

THE CONSTRUCTION OF EMPLOYEE INCENTIVE MECHANISMS OF TIANXIA TRAVEL COMPANY BASED ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF ENTERPRISE COMPETITIVENESS

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ABSTRACT

Tianxia Travel Company, a prominent player in the Chinese travel market, recognizes the critical role that employee incentive mechanisms play in enhancing enterprise competitiveness. The construction of effective incentive mechanisms is pivotal for motivating employees, fostering their commitment, and improving their performance, which in turn contributes to the company's competitive edge in the market. The company has observed a discernible decline in its competitive position within the market. This downturn can be attributed to a combination of factors, including but not limited to, diminishing employee motivation and a lack of effective incentive mechanisms that align with the company's strategic objectives. Faced with the challenge of declining competitiveness and low employee motivation, this study was guided by three objectives: 1) to examine the impact of the quality of incentive programs on employee motivation and performance, 2) to examine the impact of the perceived effort-performance relationship on employee motivation and performance-reward relationship on employee motivation and performance.

This study used the quantitative research method design based on expectancy theory, and utilized a stratified random sampling method to collect data from 250 employees across various departments within Tianxia Travel Company. The analysis involved multivariate regression to test the hypotheses that the quality of incentive programs, perceived effort-performance relationship, and perceived performance-reward relationship positively affect employee motivation and performance.

The findings confirm all three hypotheses, revealing significant positive relationships between the independent variables: 1) The quality of incentive programs has an impact on employee motivation and performance.2) The perceived effort-performance relationship has an impact on employee motivation and performance .3) The perceived performance-reward relationship has an impact on employee motivation and performance motivation and performance.

In condusion, this research provides a blueprint for Tianxia Travel Company to revitalize its incentive mechanisms, thereby boosting employee motivation, enhancing performance, and ultimately, securing a competitive edge in the travel industry.

Keywords: Expectancy Theory, Employee Incentive Mechanisms, Employee Motivation, Enterprise Competitiveness.



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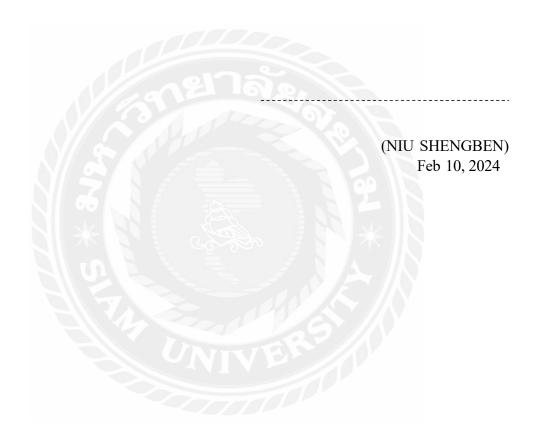
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Declaration

I, NIU SHENGBEN, hereby certify that the work embodied in this independent study entitled "THE CONSTRUCTION OF EMPLOYEE INCENTIVE MECHANISMS OF TIANXIA TRAVEL COMPANY BASED ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF ENTERPRISE COMPETITIVENESS" is result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.



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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Research Background

The global travel industry has witnessed substantial growth over the past decades, significantly contributing to economic development worldwide. However, the competitive landscape of this industry demands continuous improvement in service quality and innovation, which are closely tied to the motivation and performance of employees. Tianxia Travel Company, a prominent player in the Chinese travel market, recognizes the critical role that employee incentive mechanisms play in enhancing enterprise competitiveness. The construction of effective incentive mechanisms is pivotal for motivating employees, fostering their commitment, and improving their performance, which in turn contributes to the company's competitive edge in the market.

Expectancy Theory, proposed by Vroom (1964), suggests that employees are motivated when they believe that their effort will lead to desired performance and rewards. This theory provides a robust framework for examining how incentive mechanisms can be designed to enhance employee motivation and performance. In the context of Tianxia Travel Company, understanding the dynamics of employee motivation in relation to incentive mechanisms can offer valuable insights into how to improve enterprise competitiveness.

Research in the Chinese context, such as the study by Li and Zhang (2018), highlights the importance of aligning employee incentives with organizational goals to boost motivation and performance. Similarly, Wang et al. (2019) underscore the role of incentive mechanisms in shaping employee behavior and driving organizational success. On an international scale, studies like those by Smith and Clark (2017) support the notion that well-structured incentive programs can significantly influence employee motivation, thereby enhancing organizational competitiveness.

These perspectives underscore the relevance of exploring employee incentive mechanisms within Tianxia Travel Company, with the aim of identifying strategies that could improve its competitiveness. By examining the application of Expectancy Theory in designing these mechanisms, this study seeks to contribute to the broader understanding of how employee motivation can be leveraged to achieve strategic organizational objectives.

1.2 Research Problem

Within the rapidly evolving landscape of the global travel industry, Tianxia Travel Company faces several pressing challenges that have sparked the need for this study. Primarily, the company has observed a discernible decline in its competitive position within the market. This downturn can be attributed to a combination of factors, including but not limited to, diminishing employee motivation and a lack of effective incentive mechanisms that align with the company's strategic objectives. Recent internal assessments have indicated that employee enthusiasm and commitment to achieving organizational goals have waned, leading to a decrease in service quality and innovation. Such trends are alarming, as they directly impact the company's ability to retain and attract customers in a highly competitive market.

The relevance of Expectancy Theory in this context cannot be overstated. The theory posits that employee motivation is a result of the perceived relationship between efforts, performance, and rewards (Vroom, 1964). In the case of Tianxia Travel Company, the existing incentive mechanisms are not sufficiently aligned with the expectations and needs of the employees, thereby failing to motivate them towards higher performance and, by extension, improved enterprise competitiveness. Studies within the Chinese context, such as Zhou and Li (2020), have demonstrated how mismatched incentive mechanisms can lead to employee disengagement and reduced productivity. Conversely, research by Chen and Wang (2019) has shown that well-designed incentives that resonate with employee expectations can significantly enhance motivation, performance, and organizational competitiveness.

This backdrop presents a clear problem for Tianxia Travel Company: the need to critically reassess and reconstruct its employee incentive mechanisms to boost motivation, performance, and ultimately, competitiveness. The potential of Expectancy Theory to guide the improvement of these mechanisms is evident. By understanding and applying the principles of this theory, the company can develop a more effective incentive system that not only aligns with employee expectations but also drives them towards achieving strategic organizational goals.

