Relationship of Intrinsic Reward Practices to Employees' Job Satisfaction and Creative Performance: An Empirical Study on Private Universities of Bangladesh

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Abstract

Intrinsic reward practices are increasingly receiving a wide range of acceptance in today's organizations that could play a vital role in educational institutions, where employees' job satisfaction and creative performance are ever demanding. Hence, this study mainly intends to investigate the associations of intrinsic reward practices with employees' job satisfaction and creative performance. Data were collected from 101 teachers working in different private universities in Chattogram by administering structured questionnaires containing established scales of intrinsic reward practices, job satisfaction, and creative performance. Statistical analysis of the data collected for this study shows significant positive associations of intrinsic reward practices to employees' job satisfaction and creative performance. An important implication of the study includes the necessity of intrinsic reward practices to enhance satisfaction and stimulate an individual's creative performance. Limitations of the current study and directions for future research have also been pointed out.

Key Words: Intrinsic reward practices, job satisfaction, creative performance, educational institution.

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1.0. Introduction

Due to intensified global competition and changing business environments, mostly because of rapid technological advancement, organizations need to be more innovative to survive and grow in any industry. And plausibly, the survival and innovativeness of the firms largely depend on their employees' efforts, for which employees are hired and rewarded in different forms. However, one of the key challenges that organizations are encountering in today's highly competitive business environment is to be more creative and innovative (Muller & Välikangas, 2002). Employees' creativity is increasingly seen as a key driver of the firms' performance, growth, and competitiveness (Amabile, 1996; Gong, Zhou, & Chang, 2013). Indeed, employees' creative performance (CP) is widely recognized as a key asset (see Amabile, 1996; Gong, Zhou, & Chang, 2013; Rahim, Kim, Jasimuddin, Soranastaporn, & Rahman, 2014), and recognizing creativity is becoming more and more essential for competitive advantage (Luthans, 2011).

To ensure desired employees' performance, organizations need to pay a handsome amount of financial reward to their employees. Irrespective of size, nature, and types of organizations, HR managers are aware of the need for a strategic compensation structure –an essential but difficult HRM function – to attract, maintain, and retain their competent workforces in today's work environment. "Reward system of an organization includes anything that an employee may value and desire and that the employer is able or willing to offer in exchange for employee contributions" (Henderson, 2009, p.15). Rewards could be both extrinsic (e.g. salary, wage, incentives, etc.) and intrinsic (mostly considered nonfinancial, e.g. recognition). Even though both financial and non-financial incentives have an equally significant effect (Peterson & Luthans, 2006), considerable pragmatic evidence shows that financial offers might not be much significant for enhancing employees' performance (Camerer & Hogarth, 1999). Moreover, emphasizing only extrinsic rewards may not be a useful way to manage today's workforce completely. For instance, it is observed that even after a significant increment of the base salaries and bonuses to promote the recruitment and retention of the best turnover of the skilled human resources of information technology employees continued and was a problem (Martocchio, 2006). Moreover, despite the theorizing, results suggest

that pay level is only marginally connected to employee satisfaction (Judge, Piccolo, Podsakoff, Shaw, & Rich, 2010) and extrinsic rewards may negatively influence the employees' creativity and intrinsic motivation (Amabile, 1996; Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 1999). Hence, intrinsic reward practices (IRP) could be a tool that may positively contribute to employees' job satisfaction (JS) and their CP. Moreover, employees are considerably recognizing intrinsic rewards (IR), for example, recognition, appreciation by managers, etc., besides the monetary rewards (e.g. salary, incentives, etc.) provided by their employing organizations. For example, "some employees value interesting work and recognition more than money" (e.g. Morris, 1996, as cited in Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004, p. 303).

A good number of firms in service industries are emerging with more creative business efforts and millions of workers are hired. To serve the organizations, more satisfied workforces are required who can positively and creatively contribute to organizations' performance. Hence, organizations need to explore issues having positive relationships with both employee JS and CP. During the last two decades, the number of higher educational institutions in Bangladesh has increased remarkably. And these institutions are contributing at the tertiary level of education and supplying a major portion of human resources to the current job market of this country where the teachers of these institutions are playing a vital role in transforming individuals into human resources. And teachers' satisfaction and creative performance are highly desired matters at any level of the education sector. It is asserted that improving employees' JS and loyalty result in organizations' higher productivity and profit (Silvestro, 2002). Similarly, teachers also need to be both satisfied and creative in their profession. It is found that academic employees are highly satisfied and motivated through recognition of their performances and achievements (Chikungwa & Chamisa, 2013). Luthans (2011) asserted that "there is a little doubt that the non-financials can be very powerful, but are often overlooked as a reinforce in behavioral performance management" (p. 391). Hence, it could be investigated whether the IRP has associations with teachers' JS and CP at the tertiary level of educational institutions in Bangladesh.

