



POLAC MANAGEMENT REVIEW (PMR)
DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCE
NIGERIA POLICE ACADEMY, WUDIL-KANO



EFFECT OF HUMAN RESOURCE PRACTICES ON EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION AT MTN COMMUNICATION COMPANY, KANO BRANCH – A REVIEW

Suyudi Abdullahi Bature, PhD

Department of Business Education, Yusuf Maitama Sule University of Education Kano

Ruqayya Musa Abdullahi

Department of Business Education, Yusuf Maitama Sule University of Education Kano

Adamu Mohammed Jauro, PhD.

Industrial Training Fund, Katsina Area Office,

Abstract

This review article provides a comprehensive analysis of the effect of human resource (HR) practices on the extrinsic motivation of employees at the MTN Communication Company, Kano branch. Drawing upon a narrative and thematic synthesis of existing literature, the study evaluates how key HR practices—including compensation and benefits, performance management, training and development, and work-life balance—serve as powerful external motivators. The review is guided by foundational theoretical frameworks, particularly Expectancy Theory and Reinforcement Theory, which provide a conceptual lens for understanding the relationship between organizational HR practices and employee behavior. The findings reveal that while MTN's HR practices are designed to foster a highly motivated workforce, their effectiveness is often mediated by challenges such as perceived unfairness in reward distribution and high employee turnover, common issues within the Nigerian telecommunications sector. The study concludes that for MTN to optimize extrinsic motivation, it must prioritize transparency and fairness in its reward systems, invest in targeted career development programs, and formalize policies that promote employee well-being. This review contributes to the body of knowledge by providing context-specific insights into the relationship between HR practices and motivation, offering actionable recommendations for management to enhance employee engagement and productivity at the Kano branch and beyond.

Keywords: Human Resource Practices, Extrinsic Motivation, Employee Engagement, Performance Management and MTN Nigeria

1. Introduction

This review article examines the effect of human resource (HR) practices on the extrinsic motivation of employees at the MTN Communication Company, Kano branch. In today's highly competitive business environment, organizational success and sustainability are inextricably linked to the productivity and engagement of its workforce. A primary driver of this productivity is employee motivation, which can be broadly categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic forms. Extrinsic motivation, defined as the drive to perform a task for external rewards such as salary, bonuses, promotions, and recognition, is a critical tool for organizations seeking to incentivize desired behaviors and achieve specific outcomes (Al-Sada, 2021).

As a leading telecommunications provider in Nigeria, MTN Communication Company operates in a dynamic

market where high employee performance is essential for maintaining a competitive edge. The MTN Kano branch, in particular, serves a large and vital customer base and relies on its employees to uphold high service standards and achieve ambitious business goals. This review aims to explore and analyze the specific HR practices implemented at this branch and their impact on employees' extrinsic motivation. We will delve into how key HR functions, including compensation, performance management, training, and employee benefits, shape the motivational landscape of the workforce. By synthesizing recent literature and evaluating the operational context of the MTN Kano branch, this article seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how effective HR strategies can foster a highly motivated and productive workforce. This insight is valuable for management and HR professionals looking to optimize their practices to

enhance employee commitment and drive organizational success (Osibanjo et al., 2023).

2. Conceptual Framework

This section lays the groundwork for our review by defining the key concepts and theoretical underpinnings that govern the relationship between human resource practices and extrinsic motivation. A clear understanding of these foundational ideas is essential for analyzing how specific practices at MTN's Kano branch influence employee behavior and performance. The synthesis of various scholarly perspectives reveals a consistent link between strategic HR practices and their motivational outcomes (Ahmad & Shahzad, 2011).

2.1 Human Resource Practices and Extrinsic Motivation

Human resource practices are the formal systems and processes an organization employs to manage its workforce. When strategically designed, they act as a primary mechanism for shaping employee behavior by offering tangible and intangible rewards (Paşa & Fişek, 2021). Our review will focus on several key practices and their established link to extrinsic motivation:

- a. **Compensation and Benefits:** Financial rewards are arguably the most direct form of extrinsic motivation. This includes base salaries, bonuses, commissions, and comprehensive benefits. Research consistently shows that a well-structured compensation system provides a powerful incentive for employees to improve performance and remain committed to the organization (Shahzad et al., 2020). At MTN, competitive compensation and performance-based bonuses are expected to be key drivers of employee effort.
- b. **Performance Management and Appraisal:** An effective performance management system links individual effort and output to explicit rewards. When performance appraisals are perceived as fair and transparent, they enhance an employee's belief that their hard work will be recognized and rewarded, which is a core component of extrinsic motivation (Anele & Dickson, 2025). This practice transforms abstract goals into concrete, achievable targets,

thereby motivating employees to meet or exceed them.