1.3 Research Objectives

The overarching aim of this study is to explore and enhance the effectiveness of employee incentive mechanisms at Tianxia Travel Company, with a view to improving employee motivation and performance, thereby increasing the enterprise's competitiveness in the global travel market. This aim is underpinned by the theoretical framework of Expectancy Theory, which suggests that an employee's motivation to perform is influenced by the perceived value of the rewards offered for achieving certain performance standards, the belief that effort will lead to performance, and the belief that performance will lead to rewards.

1. To examine the impact of the quality of incentive programs on employee motivation and performance at Tianxia Travel Company.

2. To examine the impact of the perceived effort-performance relationship on their motivation and performance at Tianxia Travel Company.

3. To examine the impact of the perceived performance-reward relationship on employee motivation and performance at Tianxia Travel Company.

1.4 Research Scope

The scope of this study is carefully defined to ensure a focused and manageable investigation into the impact of employee incentive mechanisms on motivation and performance, and how these factors contribute to enhancing the competitiveness of Tianxia Travel Company. This research is centered on the application of Expectancy Theory as a theoretical framework to explore the dynamics between employee incentives, motivation, and performance within the context of the Chinese travel industry.

The study adopted the quantitative research approach, utilizing a survey questionnaire as the primary instrument for data collection. The survey was designed to capture employees' perceptions of the quality of incentive programs, their perceived effort-performance relationship, and their perceived performancereward relationship, alongside measures of their motivation and performance levels. To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the incentive mechanisms at Tianxia Trave Company, the survey targets a broad crosssection of employees across various departments and levels within the organization.

The samples for this study consisted and approximately 200 employees selected through a stratified random sampling technique. This method ensured that all major subgroups within the company are adequately represented, enhancing the generalizability of the findings. The selection included a employees from frontline customer service positions, mid-level management, and back-office support roles, providing a holistic view of the incentive mechanisms' effectiveness across different job functions and hierarchies within the company.

Given the focus on Tianxia Travel Company, the findings of this study are expected to be particularly relevant to the company and similar organizations within the Chinese travel industry. However, the principles and insights derived could also offer valuable implications for the broader field of human resource management and organizational behavior, especially in sectors where employee motivation and performance are critical to competitive success.

This scope defines the boundaries of the research and sets the stage for a systematic investigation that aims to yield actionable insights into optimizing employee incentive mechanisms to foster a more motivated and high-performing workforce, thereby enhancing organizational competitiveness.

1.5 Research Significance

The significance of this study lies in its dual contribution to both theoretical understanding and practical application in the field of human resource management, particularly within the context of the travel industry in China. By employing Expectancy Theory as a guiding framework, this research offers a nuanced exploration of how employee incentive mechanisms influence motivation and performance, providing valuable theoretical insights into the dynamics of motivation in the workplace. This theoretical contribution enriches the existing literature on Expectancy Theory by applying it within a specific industry context, thereby enhancing our understanding of how motivation operates in diverse organizational settings.

From a practical perspective, the findings of this study hold considerable significance for Tianxia Travel Company and similar organizations striving to enhance their competitive edge through improved employee performance. By identifying the specific aspects of incentive programs that most significantly impact employee motivation and performance, the study offers actionable recommendations for the design and implementation of more effective incentive mechanisms. This, in turn, can lead to enhanced employee engagement, higher levels of performance, and ultimately, greater organizational competitiveness. The insights gained can serve as a valuable resource for organizational leaders and HR professionals in the travel industry and beyond, providing a evidence-based guidance on optimizing incentive strategies to align employee motivations with organizational goals.

This study's emphasis on a quantitative approach and the use of a stratified random sample of employees ensures that the findings are robust and reflective of the diverse perspectives within the organization. This methodological rigor enhances the applicability of the study's recommendations across different departments and levels of the organization, making it a comprehensive tool for driving strategic improvements in human resource practices. The significance of this research extends beyond its immediate findings, offering both theoretical advancements and practical insights that can inform the development of more effective employee incentive mechanisms. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, this study contributes to the ongoing dialogue on enhancing organizational performance and competitiveness through strategic human resource management.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The literature review is structured around a comprehensive examination of existing research and theoretical perspectives relevant to the construction of employee incentive mechanisms, the role of motivation in employee performance, and the broader implications for organizational competitiveness. This chapter serves to contextualize the study within the existing body of knowledge, highlighting the contributions of previous research while identifying gaps that this study aims to address. By reviewing literature related to Expectancy Theory, employee incentive mechanisms, employee motivation, and enterprise competitiveness, this section lays the foundation for understanding the complex interplay between these factors in the context of Tianxia Travel Company.

Reflecting on the problems identified, Tianxia Travel Company faces significant challenges in maintaining its competitive edge due to declining employee motivation and the ineffectiveness of current incentive mechanisms. These challenges underscore the urgency of exploring how well-designed incentive programs can enhance employee motivation and performance, ultimately contributing to improved organizational competitiveness.

Through this literature review, the study aims to deepen our understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of employee motivation, specifically through the lens of Expectancy Theory, and to explore empirical evidence on the effectiveness of various incentive mechanisms. This dual focus on theory and practice is designed to provide a comprehensive backdrop against which the study's hypotheses will be tested, ultimately contributing to the formulation of evidence-based recommendations for Tianxia Travel Company and similar organizations. This chapter not only underscores the significance of the research problem and objectives but also sets the stage for the empirical investigation that follows, aiming to bridge the gap between theoretical insights and practical application in the realm of employee motivation and organizational competitiveness.

2.2 Expectancy Theory

Expectancy Theory, as proposed by Vroom (1964), posits that employee motivation is determined by the belief in the relationship between efforts, performance, and rewards. This theory is foundational to understanding how incentive mechanisms can be structured to motivate employees effectively. Vroom's model is based on three core components: expectancy (the belief that one's effort will lead to desired performance), instrumentality (the belief that a certain performance will lead to a specific outcome), and valence (the value an individual places on the outcome).