However, a study investigating the relationship of quality-supportive IRP with employee JS and CP in the education sector of Bangladesh could contribute to

the existing literature; previous research on IRP relating to employees' JS and CP in higher education made a limited contribution in the context of Bangladesh. These research gaps have led to pursuing the current study. Consequently, there is a scope to conduct a study on whether the IRP can contribute to JS and CP of university teachers. Moreover, a lucid understanding of literature regarding IRP, employees' JS, and CP will help the HR managers of such institutions manage their resources more effectively and efficiently. Therefore, examining the associations of IRP with JS, and CP is a significant area of investigation.

1.1 Research Objectives

The major objective of the study is to look into the associations of IRP with JS and CP of the teachers in the private universities of Bangladesh. To attain this main objective, the following specific objectives are set out:

1. to investigate the relationship between IRP and JS of the teachers,
2. to examine the association between IRP and CP of the teachers.

2.0. Literature Review

2.1 Intrinsic Reward Practices

"Intrinsic compensation reflects employees' psychological mind-sets that result from performing their jobs" (Martocchio, 2019, p. 3). "Principles of intrinsic compensation also provide the basis for nonmonetary recognition awards" (Martocchio, 2006, p. 5). In literature, diverse forms of non-monetary recognition (e.g. plaques, certificates, letters, etc.), recognition for employees' achievements or celebration to acknowledge the achievement of the worker, appreciation by the managers or leaders to acknowledge an achievement, seeking suggestions from the workers that give workers to have opportunities of taking part in the decision-making process or greater responsibility in decision-making, etc. as the different forms of IR (e.g. Allen & Kilmann, 2001; Kominis & Emmanuel, 2005). Intrinsic rewards are correlated to individuals' work engagement and could lead to high employee retention (Bhatnagar, 2007). The highly involved employees are found to be depended more on IR than

extrinsic ones (Wood, 1974). In another study, Absar, Sikder, Nimalathasan, and Bhuiyan (2010) suggested that non-financial benefits or rewards (e.g. challenging job, empowerment, recognition, job security, better working condition) should be necessary for both the public and private sectors of Bangladesh. In addition, employee participation in decision-making can positively contribute to individuals' involvement, awareness, and commitment (Damanpour, 1991; Glynn, 1996) too.

2.2 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (Locke, 1976). Employees' JS is assumed to influence their opinion of "how interesting the work is, how well they are doing, and, in general, how much they enjoy doing it" (McCormick & Ilgen, 1985, p. 309). It is an attitude towards work-related conditions, facets, or aspects of the job (Wiener, 1982). Studies found that JS has positive impacts on job performance, positive work values, and high levels of employee motivation while it has negative impacts on absenteeism, turnover, and burnout of the employees (Begley & Czajka, 1993; Tharenou, 1993). In different studies, JS has been explored to be linked to different outcomes, e.g. lower turnover rates (Mobley, 1977), job performance (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001), and job involvement (Karan & Rahman, 2014). Inversely, a lack of workers' JS results in high absenteeism, high turnover, low performance, and decreased productivity (Koys, 2001). Various issues like security, pay, benefits, promotion, work conditions, supervision, type of work, vacation and holiday practices, relationships with co-workers, etc., are found to be related to JS (Misener, Haddock, Gleaton, & Ajamieh, 1996). Studies conducted in Bangladesh found that employee JS is correlated to ethical behavior (Lovely & Hoque, 2017), managerial attributes and service quality (Chakraborty & Rahman, 2013), executives' turnover intention (Karan, Rahman, & Biswas, 2018), and CP behavior (Chakraborty & Uddin, 2018).

2.3 Creative Performance

Great interest has been seen among scholars in social science regarding the factors that influence creative performance (Rahim et al. 2014). Lim and Choi (2009) define "CP as the behavioral manifestation of creativity" (p. 119), while creativity is the creation of ideas that are both novel and useful for the organization (Amabile, 1988). CP is associated with the creation of new and useful ideas regarding processes, procedures, strategies, products, and services (George & Zhou, 2001). "Creative performance is different from routine performance measures that involve decision-makers' day-to-day initiatives or routine operations, such as following standard operating procedures, resolving employee conflicts, signing documents, and so on" (Rahim, Civelek, & Liang, 2015, p. 52). Creativity and CP behaviors have positive impacts on organizational performance (Mishra & Singh, 2010). Studies found various factors like feedback (Zhou, 1998), social intelligence (Rahim, Civelek, & Liang, 2015), and cultural norms (Moorman, 1995) influence the CP or outcomes of the employees. Amabile (1988) asserts that organizations need to create a climate that encourages and stimulates employees' creative thinking. A study conducted by Chakraborty and Uddin (2018) revealed that job involvement has a significant influence on the CP behavior of individuals.