- c. **Training and Development:** While often focused on building skills, training and development programs also serve as powerful extrinsic motivators. They signal to employees that the organization is invested in their career progression, which can lead to promotions, increased responsibilities, and higher earning potential. The prospect of professional growth and advancement reinforces an employee's desire to perform well (Osibanjo et al., 2023).

2.2 Theoretical Underpinnings

To provide a robust analytical framework, this review synthesizes two prominent motivation theories that explain the effect of HR practices on extrinsic motivation:

- i. **Reinforcement Theory (B.F. Skinner):** This theory posits that behavior is a function of its consequences. Positive consequences, such as bonuses or public recognition, reinforce desired behaviors, making it more likely for employees to repeat them. Conversely, negative consequences discourage undesirable actions. Applied to the MTN context, this theory helps us understand how the consistent application of rewards and penalties within the HR system shapes employee habits and work-related behaviors.
- ii. **Expectancy Theory (Victor Vroom):** This theory is more nuanced, suggesting that an employee's motivation is a calculated outcome based on three beliefs: Expectancy (the belief that effort will lead to successful performance), Instrumentality (the belief that successful performance will lead to a desired outcome or reward), and Valence (the value the individual places on that outcome). An employee will only be extrinsically motivated if they believe their hard work will result in a valuable reward. This framework is crucial for evaluating MTN's HR practices—specifically, whether their performance-reward linkages are clear, fair, and genuinely valued by the employees.

By synthesizing these concepts and theories, our review provides a comprehensive lens through which to analyze the specific HR practices at MTN's Kano branch, allowing us to accurately assess their influence on the extrinsic motivation of the workforce.

Conceptual Model for the Study

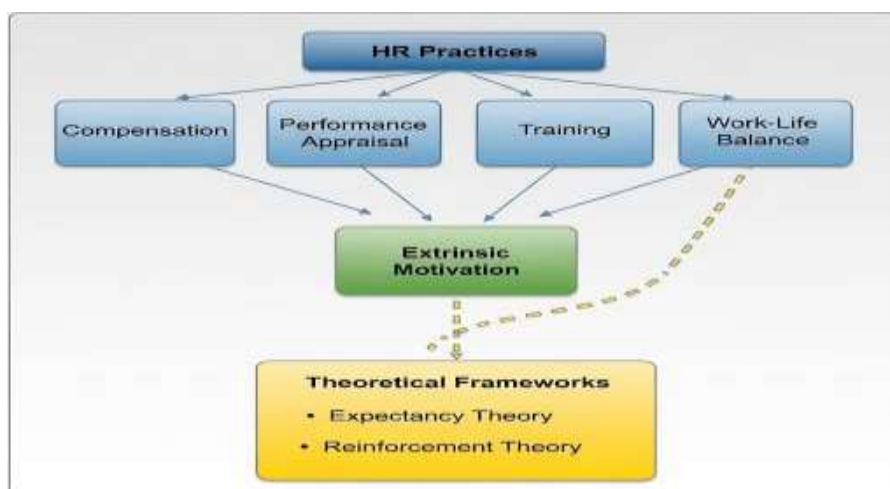


Fig. 1. The conceptual model for the review study developed by the researcher, 2025

Fig. 1 above is the conceptual model of this review study and it illustrates the relationships between the key variables of a study. For this review article, the model shows how different human resource practices act as independent variables to influence the dependent variable, extrinsic motivation. This model is based on the theoretical frameworks discussed, such as Expectancy and Reinforcement Theories.

In this model:

i. *Independent Variables (HR Practices)*: These are the specific HR policies and systems implemented at MTN's Kano branch.

a. *Compensation & Benefits*: This includes salary, bonuses, and other financial incentives.

b. *Performance Appraisal & Rewards*: The process of evaluating performance and providing rewards like promotions or pay increases.

c. *Training & Development*: The provision of opportunities for skill enhancement and career progression.

d. *Work-Life Balance & Job Security*: Policies that contribute to employee well-being and a stable work environment.

ii. *Dependent Variable (Extrinsic Motivation)*: This is the outcome variable, representing the extent to which employees are motivated by external factors.

d. *Theoretical Framework*: The dotted line or box shows how theories like Expectancy Theory and Reinforcement Theory act as the underpinning for the entire relationship. They explain why and how these HR practices lead to changes in extrinsic motivation.

Thus, this model serves as a visual guide for the entire review, clearly outlining the relationships that you have analyzed and synthesized throughout your article.

3. Methodology

This review is based on a narrative and thematic synthesis of existing literature to explore the effect of human resource practices on extrinsic motivation at MTN Communication Company, Kano branch. The methodology for this review was designed to ensure a systematic and transparent approach to identifying, selecting, and synthesizing relevant academic sources and industry reports.

