



Journal Homepage: -www.journalijar.com
**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF
 ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)**

Article DOI:10.21474/IJAR01/6824
 DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/6824>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REWARD MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND DISCIPLINE OF EMPLOYEES IN PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN UGANDA.

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Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 02 February 2018
 Final Accepted: 04 March 2018
 Published: April 2018

Keywords:-

Relationship; Reward Management,
 Strategies, Discipline, Private
 Universities.

Abstract

In private universities, like any other organisation reward management is one of the strategies used by Human Resource Managers for attracting and retaining suitable employees as well as facilitating them to improve their performance through motivation and to comply with employment legislation and regulation. This study investigated the relationship between reward management strategies and employee discipline in private universities in Uganda. The study employed a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design. Qualitative and Quantitative approaches were also employed. The sampled universities are the sampling units and lecturers, University administrators and the human resource personnel formed the sampling frame. A sample size of 380 respondents was obtained from a population of 7,184 using Krejcie and Morgan formula. Purposive, Cluster and simple random sampling techniques were used to obtain the respondents. Questionnaires and interviews were used to collect data. Quantitative data were analysed using frequencies, Percentages, Pearson correlation and regression analysis while qualitative data were arranged thematically and reported as narrations. The findings revealed that there was a significant positive correlation between remuneration and employee discipline ($r = .341$; $p = .000$), employee benefits and employee discipline ($r = .590$; $p = .000$) and promotion and discipline of employees ($r = .679$; $p = .010$). The conclusions showed that there was a significant correlation between remuneration and employee discipline. There was a significant positive correlation between employee benefits and employee discipline. The study further found out that there was a significant and positive correlation between promotion and discipline of employees. The study recommended that better remuneration of employees in an organization have influence on employee discipline. Therefore, private universities need to embrace better ways of remunerating employees as this improves commitment to work and discipline.

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Introduction:-

Discipline like reward, is an inevitable correlate of organisations and is one of the major functions of performing managers (Maicibi, 2007). Discipline can be defined as a state of self-control and orderly conduct of an individual in accordance with the acceptable standard mode of behaviour. It can also be referred to as the person's ability to control his own behaviour so that he does what is expected of him. It further refers to the practice of training people to obey rules, regulations and orders and punishing them if they do not. When an organisation is not satisfied with the behaviour of an employee, it can take disciplinary action against him/her aimed at maintaining standards consistent with an organization's mission and strategic goals (Tibamwenda, 2010). Hersey and Blanchard et al (1993:269), traced the word "discipline" to have come from the word 'disciple'. Considering a disciple to be a learner, they referred to discipline as a learning process that provides an opportunity for positive growth.

However, for organisation staff discipline is a condition where by employees conduct themselves in accordance with the organisation rules and standard acceptable behaviour. This definition is the same as the one by Jones, George and Hills (2000), who defined discipline as obedience, synergy, application and other outward mark of respect for superior's authority. It can be further considered as the general conduct or behaviour of people in a particular setting. If the conduct conforms to the expected and required norms, we say they are disciplined. But if it does not conform, then we say they are undisciplined. Actually, discipline is a concept which tends to hinge on the notion that, nothing left loose, ever does something meaningful.

The analogy by Tripathi (2004), can explain this concept better. He said that just as no stream drives anything until it is confined, no horse gets anywhere until it is harnessed and no Niagara is ever turned into light and power until it is funneled, therefore also no man ever grows until he/she is disciplined. The analogy implies is that discipline is a concept which involves taking action to correct, guide or control behaviour of people towards realizing an intended outcome. It further denotes that managers should work to help the subordinates portray a desired behaviour.

Private universities in Uganda have been considered not to be performing to the level of other public universities. It has been observed that most private universities use different reward management strategies for their employees compared to their counterparts in public universities. These private universities have different criteria of promoting employees, remunerating and offering employee benefits (NCHE, 2005). It is likely that poor reward management strategies may lead to the irregular attendance, late marking of students' course works, non-Punctuality, not adhering to rules and regulations, non-accomplishment of tasks and assignment, untimely issuing of exam result, non-accountability, Employee dishonesty, irresponsibility of goods and property, non-stability at work place and increased turnover of employees. This contextual evidence leaves one wondering if the indiscipline that is in the university could be as a result of the poor reward management strategies being used in the private universities in Uganda.

