would you work in a remote location again?
3. Under what circumstances would you work in a remote location?
4. What are some of your accomplishments when you worked in a remote location?