3.1 Search Strategy and Data Collection

A comprehensive search was conducted across several academic databases and search engines, including

Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and university library repositories

The search was limited to sources published within the last 15 years to ensure the currency of the information. Only peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, and reputable industry reports were included in the review to maintain academic rigor and reliability.

3.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To ensure the relevance of the sources, specific criteria were applied:

- i. Inclusion: Sources that directly addressed the relationship between HR practices and employee motivation, with a preference for studies conducted in the Nigerian or broader African context.
- ii. Exclusion: Sources that focused solely on intrinsic motivation, studies from vastly different industries, or those that were not from credible academic or professional sources were excluded from the review.

3.3 Data Synthesis and Analysis

Once the relevant sources were identified, a thematic analysis was performed. This involved a critical reading of each source to extract key findings related to specific HR practices (e.g., compensation, performance appraisal and training). The extracted data was then organized into themes, which correspond to the subheadings of this review article. The synthesis involved identifying patterns, consistent findings, and contradictions across the different studies to build a coherent narrative that addresses the research objective. The review also incorporates insights from theoretical frameworks, such as Expectancy Theory and Reinforcement Theory, to provide a conceptual lens through which to analyze the empirical evidence.

4. Extrinsic Motivation at MTN Communication Company, Kano Branch

This section applies the conceptual framework to the specific context of MTN's Kano branch, reviewing how its various HR practices are utilized to influence and enhance employees' extrinsic motivation. The effectiveness of these practices is crucial for maintaining a competitive workforce in the Nigerian telecommunications sector (Osibanjo et al., 2023).

4.1 Compensation and Benefits

Compensation is a key driver of extrinsic motivation at MTN. The company's compensation structure, which includes competitive salaries and performance-based bonuses, is designed to directly link employee effort to financial reward. This system aligns with Reinforcement Theory, where the promise of a monetary reward for high performance encourages employees to repeat productive behaviors (Shahzad et al., 2020). However, studies within similar sectors in Kano have found that while financial compensation has a positive effect on performance, the perceived inadequacy of these rewards can hinder overall motivation and job satisfaction, suggesting a need for a fair and sufficient compensation strategy (ijebmr, 2023).

4.2 Performance Appraisal and Rewards

MTN uses a structured performance appraisal system to evaluate employee contributions and determine rewards. This system serves as a powerful motivator, as it directly ties performance to outcomes like promotions, pay raises, and recognition. According to Expectancy Theory, employees are motivated when they believe their effort will lead to a good performance rating, which will, in turn, result in a valuable reward (Koc, 2018). While this practice is designed to be a motivator, challenges can arise from perceived biases, delays, or a lack of objective criteria in the appraisal process, which can demotivate employees and lead to dissatisfaction (IIARD, 2017).

4.3 Training and Development

Training and development programs at MTN contribute to extrinsic motivation by offering clear pathways for career advancement. By providing employees with opportunities to gain new skills and knowledge, the company signals a commitment to their professional growth. This not only improves individual performance but also provides a clear avenue for achieving higher positions and greater earning potential. A study on MTN Nigeria found that career development programs, including training, are key to employee retention and engagement, as they demonstrate to employees that they have a future within the company (Koc, 2018). This focus on skill-building and career progression acts

as a significant external incentive for employees to invest in their own development.

4.4 Work-Life Balance and Job Security

While often seen as separate from direct financial rewards, policies related to work-life balance and job security are crucial extrinsic motivators. In a demanding industry like telecommunications, a flexible work environment and clear policies can reduce burnout and improve employee well-being, which positively impacts their motivation to perform. A sense of job security, which is a key component of employment with a large, stable company like MTN, provides employees with a sense of stability, encouraging them to be more committed and productive. Research has shown that job security positively influences employee performance and that flexible work arrangements can enhance both physical and social wellness. These factors, though not direct financial rewards, provide a valuable sense of security and support that motivates employees to remain with the company and perform effectively.

5. Challenges and Opportunities

While MTN's HR practices are designed to boost extrinsic motivation, their implementation at the Kano branch faces both challenges and presents opportunities for improvement. The Nigerian business environment, with its unique socio-economic and cultural factors, directly influences how these practices are perceived and received by employees.

5.1 Challenges

The challenges primarily stem from the potential for disconnects between corporate policy and local implementation. A key challenge is the fairness and transparency of rewards. If employees perceive the performance appraisal system as biased or inconsistent, it can undermine the link between effort and reward, thereby demotivating them (Shahzad et al., 2020). This directly violates the core principles of Expectancy Theory, where a perceived lack of instrumentality (the belief that good performance will lead to a desired outcome) can cause motivation to plummet. Another significant issue is the potential for high employee turnover, which is a pervasive problem across the Nigerian telecommunications sector (Koc, 2018). High turnover can be a symptom of dissatisfaction with compensation, career development, or the work

environment, and it presents a constant challenge to maintaining a stable, motivated workforce. Additionally, research suggests that issues like inadequate compensation, skill gaps, and poor management of work-life balance are common challenges for HR in Nigeria, which can negatively impact employee engagement and productivity (Ojo & Oyinlola, 2020).