In private universities, like any other organisation reward management is one of the strategies used by Human Resource Managers for attracting and retaining suitable employees as well as facilitating them to improve their performance through motivation and to comply with employment legislation and regulation. As observed by McKenna and Beach (2002), and rightly so, that while the financial aspect of rewards relates to extrinsic motivation meant for the satisfaction of basic needs of life, while the non-financial rewards are more intrinsic, in that, they are meant for the satisfaction of psychological needs including job variety and challenging people, achievement, recognition, employee development and involvement in determining the affairs of the organisation.

It has been observed that private universities charge more tuition from students and as a result of this, they are expected to be offering better remuneration, employee benefits and to have streamlined promotions for their employees. However, in an educational setting several factors limit the bid to achieve quality (Tibarimbasa, 2010). A number of factors inspire the changes that occur all the time in terms of students' enrolment, staff needs, attraction and retention. These changes tend to create doubt in the public as to whether the institutions are producing good quality people that can move the country forward. These changes can only be met if there is a clear reward management strategy that brings all the employees together. According to Kane (1996), this link can be created through adopting an effective strategy that can bring the employees and the institutions together. Unless such a management strategy is well streamlined, the institutions are likely to be affected since the resources will not be held together to achieve positive results that are the virtues upon which a university should be built to give solutions to the social, economic and political problems in society.

Private universities in Uganda, which are the focus of this study, are experiencing a number of management problems (Tibarimbasa, 2010). For instance, the Commission of Inquiry into the management of private universities indicated unclear management structures in some universities being characterized by a mixture of ownership and management, poor retention of staff especially administrative staff and threats of strikes resulting from unprecedented increase of school fees, (National Council of Higher Education, 2005). It should be noted, however, that there is no independent study that has been carried out to establish the factors leading to these managerial problems. Unless these factors are explored, there is a likelihood of these universities losing track of their goals and objectives. It is from this conviction that the researcher found it necessary to carry out a study which focuses on the reward management strategies and discipline of employees in private universities in Uganda. In the past years, the level of discipline among private university employees has deteriorated to the extent that there have been cases of irregularity of employees at work, late marking of students' course works, constant late coming, non-adherence to rules and regulations, non-accomplishment of tasks and assignments given, untimely issuing of exam results, non-accountability, Employee dishonesty, irresponsibility of goods and property, non-stability at work place and employee turnover. This has constantly led to frequent strikes by students as shown by the most recent strike at Nkumba University, 2014 and Muteesa Royal University which was closed as reported in the Sunday Monitor of August 28th 2016. This therefore called for a study of the relationship of reward management strategies and discipline of employees.

Methodology:-

Research methodology describes the overall approach to research design (Creswell, 2009). It is a plan of action that links methods to outcomes. The matter of understanding the relationship between reward management strategies and employee discipline in private universities in Uganda is an epistemological one. The epistemological and ontological underpinnings of the research questions posed in this study require an understanding of respondents' knowledge about reward management strategies employed by various universities.

This study used pragmatist paradigm since it combines the qualitative and quantitative approaches within different phases of the research process (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Pragmatist researchers focuses on the 'what' and 'how' of the research problem (Creswell, 2003). Pragmatism is seen as the paradigm that provides the underlying philosophical framework for mixed-methods research (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003; Somekh & Lewin, 2005). Since this research used quantitative and qualitative approaches, this paradigm was deemed appropriate for this study.

The study employed a descriptive cross-sectional survey research design to establish the reward management strategies and discipline of employees in private universities. Descriptive survey design enabled the researcher to describe the state of affairs as they are and report the findings (Kombo & Tromp, 2009). The study adopted concurrent triangulation of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection making it a mixed methods approach. This method allowed rapid collection of data from a large sample within the shortest time possible by use of questionnaires and interview guide.

The target population was 7,186 employees according to the year 2016 from the private universities in Uganda. This consisted of 7164 lecturers, seven human resource personnel seven university administrators and seven heads of departments. The population included employees of private accredited and chartered universities such as lecturers, University

The sample size for the study was based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula where a sample size of 365 lecturers was obtained. Furthermore, 7 university administrators and 7 human resource personnel were included in the study giving a sample size of 385.

Administrators Heads of departments and the human resource personnel.

Purposive sampling was used to select the administrators, human resource and heads of departments because in this study; they possess information regarding the nature of reward management strategies and the discipline of employees in the private universities. For the other categories of employees (lecturers) convenient sampling (where the respondents are selected because they are accessible) was used to select the needed respondents. This was because of the nature of the positions the lecturers hold and their busy schedules of lecturing.

To ensure good representation and to allow for the study of the reward management strategies and discipline in private universities in Uganda, the status of registration was considered as a crucial criterion. All these universities were purposively sampled.