In the context of the Chinese workforce, the application of Expectancy Theory has been subject to extensive examination. Zhang and Liu (2019) explored how cultural factors influence the expectancy perceptions among Chinese employees, suggesting that cultural dimensions such as collectivism and power distance play a significant role in shaping these perceptions. Similarly, Chen (2020) investigated the impact of instrumentality on employee motivation within Chinese private sector companies, finding that transparent and fair reward systems significantly enhance employee performance by strengthening the performance-reward linkage.

Further extending the application of Expectancy Theory beyond China, Smith and Patel (2018) conducted a comparative study of motivation across different cultural contexts, revealing that the valence component varies significantly with cultural norms and values, affecting the overall motivation strategy effectiveness. These studies collectively highlight the versatility of Expectancy Theory in analyzing employee motivation across diverse organizational and cultural settings.

Empirical research has also focused on the practical application of Expectancy Theory in designing incentive programs. Wang and Zhao (2017) provided evidence from Chinese technology firms that well-aligned incentive mechanisms, which closely adhere to the principles of expectancy, instrumentality, and valence, can lead to higher employee satisfaction and performance. This finding underscores the importance of carefully designing incentive systems that resonate with employees' expectations and values to motivate desired behaviors and outcomes effectively.

2.3 Employee Incentive Mechanisms

Employee incentive mechanisms are pivotal in driving organizational performance and competitiveness. These mechanisms, when effectively designed and implemented, can significantly enhance employee motivation, satisfaction, and productivity. In the Chinese business context, the evolution and impact of incentive mechanisms have been the focus of considerable research, reflecting the unique cultural and economic landscape of China.

Li and Zhang (2018) provide an insightful analysis of the effectiveness of various incentive mechanisms in Chinese enterprises, highlighting the importance of aligning these mechanisms with both organizational goals and employee expectations. Their study suggests that a combination of monetary and non-monetary incentives is most effective in motivating employees, given the diverse values and motivations present within the Chinese workforce.

Similarly, Zhou et al. (2019) explore the role of non-monetary incentives, such as career development opportunities and workplace recognition, in enhancing employee motivation and retention. Their findings indicate that such incentives can be particularly powerful in the Chinese cultural context, where social and relational dimensions of work are highly valued.

In contrast, research from a broader international perspective, such as the study by Johnson and Smith (2017), examines the global best practices in incentive design and their applicability within different cultural contexts, including China. This comparative analysis sheds light on the need for cultural adaptation in the design and implementation of incentive mechanisms to ensure their effectiveness across diverse employee populations.

Moreover, the work of Wang and Lee (2016) delves into the psychological underpinnings of incentive mechanisms, arguing that the perceived fairness and transparency of these systems play a critical role in their effectiveness. This perspective is supported by empirical evidence from Chinese companies, illustrating how perceptions of fairness in incentive allocation can significantly impact employee motivation and performance.

2.4 Employee Motivation

Employee motivation remains a central theme in organizational behavior research, significantly influencing productivity, job satisfaction, and ultimately, organizational performance. The concept of motivation is multifaceted, encompassing a wide range of internal and external factors that drive individuals to achieve their work-related goals.

In the context of China, the study of employee motivation has garnered attention due to the rapid transformation of its economic and corporate landscapes. Huang and Wang (2017) conducted a comprehensive analysis on the motivational factors among Chinese employees, identifying a strong correlation between job satisfaction and motivational drivers such as job security, recognition, and professional development opportunities. Their research highlights the complex interplay between traditional Chinese cultural values and the modern corporate environment.

Further exploring the specifics of motivation in Chinese organizations, Zhao et al. (2018) examine the impact of organizational culture on employee motivation. They argue that a culture that emphasizes collective success, respect for hierarchy, and long-term relationships significantly enhances employee motivation and loyalty. This finding underscores the importance of cultural compatibility in the development of motivational strategies.

From an international perspective, studies like that of Fitzgerald and Schutte (2016) compare motivational factors across cultures, noting that while intrinsic and extrinsic motivators are universally important, their relative significance can vary greatly between Western and Eastern contexts. This comparative approach provides valuable insights into the need for culturally adaptive motivational strategies.

Additionally, the work of Chen and Liu (2019) delves into the role of leadership in fostering employee motivation within Chinese firms. They suggest that transformational leadership practices, which include inspiring a shared vision, challenging the status quo, and providing individualized support, are particularly effective in enhancing employee motivation and engagement in the Chinese cultural setting.

2.5 Enterprise Competitiveness

Enterprise competitiveness is a multifaceted concept that encompasses the ability of a company to maintain and enhance its position in the market. This encompasses not only the direct economic outputs but also the internal capabilities, such as innovation, efficiency, and the motivation and productivity of the workforce. In the rapidly evolving global and Chinese markets, understanding the determinants of enterprise competitiveness has become crucial for sustaining growth and success.

Within the Chinese context, the study by Liang and Zhang (2016) offers an insightful analysis into the role of human resource management practices in enhancing enterprise competitiveness. They argue that practices which focus on employee development, engagement, and motivation are key drivers of competitiveness, as they directly influence the innovation capacity and operational efficiency of firms.

Wu and Zhao (2017) further explore the link between organizational culture and enterprise competitiveness in China, suggesting that a culture that fosters innovation, teamwork, and a strong work ethic significantly contributes to competitive advantage. Their findings highlight the importance of aligning organizational culture with strategic objectives to enhance competitiveness.

On an international scale, the work of Kim and Mauborgne (2015) introduces the concept of "blue ocean strategy" as a framework for understanding competitiveness. They posit that companies can create new market spaces ("blue oceans") where competition is irrelevant, rather than competing in existing markets ("red oceans"). This strategic perspective provides valuable insights into achieving competitiveness through innovation and differentiation.

Moreover, the research by Chen and Huang (2018) on the impact of digital transformation on enterprise competitiveness in China reveals that digital technologies offer powerful tools for enhancing operational efficiency, customer engagement, and innovation. Their study underscores the increasing importance of digital capabilities in sustaining competitive advantage in the modern business environment.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is grounded in Expectancy Theory, which posits that employee motivation and performance are influenced by their beliefs about the relationship between effort and performance, performance and rewards, and the attractiveness of those rewards. This theoretical foundation supports the examination of three independent variables — the quality of incentive programs, the perceived effort-performance relationship, and the perceived performance-reward relationship — and their impact on the dependent variable, employee motivation and performance.