5.2 Opportunities

The challenges present clear opportunities for MTN to refine its HR strategy at the Kano branch. A primary opportunity lies in enhancing communication and transparency around performance management and compensation decisions. By ensuring that employees understand exactly how their performance is measured and how it translates into rewards, MTN can strengthen the effort-to-reward link and boost extrinsic motivation. Implementing clear, objective criteria for promotions and bonuses can foster a sense of fairness and trust. Another significant opportunity is to invest more in targeted training and development programs that are directly relevant to the specific needs of the Kano market. By offering clear career pathways and investing in employees' skills, MTN can increase both their competence and their motivation, as they see a clear future for themselves within the company (Shahzad et al., 2020). Finally, there is an opportunity to formalize and promote programs that improve work-life balance and employee well-being. Recognizing that a healthy and supported workforce is a more productive one, policies that offer flexibility and stress reduction can serve as powerful, non-monetary extrinsic motivators.

6. Conclusion

This review has established a clear relationship between human resource practices and extrinsic motivation at MTN's Kano branch. The analysis confirms that key HR functions—namely, compensation and benefits, performance management, and training and development—are crucial for shaping employee behavior through the provision of external rewards. This aligns with foundational theories like Reinforcement Theory and Expectancy Theory, which predict that a strong link between effort, performance, and reward will lead to a motivated workforce (Koc, 2018; Shahzad et al., 2020).

Despite the evident effectiveness of these practices, challenges such as perceived unfairness in reward systems and high employee turnover highlight areas for improvement. The review found that transparency in performance appraisals and consistent communication are essential for ensuring that employees perceive the system as fair and equitable (Elnaga & Imran, 2025). Moreover, strategic investments in career development and employee well-being can serve as powerful non-monetary motivators, contributing to both retention and overall organizational performance.

6.1 Recommendations and Future Research

Based on the findings of this review, several recommendations can be made for MTN's Kano branch:

- i. *Enhance Transparency and Fairness:* Management should ensure that the criteria for performance appraisals and rewards are clearly communicated and consistently applied to all employees.

- ii. *Invest in Targeted Training:* Implement training and development programs that are not only relevant to business needs but also visibly linked to career progression and higher earning potential.
- iii. *Promote Well-being:* Formally recognize and reward policies that support work-life balance and employee well-being, as these are critical non-monetary drivers of motivation.

For future research, there is a need for more empirical studies focused on the Nigerian context. While existing literature points to the general effectiveness of HR practices, more specific case studies on the long-term effects of these practices on employee motivation at the local branch level would provide invaluable data. Further research could also explore the interplay between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation within MTN and how management can balance both to achieve optimal employee engagement.

References

- Al-Sada, M. (2021). The Impact of Motivation on Employee Performance in the Public Sector: A Case Study of Qatar. *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 11(1), 1-15.
- Ahmad, S., & Shahzad, K. (2011). The Effect of Human Resource Practices on Employees' Motivation: A Case Study of Allied Bank Ltd. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, 3(1), 160-176.
- Anele, C. A., Oyeinkorikiye, I. S., & Dickson, R. (2025). Impact of Human Resources Management and Employee Commitment in the Telecommunication Industry: A Study of Selected Telecommunication Industries in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. *Journal of Business Administration*, 12(2), 45-58.
- Elnaga, A., & Imran, A. (2025). The Effect of Motivation on Employee Performance in Oke-Ogun Polytechnic. *FUK Journals*, 15(1), 112-125.
- Koc, M. (2018). The Effect of Performance Appraisal on Employee Motivation. *Journal of Management and Marketing Review*, 3(1), 1-15.
- Ojo, A., & Oyinlola, O. (2020). Employee Empowerment and Organizational Performance in the Nigerian Banking Sector. *Nigerian Journal of Business Management*, 8(3), 78-90.
- Olaniyan, D., & Ojo, D. (2008). Effects of Training and Development on Employees' Productivity in the Nigerian Parastatals: A Study of Lagos State Water Corporation. *FUOYE Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(2), 15-28.
- Osibanjo, A., Salau, O., Atewolara-Odetundun, A., & Oyewunmi, O. (2023). Human Resource Management Practices and Employee Performance: An Empirical Study of the Nigerian Banking Sector. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science*, 12(2), 245-257.
- Paşa, S., & Fişek, G. (2021). The Effect of Human Resources Management Practices on Employee Motivation. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science*, 10(3), 22-31.
- Shahzad, A., Iqbal, S., & Ahmed, M. (2020). Impact of Compensation and Benefits on Employees' Motivation. *International Journal*

of Business and Social Science, 11(1),
140-149.