3.0 Development of Research Hypotheses

3.1 Intrinsic Rewards and Job Satisfaction

IR, which includes various forms of recognition, 360-degree rating, a celebration for the achievement of the employees, etc., is investigated in different studies (e.g. Allen & Kilmann, 2001). Intrinsic rewards that include non-monetary forms of recognition (e.g. plaques, certificates, letters, etc.) are also considered recognition given to someone for their achievement. Work recognition is found to be related to higher levels of employees' JS (Saunderson, 2004). When a manager appraises someone, it may work in the form of feedback regarding one's job performance that may influence the emotions of the employees and result in higher JS. Hence, recognition for quality performance may contribute to teachers' JS. Feedback regarding employees' performance contributes to employee motivation, JS, and performance management, too (Alma & Thomas, 2001). Moreover, IR

followed by extrinsic social rewards is a powerful predictor of overall work satisfaction (Mottaz, 1985). Thomas and Tymon, (1994) also found evidence for the association of IR and employees' JS. Considering the above evidence of the earlier studies, it may be assumed that there may be a positive association of IRP with the JS in Bangladesh too. Hence, the following hypothesis has been proposed:

> *Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between intrinsic reward practices and job satisfaction of the teachers in the private universities in Bangladesh*

3.2 Intrinsic Rewards and Creative Performance

An organizational reward system plays a significant role in motivating employees' CP (Eisenberger, 1992). Several studies also showed that intrinsic motivation stimulates creativity (e.g. Amabile, 1985; Choi, 2004). In addition, innovation necessitates a higher level of involvement and participation (Damanpour, 1991). It is found that highly involved individuals depend more on intrinsic reward (Wood, 1974), and a positive relationship has also been found between job involvement and employees' CP behavior (Chakraborty & Uddin, 2018). Hence, it could be assumed that IRP could have an association with employees' CP. Rewards like recognition and appreciation have a significant role in motivating employees and increasing their performance (Deeprose, 1994). Thus, positive recognition or feedback from the institution or the supervisor may motivate employees to put more effort which may lead to CP. Literature reveals that feedback is an influential factor in stimulating CP (Zhou & George, 2001). Suppose institutions provide positive feedback (it may be in the form of celebration or recognition of employees' performance) regarding the creative efforts that may inspire them to take more new and innovative steps, even in their day-to-day activities. Moreover, employees who get the opportunities of participating in setting goals and making decisions perceive higher levels of work-environment creativity (Schepers & van den Berg, 2007). Similarly, if teachers get the opportunity to provide suggestions and participate in the decision-making process in their institutions, they may be motivated and may have a tendency to contribute more which may lead them to take more creative steps for the well-being of the institutions. Based on the above discussion, it may be hypothesized that IRP may have a relation with CP

in the context of Bangladesh too. Hence, the second hypothesis has been developed as follows:

> *Hypothesis 2: There is a positive association between intrinsic reward practices and the creative performance of the teachers in the private universities in Bangladesh*

Based on the literature review and hypotheses considered for the study, the following research framework is developed to illustrate the associations of IRP with JS and CP:

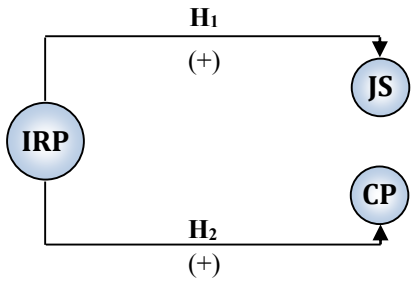


Figure-1: Research Framework

Note: IRP=intrinsic reward practices; JS=job satisfaction; CP=creative performance.

Source: Authors' contribution, 2019.

4.0. Research Methods

4.1. Participants

Teachers working in different private universities in the Chattogram City of Bangladesh were considered as the population of the research. Hence, data for this study were collected from 101 teachers working at five different private universities in Chattogram. The convenience sampling technique was used in selecting respondents for collecting data for this study. Respondents were requested to rate their perceptions regarding IRP in their current institutions, their JS, and CP at their current workplace. The respondents were also asked to provide their demographic information (i.e. age, gender, tenure, educational background, and organizational level). During data collection, information

regarding their designations and the names of their institutions were not sought out.