The data collection instruments questionnaires which comprised of both structured and unstructured questions, Interviews administered to Heads of departments, University Administrators and human resource personnel.

To test the validity of the instruments used in the study, the questionnaires were availed to supervisors together with a panel of experienced researchers in education management of Kampala International University. The results from the piloting together with the comments from the experts were incorporated in the final instrument revisions to improve its validity. To determine the reliability of the instruments, research questionnaire was piloted using thirty employees from Islamic University in Uganda (IUTU) who were not part of the respondents. The Cronbach alpha for the four constructs were; remuneration ($\alpha=.812$); employee benefits ($\alpha=.743$); promotion ($\alpha=.684$) and Discipline ($\alpha=.804$). The overall Cronbach alpha was 0.761 for employee questionnaire and therefore all the constructs were considered reliable and therefore the instruments were adopted for the study.

After the data collection exercise, the data was edited and the researcher made sure every question was answered. Raw data was then coded and entered into the Statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0). The researcher generated percentages and frequencies, which were used to make comparisons of the responses. The hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. This is because all the three hypotheses are concerned with relationships, and it is Pearson Correlation Coefficient that is appropriate for testing such relationships. In addition, multiple regression analysis was used test the relationships in the model;

$$y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + e$$

Where,

y= Dependent variable

α = regression constant,

$\beta_1 - \beta_3$ = Regression coefficients (change in y for every unit change in X)

X_1 = Employees Remuneration

X_2 = Employees Benefits

X_3 = Employees Promotion

e = Error term

Using regression, the DV which was Employee discipline was regressed on the independent variables (IV) which were remuneration (IV1), Employee benefits (IV2) and promotion (IV3). The data collected from respondents using interviews and the open-ended questionnaire in the semi-structured questionnaire was analysed using content analysis. The qualitative data was basically generated through interviews with the respondents on the relevant aspects of the research. During analysis, most of this information was presented in form of quotations.

Results:-

Pearson Linear Correlation Coefficient Analysis was used to test the relationship between reward management strategies (remuneration, benefits and promotion) and employee discipline. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1:- Pearson Linear Correlation Analysis showing the relationship between Reward Management Strategies and Discipline of Employees

		Remuneration2	Benefits2	Promotion	Discipline
Remuneration2	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	309			
Benefits2	Pearson Correlation	.341**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	309	309		
Promotion	Pearson Correlation	.026	.354**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.646	.000		

	N	309	309	309	309
Discipline	Pearson Correlation	.231**	.590**	.679**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	309	309	309	309

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Regression analysis was employed to test the relationships in the model. The regression method was used to determine the relationship between reward management strategies and employee discipline in private universities in Uganda. The term "independent" variables and "dependent" variables are derived from the mathematical expression;

$$y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + e$$

Where,

y= Dependent variable

α = regression constant,

$\beta_1 - \beta_3$ = Regression coefficients (change in y for every unit change in X)

X_1 = Remuneration

X_2 = Benefits

X_3 = Promotion

e = Error term

The regression coefficient ' α ' is the Y intercept: while β_1 , β_2 , β_3 and β_4 are the net change in y for each change of either of the variables (factors), x_1 , x_2 and x_3 .

The main purpose of the study was to determine the relationship between reward management strategies and employee discipline in private universities in Uganda. Regression analysis combined selected independent variables with employee discipline being the dependent variable. This was to determine any significance for the assumed relationships based on the magnitude and direction of the relationship. Variables such employee remuneration, employee benefits and employee promotion were the predictors representing the independent variables. The f statistics produced $CF = 157.507$ was significant at 1 percent level ($CF \leq .001$), thus conforming the fitness of the model. The R^2 represented the measure of variability in employee discipline that is accounted for by the predictors (independent variables). From the model, ($R^2 = .608$) shows that all the predictors account for 60.8% variation for employee discipline in private universities in Uganda. Therefore, the predictors used in the model have captured the variation in employee discipline.

The adjusted R^2 gave the idea of how well the model generalizes and ideally, its value would be the same or very close to R^2 . In our case the value of adjusted R^2 is .608, showing that if the data was derived from the population rather than the sample it accounts for approximately 60.8% variance in employee discipline. The change statistics were used to test whether the change in R^2 is significant using the F ratio as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2:- Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin - Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df 1	df 2	Sig. F Change	
1	.780 _a	.608	.604	.26607	.608	157.507	3	305	.000	1.972
a. Predictors: (Constant), Promotion, Remuneration, Benefits										
b. Dependent Variable: Discipline										

The analysis of variance was used to test whether the model could significantly fit in predicting the outcome than using the mean as shown in Table 3.