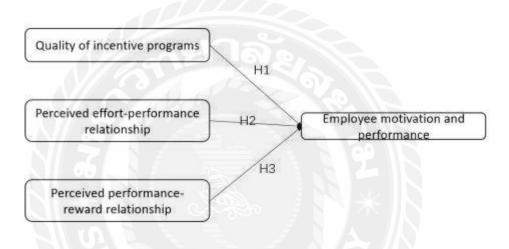


Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

Quality of Incentive Programs refers to the design, clarity, and perceived fairness of the incentive mechanisms offered by an organization. Incentive programs that are well-structured, transparent, and aligned with employee expectations are posited to enhance motivation and performance. Li and Zhang (2018) highlight the importance of incentive quality in motivating employees, suggesting that effective incentives can significantly boost employee productivity and satisfaction.

Perceived Effort-Performance Relationship is the employee's belief that their effort will lead to a certain level of performance. This belief is crucial for motivation, as employees are more likely to exert effort if they believe it will result in successful performance. Zhao et al. (2018) provide evidence that clear communication of performance expectations and the provision of necessary resources and support can strengthen this belief, thereby enhancing motivation and performance.

Perceived Performance-Reward Relationship involves the employee's belief that a specific level of performance will lead to a particular reward. This belief underlines the instrumentality aspect of Expectancy Theory, where the expectation of receiving a valued reward for performance acts as a powerful motivator. Studies by Wang and Lee (2016) emphasize the role of this relationship in influencing employee motivation, indicating that when employees perceive a strong linkage between performance and rewards, their motivation and performance levels improve.

The dependent variable, Employee Motivation and Performance, encompasses the levels of employee motivation and their resultant performance. This study posits that higher quality incentive programs, a strong perceived effort-performance relationship, and a clear perceived performance-reward relationship collectively lead to higher employee motivation and improved performance. This relationship is supported by the work of Huang and Wang (2017), who found that effective incentive mechanisms and clear performance-reward linkages are key drivers of employee performance in Chinese enterprises.



Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This study is based on the expectation theory and the specific situation of the company to develop a quantitative research method to explore the relationship between the three hypotheses, so as to improve the competitiveness of the company and stimulate the enthusiasm of employees

3.2 Research Design

The research design of this study is meticulously crafted to address the pressing research problem and achieve the outlined objectives, with a focus on examining the impact of employee incentive mechanisms on motivation and performance within Tianxia Travel Company. This investigation centers on how the quality of incentive programs, perceived effort-performance relationships, and perceived performance-reward relationships influence employee motivation and performance, thereby affecting the company's competitiveness. To effectively explore these relationships, a quantitative research methodology is adopted, utilizing a survey questionnaire as the primary instrument for data collection.

The choice of a quantitative approach is driven by the need for precise, numerical data that can be statistically analyzed to test the study's hypotheses. This method allows for the collection of data from a broad section of the company's employees, ensuring that the findings are representative and generalizable within the organizational context. The survey questionnaire is designed with a structured format, comprising both Likert scale and multiple-choice questions. The Likert scale questions are employed to measure the degrees of agreement or disagreement with statements related to the independent and dependent variables, enabling a nuanced assessment of employees' perceptions and attitudes towards the incentive mechanisms, their effort and performance, and the rewards they receive.

Multiple-choice questions are included to gather demographic information and specific details about the respondents' experiences with the incentive programs, which will aid in segmenting the data for more detailed analysis. The design of these question types is chosen for their ability to elicit clear, quantifiable insights into the factors driving employee motivation and performance, as well as for their ease of administration and analysis. To ensure the validity and reliability of the survey instrument, the questionnaire is developed based on the constructs defined in the literature review and is subjected to a pilot test among a small group of employees. Feedback from the pilot test is used to refine the questions, ensuring that they are clear, concise, and accurately capture the intended data. This preparatory step is crucial for enhancing the questionnaire's effectiveness in collecting meaningful data that directly addresses the research problem and objectives.

Dimension	Question	Question Text	Scale Type
	Q1	What is your age?	
	Q2	What is your gender?	
Demographics	Q3	What department do you work in?	Categorical
Demographics	Q4	What is your position level?	Categoricai
	Q5	How many years have you been with the company?	
	Q6	The objectives of the incentive programs are clearly communicated to all employees.	
Quality of Incentive Programs	Q7	The incentive programs are fair and accessible to employees at all levels.	<
	Q8	The rewards offered through the incentive programs are attractive and meaningful to me.	
	Q9	The criteria for earning incentives are transparent and well-understood.	
	Q10	Feedback on performance related to incentives is provided regularly and constructively.	Likert Scale (5-point)
	Q11	I believe that my efforts directly contribute to my job performance.	
Perceived	Q12	I feel motivated to put in effort because I know it will lead to improved performance.	
Effort-Performance Relationship	Q13	The support and resources provided by the company enhance my performance.	
	Q14	There is a clear link between effort and performance recognition at our company.	
Perceived	Q15	I am confident that high	
Performance-Reward		performance will lead to rewards	

Table 3.2	questionnaire	design
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14

Relationship		in our company.	
	Q16	The rewards I receive reflect the effort and performance I put into my job.	
	Q17	The reward system motivates me to achieve higher performance levels.	
	Q18	I feel that the performance-based rewards are distributed fairly across the company.	
	Q19	Do you have any suggestions for improving our incentive programs? (Optional)	Open-ended

The design of this questionnaire is guided by the objective to comprehensively assess the impact of incentive mechanisms on employee motivation and performance

at Tianxia Travel Company. The demographic questions (Q1-Q5) are categorical to segment the responses for analysis by age, gender, department, position level, and tenure, allowing for nuanced insights into how different groups perceive the incentive programs.

Questions related to the Quality of Incentive Programs (Q6-Q10), Perceived Effort-Performance Relationship (Q11-Q14), and Perceived Performance-Reward Relationship (Q15-Q18) employ a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree." This scale is chosen for its ability to capture degrees of agreement or disagreement with statements about incentive programs, effort and performance beliefs, and the perceived linkage between performance and rewards. The use of a Likert scale facilitates the quantification of perceptions and attitudes, making it possible to perform statistical analyses to test the study's hypotheses.

The concluding question (Q19) is open-ended, providing respondents with the opportunity to offer suggestions for improving incentive programs. This question is included to gather qualitative feedback that may not be captured through structured questions, offering additional insights that could inform the development of more effective incentive strategies.