Respondents varied in the age ranging from 25 to 65 years, with a mean of 33.6 (SD = 6.8) years. The average job experience of the respondents was 6.7 years (SD = 5.1). Among 101 teachers, 53 (52.5%) were male while 48 (47.5%) were female. There were 5 (5%), 92 (91%), and 4 (4%) representations, respectively, by the top, middle, and lower-level participants. Among 101 teachers, 7 of them had completed Bachelor's degrees while 88 others had completed Master's degrees, and 6 of them held other higher degrees.

4.2 Tools Used for Data Collection and Data Analysis

In measuring IRP in the organizations, JS, and CP of the respondents, printed questionnaires were administered. All the instruments used in this study were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). This study adopts the following measures to collect data from the participants.

4.2.1 Intrinsic Reward Practice

Quality is one of the most vital issues in any educational institution. Hence, to measure the IRP in institutions, seven items were adopted from the intrinsic reward practices scale developed by Allen and Kilmann (2001). Sample items of the IRP scale are "My organization frequently provides non-monetary forms of recognition to acknowledge achievement of quality improvement goals such as plaques, certificates, letters, complimentary tickets, merchandise, etc.", "My organization provides quality based promotions wherein promotions are based primarily on the achievement of quality-based goals as opposed to quantity-based goals" etc. The reliability of the IRP scale in this study was 0.79.

4.2.2 Job Satisfaction

To measure the respondents' job satisfaction, an eleven-item scale developed by Ather and Nimalathasan (2006) was used. Sample items were "I like the content of the work I do", "My achievement is recognized by my superior" etc. The reliability of the JS scale for this study was 0.89.

4.2.2 Creative Performance

In measuring the CP of the respondents, items were adopted from the thirteen-item scale developed by Zhou and George (2001). Sample items were "I come up with new and practical ideas to improve performance", "I promote and champion ideas to others" etc. The reliability of the CP scale for the current study was 0.92.

4.3. Data Collection Procedure and Analysis of Data

Printed questionnaires were distributed among 150 teachers working in diverse departments/faculties of different private universities in Chattogram. The participants were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. To maintain privacy respondents' names, designations, and the names of their institutions/departments were not sought out during data collection. Finally, 101 (67.33%) usable responses were received. To attain the objectives of the study, descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analyses were used. The SPSS 18.0 was used to analyze the data. Due to some constraints, it was not possible to collect an equal number of responses from each of the concerned institutions.

4.4. Reliability of Scales and Validity of Data

The reliability of a measure indicates the stability and consistency with which the instrument measures the concepts and helps to assess the goodness of a measure (Sekaran, 2000). A value that is greater than 0.70 represents good reliability (Litwin, 1995; Oppenheim, 2003; Sekaran, 2000). In this study, Cronbach's alpha of IRP, JS, and CP were 0.79, 0.89, and 0.92. Hence, all these survey instruments were highly reliable for data collection. Validity is defined as a valid measure of what it is intended to measure (DeVaus, 2001). Validity was not essential because established survey instruments were adopted in this current study.

5.0. Data Analyses and Findings

The reliability (α) calculated for the IRP, JS, and CP, and correlations between the variables are presented in Table-1.

Table-1: Reliabilities of and Correlations between variables

Variables / Components	**Reliability (α)**	**Correlations**		
		1	**2**	**3**
1. IRP	.79	1		
2. JS	.89	.52**	1	
3. CP	.92	.47**	.54**	1

*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level; N = 101; IRP = intrinsic reward practices; JS = job satisfaction; CP = creative performance.*

Source: Authors own calculation, 2019.

The results presented in Table-1 indicate that there is a significant positive correlation ($r = .52$, $p < 0.01$) between IRP and JS. A significant positive relationship ($r = .47$, $p < 0.01$) between IRP and CP is also found in this study. Thus, it indicates that both hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported by the results.

Table-2: Summary of Regression Analysis of Socio-Demographic Characteristics with IRP, JS, and CP

Covariates	Co-efficient (β)			S.E. (β)			Value of t-statistic			Value of R^2			Value of F –statistic		
	IRP	**JS**	**CP**	**IRP**	**JS**	**CP**	**IRP**	**JS**	**CP**	**IRP**	**JS**	**CP**	**IRP**	**JS**	**CP**
Age	.004	.003	-.02	.03	.02	.02	-.16	-.11	-.86						
Gender	-.41	-.02	-.15	.16	.15	.13	-2.55*	-.10	-1.16						
Tenure	.00	.02	.03	.03	.03	.03	-.05	.65	.96	.12	.07	.04	2.5*	1.5	.84
Education	.44	.38	.19	.22	.20	.17	1.97	1.87	1.10						
Position	-.14	-.25	-.07	.26	.24	.20	-.54	-1.07	-.34						

*** Significant at the 0.01 level; * Significant at the 0.05 level; N = 101; IRP = intrinsic reward practices; JS = job satisfaction; CP = creative performance.*

Source: Authors own calculation, 2019.