Table 3:-ANOVA for Reward Management Strategies as Predictors of Employee Discipline

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	33.453	3	11.151	157.507	.000 ^b
	Residual	21.593	305	.071		
	Total	55.045	308			
a. Dependent Variable: Discipline						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Promotion, Remuneration, Benefits						

The F- ratio represents the ratio of improvement in prediction that results from fitting the model, relative to the inaccuracy that exists in the model. The F- ratio was 157.507 which are likely to happen by chance and was significant ($P < .05$). The model significantly improved the ability to predict the level of employee discipline in private universities in Uganda.

From the table, it emerged that all the hypotheses were accepted indicating that employee remuneration, employee benefits and employee promotion have an influence on employee discipline in the private universities.

Table 4 shows the estimates of β values and gives an individual contribution of each predictor to the model. The β value tells us about the relationship between employee discipline with each predictor. Positive β values indicate a positive relationship between the predictors and the outcome whereas a negative coefficient represents a negative relationship. All the β values in the model were positive thus a positive relationship with employee discipline in private universities.

Table 4:- Coefficients of Employee Discipline

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.301	.131		-2.303	.022		
	Remuneration	.105	.044	.092	2.407	.017	.874	1.144
	Benefits	.485	.055	.365	8.892	.000	.765	1.307
	Promotion	.499	.035	.547	14.195	.000	.865	1.156
a. Dependent Variable: Discipline								

From the results in Table 4 the model can then be specified as:- $Employee\ Discipline = -.301 + .105x_1 + .485x_2 + .499x_3 + e$

The coefficients for each of the variables indicates the amount of change one could expect in employee discipline given a one-unit change in the value of that variable, given that all other variables in the model are held constant. The constant is -.301, and this is the predicted value when all the independent variables equals zero. The standardized regression coefficient for employee remuneration .105, meaning that for a one unit increase in employee remuneration, we would expect a .105 unit increase in employee discipline while on the other hand, a one-unit increase in employee benefits would yield a positive change of 0.485 units in employee discipline. The standardized regression coefficients were used to compare the relative strength of the various predictors within the model. Because the beta coefficients were all measured in standard deviations, instead of the units of the variables, they were compared to one another. The beta coefficients are the coefficients that would be obtained if the outcome and predictor variables were all transformed to standard scores, also called z-scores, before running the regression.

To test whether there was collinearity, tests were carried out using tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) statistics. For this model, VIF values are all below 10 and tolerance statistics are all well above 0.2 and we can conclude that there was no collinearity within our data.

When one respondent asked about the relationship between reward management strategies and discipline of employees from the administrators stated that,

“Most employees do their best at work but they are forced to provide divided attention in places they part time because of the poor pay. At the end of the day the discipline level is compromised because you cannot serve two masters at the same time”

Several members from the Human resource mentioned that indiscipline lecturers were always terminated at the end of the year.

One Head of department explained that,

“Employees in private universities rarely get warning letters, indiscipline employee services are terminated”.

Majority of the employees agreed that there was a relationship between reward management strategies and discipline of the staff. One university mentioned that:

“I believe that if employees are rewarded well they can definitely be more disciplined at work. But if rewards lack employees go for “greener pastures” in other words better jobs”. This resulted to the researcher concluding that better reward management strategies lead to higher level of discipline among employees in Ugandan private Universities.

In conclusion both qualitative and quantitative data analysis were used to come up with the findings of the study. Qualitative data was analyzed by assessing the data according to the themes that were in the study.

Conclusions of the Study:-

The study further found out that there was a significant relationship between reward management strategies and discipline of employees. This implies that reward management strategies used in an organisation influences employees discipline.

Recommendations of the Study:-

The study recommended that

1. Better remuneration of employees in an organization has influence on employee discipline. Therefore, private universities need to embrace better ways of remunerating employees as this improves commitment to work and discipline.
2. Employee benefits in an organization have influence on their discipline. Therefore, universities need to embrace both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards as these improve their self-esteem and commitment to work hence improving the discipline.
3. Employee promotion influences discipline in organizations. Private universities need to streamline promotion policies in order to ensure that employees are disciplined.
4. Better reward management strategies influence employee discipline. Private universities should endeavour to see how better Reward Management Strategies can be used to ensure the Discipline of their employees is maintained. This will enable private universities to put policies in place which can enable their employees to be well rewarded.

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