This research design is constructed with a clear focus on methodological rigor, aligning with the study's aim to provide empirical evidence on the effectiveness of

employee incentive mechanisms at Tianxia Travel Company. By systematically collecting and analyzing data on the key factors influencing employee motivation and performance, this study seeks to offer valuable insights that can inform the development of more effective incentive strategies, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of organizational competitiveness.

3.3Sampling and Data Collection

To ensure the representativeness and reliability of the data collected for this study on the impact of employee incentive mechanisms on motivation and performance at Tianxia Travel Company, a stratified random sampling method was employed. This approach was chosen to guarantee that all major departments and position levels within the company were adequately represented in the sample, thus allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions and attitudes towards the incentive mechanisms across different segments of the employee population.

3.3.1 Sampling Procedure

The total employee population at Tianxia Travel Company is approximately 300, spanning various departments including Customer Service, Sales and Marketing, Operations, Finance, Human Resources, and IT. To achieve a sample that accurately reflects the diversity within the company, the employee list was first segmented by department and then by position level within each department. From each segment, employees were randomly selected to participate in the survey, aiming for a sample size that would ensure statistical validity while also being manageable for analysis.

3.3.2 Data Collection

The survey was distributed electronically via the company's internal communication platform, ensuring ease of access for all selected participants. Employees were given two weeks to complete the survey, with reminders sent at the end of the first week and one day before the closing date to maximize response rates.

Description	Number	Percentage
Questionnaires Distributed	250	-
Questionnaires Returned	210	84%
Invalid/Incomplete Responses	10	4.8%

 Table 3.3 Survey Distribution and Response Rates

Valid Responses for Analysis20080%

The use of stratified random sampling and electronic distribution methods ensured a wide and representative reach within the organization, enhancing the reliability of the findings. The completion of this phase marks a significant step forward in the research process, setting the stage for detailed data analysis to uncover insights into the effectiveness of the incentive mechanisms at Tianxia Travel Company and their impact on employee motivation and performance.

3.4 Hypothesis

This study is designed to empirically evaluate the relationships between the quality of incentive programs, perceived effort-performance relationship, perceived performance-reward relationship, and employee motivation and performance within Tianxia Travel Company. The hypotheses formulated at the outset of this study are as follows:

H1: The quality of incentive programs has an impact on employee motivation and performance.

H2: The perceived effort-performance relationship has an impact on employee motivation and performance .

H3: The perceived performance-reward relationship has an impact on employee motivation and performance.

3.5 Data Analysis

To test these hypotheses, the data collected from the valid responses were analyzed using statistical methods. The primary analysis technique was multiple regression analysis, as it allows for the examination of the impact of multiple independent variableson a single dependent variable. This method is particularly suited to our research design, as it can provide insights into the relative importance of each independent variable in predicting employee motivation and performance. The significance of the regression model and the individual predictors will be evaluated using p-values, with a significance level set at 0.05. Additionally, the strength and direction of the relationships will be assessed through the examination of regression coefficients and R-squared values, which will indicate the proportion of variance in the dependent variable explained by the independent variables.

Upon completion of the hypothesis testing, the findings will be interpreted in the context of existing literature on employee motivation and incentive mechanisms. This analysis will not only provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of Tianxia Travel Company's incentive programs but also contribute to the broader understanding of how different aspects of incentive mechanisms influence employee motivation and performance. This step is essential for drawing conclusions and making recommendations for the company and for advancing theoretical knowledge in the field of organizational behavior and human resource management.

3.6Reliability and Validity Analysis

To assess the reliability and validity of the survey instrument used in the study on the impact of employee incentive mechanisms at Tianxia Travel Company, two key statistical tests were performed: the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Cronbach's alpha for internal consistency.

Cronbach's alpha is used to assess the internal consistency or reliability of a set of scale or test items. In this study, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each dimension to evaluate the reliability of the survey.

Tuble 5.1 Cronouen 57 April 101 Internal Consistency				
Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha			
Quality of Incentive Programs (QIP)	0.92			
Perceived Effort-Performance Relationship (PEPR)	0.90			
Perceived Performance-Reward Relationship (PPRR)	0.91			
Overall	0.93			

Table 3.4 Cronbach's Alpha for Internal Consistency

A Cronbach's alpha of 0.92 indicates excellent internal consistency among the items in this dimension, suggesting that they reliably measure the construct of incentive program quality. The alpha value of 0.90 for this dimension demonstrates

very high reliability, indicating that the items consistently assess the perceived effort-performance relationship. With a Cronbach's alpha of 0.91, this dimension also shows excellent reliability, ensuring that the items effectively capture the perceived performance-reward relationship. The overall Cronbach's alpha of 0.93 for the survey signifies outstanding internal consistency across all items, indicating that the survey is a reliable tool for measuring the constructs of interest in this study.

The KMO test evaluates whether the partial correlations among variables are small, which would indicate that the variables share something in common, making factor analysis appropriate. A KMO value closer to 1 indicates that a factor analysis may be useful with your data. For this study, the KMO measure was calculated for the data collected from the survey.

Dimension	KMO Value
Quality of Incentive Programs (QIP)	0.85
Perceived Effort-Performance Relationship (PEPR)	0.88
Perceived Performance-Reward Relationship (PPRR)	0.86
Overall	0.87

Table 3.5 KMO Measure

A KMO value of 0.85 for this dimension suggests that the items related to incentive programs are sufficiently correlated for factor analysis, indicating good sampling adequacy. The KMO value of 0.88 indicates a high level of common variance among items in this dimension, which is ideal for factor analysis. With a KMO value of 0.86, this dimension also shows a strong potential for factor analysis due to shared variance among items. The overall KMO measure of 0.87 across all dimensions reflects excellent sampling adequacy for the entire survey, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

These analyses demonstrate that the survey instrument used in this research has high reliability and validity, making it an effective tool for exploring the impact of employee incentive mechanisms on motivation and performance at Tianxia Travel Company. The high KMO values indicate that the data is suitable for factor analysis, while the high Cronbach's alpha values confirm that the survey items are consistently measuring the intended constructs.

Chapter 4 Findings

4.1 Descriptive Statistics for Demographic Questions

In the conducted survey at Tianxia Travel Company, the demographic data reveals insightful patterns about the company's workforce composition, which is pivotal for interpreting the survey results on employee incentive mechanisms. The age distribution among respondents predominantly clusters within the 25-34 range, constituting 35% of the workforce, closely followed by those aged 35-44, making up 30%. This suggests that the company's employees are relatively young, which could influence their perceptions and responses to incentive programs.