A review of the Table-2 demonstrates that 12%, 7%, and 4% of the variances in IRP, JS, and CP respectively were explained by the socio-demographic characteristics (e.g. age, gender, tenure, education, and position). The results of this study indicate that a larger portion of variances in IRP, JS, and CP remain unexplained. The presence of unexplained variance suggests that there might be other potential variables that account for variations in IRP, JS, and CP.

Table-3: Summary of Regression Analysis regarding IRP (predictor), JS, and CP

Predictand	Intrinsic reward practices (Predictor)				
	Co-efficient (β)	**S.E. (β)**	**Value of t-statistic**	**Value of R^2**	**Value of F –statistic**
JS	.46	.08	6.1**	.27	36.31**
CP	.36	.07	5.32**	.22	28.33**

*** Significant at the 0.01 level; N = 101; JS = job satisfaction; CP = creative performance.*

Source: Authors own calculation, 2019.

Results shown in Table-3 indicate that about 27% and 22% of the variances in JS and CP are explained by IRP, respectively. Although a large proportion of variances in JS and CP were unexplained, it has been suggested that IRP might be the predictor in explaining the JS and CP.

6.0. Discussions and Implications

6.1 Discussions

The first purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between IRP and JS. Hypothesis 1 stated that there is a positive relationship between IRP and JS. The result ($r = 0.52$, $p < 0.01$) of the current study supported this contention. This result also offers support for the theoretical argument that IRP may be an important factor in improving employees' JS. The second purpose of this study was to examine the association between IRP and CP and in the second hypothesis, it is hypothesized that there is a positive association between IRP and CP. The result ($r = 0.47$, $p < 0.01$) of this study shows positive correlation between the two variables. This tentative understanding is based on the theoretical assumption that IRP may be a precursor of employees' higher CP. The result of the study also indicates that 27% variance in JS and 22% variance in CP are explained by IRP. It specifies that individuals, who perceive that they are intrinsically rewarded, are more satisfied and tend to exhibit more CP.

6.2 Implications

Teachers working at the tertiary level of education need to be satisfied and creative in their profession to serve their institutions and institutions should also be aware of keeping their teachers satisfied and creative in their service. The current study emphasizes the necessity of implementing IRP that focuses on quality to enhance JS and CP of individuals. Thus, this study also suggests that policymakers of the institutions should put more effort into ensuring IRP which will ultimately lead to higher quality, JS, and CP of their teachers.

Concerning management and the heads of the programs, departments, or faculties may take the advantage of practicing intrinsic reward by praising their teachers for their regular contributions, asking for suggestions whenever and wherever possible and necessary, acknowledging and celebrating their achievements and contributions, ensuring quality-based promotion, providing positive feedback to their teachers for their quality service and creative contributions to their day to day activities. Policymakers of these institutions should create and foster such an environment that supports and encourage quality service and CP. It is suggested that in developing HR policy, management should also create a provision that will consider issues like providing non-monetary forms of recognition to acknowledge employee achievement that will ensure the IRP for supporting quality. Such practices of IR along with extrinsic rewards could contribute to both employee satisfaction and CP that will eventually benefit the institutions.

6.2. Limitations

Despite the positive implications for management, the current study has some limitations. The most remarkable limitation arose from the use of convenience sampling which might restrict the generalizability of the findings. In addition, data collected from a few private universities of Chattogram may not represent the whole scenario of the country. The small sample size (N = 101) posed another limitation for this study. Larger sample size is needed to investigate further the relationships among the variables. Finally, it should, however, be noted that the current study used self-rated instruments to measure CP, which was short of 360-degree assessments where senior bosses, supervisors, colleagues, and peers could rate participants on the relevant issues.

6.3. Future Directions

In terms of future research directions, studies should be attempted to examine the associations among IRP, JS, and CP of employees in diverse industries and at different organizational levels longitudinally. Moreover, a study comparison between public and private universities will be helpful for a better understanding of the relationship between the studied variables. Future research would be benefited from a large sample size, using a variety of samples. Research examining the relationship among IRP, job satisfaction, and CP mediated by other factors, e.g. extrinsic reward practices and talent management practices could be investigated.

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