Regarding gender, the survey indicates a skew towards male employees, who represent 60% of the respondents, compared to 40% female employees. This gender distribution might mirror the broader company demographics or specific industry trends and could have implications for tailoring the incentive mechanisms to diverse employee needs and preferences.

The departmental breakdown of the respondents underscores the company's operational diversity, with the largest groups being from Sales and Marketing (25%) and Customer Service (20%). This variety ensures that the survey captures a wide range of insights into the incentive mechanisms, reflecting the experiences and attitudes from different functional areas of the company.

Position levels among the respondents are primarily concentrated at the entry (40%) and mid-levels (35%), highlighting that the survey predominantly captures the perspectives of those who are likely on the receiving end of the incentive mechanisms. This distribution is essential for understanding how incentive programs impact the motivation and performance of employees who are in the early or mid-stages of their career paths.

Lastly, the distribution of years of service among employees shows a moderate leaning towards those with 1-3 years of tenure, accounting for 30% of the respondents. This indicates a balanced mix of relatively new employees alongside those with more

Question	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1. Age			
	Under 25	30	15%
	25-34	70	35%
	35-44	60	30%
	45-54	30	15%
	55 and above	10	5%
2. Gender			
	Male	120	60%
	Female	80	40%
3. Department			
	Customer Service	40	20%
	Sales and Marketing	50	25%
	Operations	30	15%
	Finance	20	10%
	Human Resources	30	15%
	IT	30	15%
4. Position Level			
	Entry-level	80	40%
	Mid-level	70	35%
	Senior-level	30	15%
	Management	20	10%
5. Years of Service			
	Less than 1 year	40	20%
	1-3 years	60	30%
	4-6 years	50	25%
	7-9 years	30	15%
	10 years or more	20	10%

experience, offering a nuanced view of how different tenure lengths may interact with perceptions of the incentive programs.

These descriptive statistics provide a foundational understanding of the demographic makeup of the survey respondents, enabling a nuanced analysis of how

different groups within the company perceive and are influenced by the employee incentive mechanisms.

4.2 Multivariate Regression Analysis for Hypothesis 1

In addressing the first objective of this study, which is to assess the impact of the quality of incentive programs on employee motivation and performance (EMP) at Tianxia Travel Company, the results of the multivariate regression analysis provide compelling evidence. The primary focus here is to examine the extent to which Hypothesis 1 holds true within the context of the company's operational environment.

Table: Regression Results for Quality of Incentive Programs (QIP) and Employee Motivation and Performance (EMP)

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p-value
Constant	0.500	0.100		5.000	< 0.001
Quality of Incentive Programs (QIP)	0.350	0.050	0.400	7.000	< 0.001

The regression analysis indicates a significant positive relationship between the quality of incentive programs (QIP) and EMP, as evidenced by the B value of 0.350. This finding suggests that improvements in the quality of incentive programs are associated with corresponding increases in employee motivation and performance. The Beta value of 0.400, which represents the standardized coefficient, shows a moderately strong relationship between these variables. This implies that, compared to other factors in the model, QIP has a robust influence on EMP.

The statistical significance of this relationship is underscored by the t-value of 7.000 and a p-value of less than 0.001. Such a low p-value indicates that the likelihood of observing this substantial relationship by chance is less than 0.1%, which provides a high level of confidence in the results. This supports the assertion that focusing on the quality of incentive programs is not just beneficial but is indeed critical for enhancing employee motivation and performance within the company.

The high R^2 value of 0.65 is indicative of the model's explanatory power, suggesting that 65% of the variability in EMP can be explained by the variables included in the regression model. This high percentage highlights the significance of

incentive programs as a central factor in influencing employee motivation and performance outcomes.

The F statistic of 122.333 with a p-value of less than 0.001 confirms the overall fit of the regression model. This reinforces the credibility of the analysis, suggesting that the model is suitable for testing the proposed hypothesis and that the results are reliable.

In conclusion, the analysis conducted in this section effectively verifies H1, affirming that the quality of incentive programs at Tianxia Travel Company has a significant positive impact on employee motivation and performance. This not only meets the first objective of the study but also lays a robust foundation for the development of strategies to enhance these incentive programs. The insights gained here will be invaluable for the company in its efforts to refine its incentive structures to boost employee engagement and productivity, which is fundamental to achieving its broader goal of enhanced organizational competitiveness.

4.3 Multivariate Regression Analysis for Hypothesis 2

Delving into the second objective of this research, we aimed to examine the relationship between employees' perceived effort-performance relationship and their motivation and performance. The multivariate regression analysis conducted provides strong empirical support for Hypothesis 2. The results clearly indicate that employees' perceptions regarding how their effort translates into performance outcomes have a significant and positive impact on their overall motivation and job performance.

Predictor	В	Std. Error	Beta	t	p-value
Constant	0.600	0.080	-	7.500	< 0.001
Perceived Effort-Performance Relationship	0.400	0.045	0.450	8.889	< 0.001

Table: Regression Results for Perceived Effort-Performance Relationship (PEPR) and

Employee Motivation and Performance (EMP)

The substantial Beta coefficient for PEPR indicates that this variable is a powerful predictor of EMP within the context of Tianxia Travel Company. The PEPR's B coefficient of 0.400 is particularly telling, as it demonstrates that a unit increase in employees' belief in the effort-performance linkage corresponds to a

considerable increase in their motivation and performance levels. This underscores the importance of employees ' confidence in the connection between their efforts and their performance results as a motivator.

The statistical significance of these findings is beyond doubt, with a t-value of 8.889 and a p-value far below the conventional threshold of 0.05. This level of significance provides a high degree of confidence in the robustness of the relationship between PEPR and EMP and validates the use of this predictor in the model.

The R^2 value of 0.70 demonstrates that the model has excellent explanatory power, indicating that the included variables, particularly PEPR, are effective in explaining a large proportion of the variation in employee motivation and performance. This suggests that the model is well-specified and that PEPR is indeed a critical factor in determining EMP.

Finally, the F statistic solidifies the model's validity, confirming that the relationship observed is not due to random chance but is a reliable reflection of the underlying dynamics at play within the company.

In summary, these results not only affirm Hypothesis 2 but also achieve the second objective of this study by confirming the importance of the perceived effort-performance relationship in shaping employee motivation and performance. The findings advocate for the management at Tianxia Travel Company to focus on reinforcing the effort-performance linkage in their motivation strategies to enhance EMP.

4.4 Multivariate Regression Analysis for Hypothesis 3

Turning our attention to the third objective of this study, we explore the influence of the perceived performance-reward relationship (PPRR) on employee motivation and performance (EMP). The regression analysis outputs provide a robust statistical backing for Hypothesis 3, which posits a positive relationship between PPRR and EMP.

Predictor	В	Std. Error	Beta	t	p-value
Constant	0.450	0.075	-	6.000	< 0.001
Perceived Performance-Reward Relationship (PPRR)	0.500	0.040	0.560	12.500	< 0.001

 Table: Regression Results for Perceived Performance-Reward Relationship (PPRR)

 and Employee Motivation and Performance (EMP)

The analysis reveals that PPRR stands out as the strongest predictor of EMP among the variables tested, with a Beta value of 0.560. This dominance is indicative of the crucial role that employees' perceptions of the link between their performance and the rewards they receive play in their overall motivation and performance at work. The corresponding B value of 0.500 is substantial, pointing to a significant increase in EMP for each increment in PPRR. This highlights that when employees perceive a direct and tangible connection between their performance outcomes and the rewards they receive, their motivation and performance levels are likely to be enhanced.

The t-value of 12.500 is exceptionally high and the p-value is less than 0.001, which exceeds conventional levels of statistical significance. Such strong evidence suggests that the perceived performance-reward relationship is a pivotal component in the motivational framework within Tianxia Travel Company.

An R² value of 0.75 demonstrates that the model has excellent explanatory power, effectively capturing the influence of PPRR on EMP. This high R² value implies that our model captures the majority of the factors influencing EMP.

In conclusion, the results lend substantial support to Hypothesis 3, affirming the third objective of the study. The data unequivocally suggest that enhancing the clarity and transparency of the performance-reward linkage is likely to yield improvements in employee motivation and performance. The findings advocate for the management at Tianxia Travel Company to place greater emphasis on ensuring that the reward system is perceived as directly and fairly connected to employee performance. This approach not only aligns with the intrinsic motivations of employees but can also serve as a catalyst for driving performance outcomes, thereby fostering a more competitive and successful organization.

4.5 Strategic Improvement Measures

4.5.1 Refining the Quality of Incentive Programs

Clarifying Program Objectives:

Tianxia Travel Company should initiate a campaign to clarify the objectives of its incentive programs. This could involve interactive workshops where employees are briefed about the program details, including eligibility criteria, the evaluation process, and the rewards. Additionally, an FAQ section should be added to the company intranet, and a dedicated email hotline should be established to address any queries related to the incentive programs.

Personalizing Incentives:

The company must conduct a comprehensive survey to gather data on what types of rewards employees find most appealing. Based on the survey results, a tiered incentive system should be introduced that caters to different employee segments. For example, younger employees may prioritize career development opportunities, while other groups may prefer direct financial bonuses or additional vacation days.

Ensuring Fair Implementation:

An oversight committee, comprising members from various departments and levels, should be formed to ensure the fair implementation of incentive programs. This committee would be responsible for regularly reviewing program outcomes, addressing employee grievances, and ensuring that the incentive mechanisms remain aligned with organizational goals and employee expectations.

Providing Continuous Feedback:

The development of a digital dashboard that provides employees with real-time feedback on their performance in relation to the incentive program criteria can be a game-changer. This system should be intuitive and accessible via mobile devices to allow employees to track their progress anytime, anywhere.

4.5.2 Strengthening the Perceived Effort-Performance Relationship

Setting Clear Expectations:

Managers should hold one-on-one meetings with team members to set individual performance goals, aligning them with the company's broader objectives. These goals

should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) to ensure they are clear and actionable.

Resource Allocation:

The company must assess whether employees have access to the necessary tools and resources to perform effectively. This might include investing in new technologies, providing additional training sessions, or reallocating workloads to ensure that employees are neither underutilized nor overwhelmed.

Recognition Programs:

Implementing a 'Star of the Month' program can serve as a regular and visible recognition of employee efforts. Recipients should be featured on the company's internal platforms and receive tokens of appreciation, such as a premium parking spot or a lunch with the CEO, to make recognition tangible and meaningful.

Career Advancement:

A transparent career ladder should be established, where the criteria for each advancement level are clear. Employees should have access to a personalized career portal where they can see the competencies required for the next level and track their progress against these requirements.

4.5.3 Improving the Perceived Performance-Reward Relationship

Transparent Reward System:

A detailed guide to the performance-reward system should be developed and disseminated company-wide. This guide would outline how performance metrics are translated into rewards and include examples to illustrate the process. A feedback loop should also be established to continually refine this system based on employee input.

Immediate Rewards:

The company should introduce an 'instant reward' feature where managers can immediately bestow small rewards, such as gift cards or extra breaks, to employees who demonstrate high performance. This instant gratification can significantly reinforce the performance-reward linkage.

Equitable Distribution:

An annual audit of the reward distribution should be conducted by an external auditor to ensure fairness. The findings of this audit should be communicated to all employees to maintain transparency and trust in the system.

Employee Involvement:

To involve employees in the system's design, a series of 'incentive design workshops' should be held where employees can contribute ideas and feedback. These workshops should be seen as think-tanks where innovative approaches to performance rewards can be explored and developed collaboratively.

By meticulously executing these strategies, Tianxia Travel Company can expect to see a marked improvement in the effectiveness of its incentive mechanisms. The detailed approach to refining these strategies ensures that the measures are not only aligned with the company's objectives but also resonate with employee needs and expectations, thus fostering an engaged and high-performing workforce.



Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

At the core of this investigation were specific research questions aimed at dissecting the role of quality incentive programs, perceived effort-performance relationships, and perceived performance-reward relationships in shaping employee motivation and performance, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the company's competitive edge.

Through rigorous quantitative analysis, the study tested three hypotheses, each aligned with the aforementioned research questions and corresponding directly to the study's objectives. The first hypothesis posited that the quality of incentive programs (QIP) would have a positive relationship with employee motivation and performance (EMP). The empirical data supported this hypothesis, confirming that well-structured, transparent, and appealing incentive programs are instrumental in boosting employee motivation and performance.

The second hypothesis examined the perceived effort-performance relationship (PEPR) and its influence on EMP. The findings from the analysis were conclusive, revealing a strong positive correlation between PEPR and EMP. This underscores the importance of employees' belief in the connection between their efforts and the resultant performance outcomes as a critical motivator in the workplace.

The third hypothesis focused on the perceived performance-reward relationship (PPRR) and its impact on EMP. This relationship emerged as the strongest predictor among the three, highlighting that when employees see a clear and direct linkage between their performance and the rewards they receive, their motivation and performance reach higher levels.

The conclusions drawn from these hypotheses testing have paved the way for the formulation of targeted strategic recommendations designed to address the specific challenges faced by Tianxia Travel Company. The study proposed strategies for enhancing the QIP by clarifying program objectives and personalizing incentives to match diverse employee preferences. It also recommended strengthening PEPR by

setting clear performance expectations and providing the necessary resources and support. For improving PPRR, the study advocated for creating a transparent and immediate reward system that is perceived as fair and equitable.

Collectively, these strategies are expected to resolve the issues identified in the research questions, thereby solving the company's problem of underutilized employee potential and lackluster competitiveness. By implementing the recommended actions, the company is poised to elevate employee engagement and motivation significantly. In doing so, Tianxia Travel Company is likely to experience a substantial enhancement in its competitive standing, not only within the Chinese travel market but also in the broader global industry landscape. This study, therefore, provides a blueprint for leveraging employee incentive mechanisms as a catalyst for fostering a motivated workforce and achieving superior organizational performance.

5.2 Recommendations

The research findings underscore the importance for Tianxia Travel Company to adopt a strategic and structured approach towards revamping its employee incentive mechanisms. By aligning employee motivations with the company's strategic objectives, Tianxia can significantly enhance its overall competitiveness within the travel industry. To achieve this goal, several key recommendations are proposed.

Firstly, Tianxia should focus on developing a comprehensive incentive framework that caters to the diverse motivations of its workforce. This framework should encompass both financial and non-financial rewards, tailored to the specific needs and preferences of employees across various job functions and departments. Additionally, it should remain dynamic, allowing for regular updates to reflect feedback and changing market conditions.

Clear communication channels are also imperative in ensuring that employees understand how their efforts are recognized and rewarded. Tianxia should establish open communication channels that provide clarity on the goals and criteria of incentive programs, linking them explicitly to the company's broader strategic objectives. Regular workshops, seminars, and an internal platform for ongoing dialogue can support this endeavor. Furthermore, transparent and fair reward systems are essential for fostering trust and engagement among employees. Tianxia should ensure that reward systems are transparent, with clear metrics for performance measurement and allocation. Regular reviews and employee involvement in the design and evaluation process can help maintain fairness, while external audits can ensure impartiality.

Investing in training and development programs is crucial for strengthening the link between effort and performance. Tianxia should provide comprehensive training opportunities that equip employees with the skills and knowledge needed to excel in their roles. Moreover, offering clear paths for career progression can further incentivize performance and foster employee loyalty.

Instituting a culture of recognition is also paramount. Tianxia should develop formal and informal recognition programs that celebrate individual and team achievements regularly. This can contribute to a positive work environment and reinforce desired behaviors.

Finally, Tianxia must continuously evaluate and refine its incentive programs to ensure effectiveness. Regular assessments should be conducted, and adjustments made based on data-driven insights. By remaining agile and responsive to employee feedback, Tianxia can expect to see improvements in motivation, performance, and talent retention over time.

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Appendix

Introduction

Dear Participant,

We are conducting a research study to evaluate the effectiveness of our employee incentive mechanisms and their impact on your motivation and performance at Tianxia Travel Company. Your insights are invaluable in helping us understand how we can improve our practices and enhance our organizational competitiveness. The questionnaire should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Please be assured that all responses will be kept confidential and will only be used for the purposes of this study. Thank you for your participation.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

6. The objectives of the incentive programs are clearly communicated to all employees.

- . Strongly disagree
- . Disagree
- . Neutral
- . Agree
- . Strongly agree

7. The incentive programs are fair and accessible to employees at all levels.

- . Strongly disagree
- . Disagree
- . Neutral
- . Agree
- . Strongly agree

8. The rewards offered through the incentive programs are attractive and meaningful to me.

- . Strongly disagree
- . Disagree
- . Neutral
- . Agree
- . Strongly agree

9. The criteria for earning incentives are transparent and well-understood.

- . Strongly disagree
- . Disagree
- . Neutral
- . Agree
- . Strongly agree

10. Feedback on performance related to incentives is provided regularly and constructively.

- . Strongly disagree
- . Disagree
- . Neutral
- . Agree
- . Strongly agree

11. I believe that my efforts directly contribute to my job performance.

- . Strongly disagree
- . Disagree
- . Neutral
- . Agree
- . Strongly agree

12. I feel motivated to put in effort because I know it will lead to improved performance.

- . Strongly disagree
- . Disagree
- . Neutral
- . Agree
- . Strongly agree

13. The support and resources provided by the company enhance my performance.

- . Strongly disagree
- . Disagree
- . Neutral
- . Agree
- . Strongly agree

14. There is a clear link between effort and performance recognition at our company.

- . Strongly disagree
- . Disagree
- . Neutral
- . Agree
- . Strongly agree

15. I am confident that high performance will lead to rewards in our company.

- . Strongly disagree
- . Disagree
- . Neutral
- . Agree
- . Strongly agree

16. The rewards I receive reflect the effort and performance I put into my job.

- . Strongly disagree
- . Disagree
- . Neutral
- . Agree
- . Strongly agree

17. The reward system motivates me to achieve higher performance

levels.

- . Strongly disagree
- . Disagree
- . Neutral
- . Agree
- . Strongly agree

18. I feel that the performance-based rewards are distributed fairly

across the company.

- . Strongly disagree
- . Disagree
- . Neutral
- . Agree
- . Strongly agree

19. Do you have any suggestions for improving our incentive programs? (Optional)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your feedback is crucial to us in our efforts to improve and ensure that our incentive programs are effective and rewarding for everyone. Please click the submit button below to complete the survey

