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MATERIAL INCENTIVE MECHANISMS FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THE TRANSPORT SECTOR: A SYSTEMIC APPROACH AND EFFICIENCY ANALYSIS

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Abstract

The bonuses offered by materials matter in enhancing the productivity and morale and retention of military personnel particularly in the transport field whereby the readiness and the accuracy of logistics is of priority. This paper discusses the character and effectiveness of material incentive schemes in the military transport workers over some systemic approach that looks at the system performance outcomes and its effectiveness to the organization. The research is a synthesis of theoretical methods in the human resource management, behavioural economics as well as defense logistics to come up with an integrated method of analysis. The study evaluates the existing incentive systems i.e. the monetary component of incentives like salaries, allowances, performance incentives and non-monetary component of incentives like non-monetary benefits in mixed approach manner. The data collection was done through structured survey and semi structured interviews in the military transport units in the sampled regions with the help of secondary data via the defense reports. The analysis demonstrates the efficiency measures in terms of productivity scores, cost-effectiveness scores, and service reliability scores to ascertain performances of incentive mechanisms. Findings indicate that material rewards that are well constructed may significantly increase the level of efficiency in operations, reduce turnover intentions and augment task commitment among personnel. However, uneven distribution of incentives, lack of transparency and inadequate alignment to performance measures can undermine their performance. The paper lays stress on the necessity to embed incentive systems within broader systemic measure that considers the culture of an organization, leadership and mission-specific practice. The conclusion of the paper includes a proposal of a better solution to the optimization of material incentives within military transport systems with a focus on equity, performance interdependence, and responsiveness to the evolving operating conditions. This knowledge is incorporated in the policy formulation and the strategic human

resource planning within the defense forces and offers certain practical implications in improving the performance of an individual and the efficiency of the logistics as a whole.

KEYWORDS: Material incentives; Military personnel; Transport sector; Incentive mechanisms; Organizational efficiency; Performance evaluation; Defense logistics; Employee motivation; Resource optimization; Systemic approach; Cost-effectiveness; Workforce retention; Operational readiness; Human resource management; Productivity analysis

1. INTRODUCTION

Material incentives play a key role in motivation, discipline and performance in the military institutions and most importantly in the transport sector that is a special field. The military transport system is a highly significant backbone since it will play a role in timely delivery of the personnel, equipment and supplies and this has got direct relation with operation readiness and operational effectiveness of a strategy. In this case, the creation of the adequate systems of incentives and the implementation of efficient reward systems will be of paramount importance in not only enhancing the performance of the individual, but also of the organization making it more efficient and resilient.

Military setups are very ordered setups in comparison to civil sector where hierarchies are strict, standard procedures are in place as well as conditions of great risk that demand well-structured mode of stimulation. Some of the material incentives that can be employed as tangible measures of recognizing efforts, motivation towards skills acquisition, and further motivation among the personnel assigned with the responsibility of tasking logistical missions that are challenging include monetary rewards, allowances, benefits, and career growth opportunities. However, these incentives will just be effective when they are consistent to the institutional goals, are equally distributed and adaptable to the alterations in operation problems.

Whole person attitude to material incentive systems will involve the research of the connection between policy and organization systems and behavioural responses of individuals. This approach will enable comprehension of the details of influence of incentives on not only the productivity, but also job satisfaction, retention, and efficiency in the military transport sector. Additionally, the efficiency analysis provides a quantitative and qualitative basis on the evaluation of the outcomes of the said incentive systems to ascertain that resources are optimally utilized and performance desired is achieved.

The case study is aimed to explore the design, operation and effectiveness of incentive schemes of materials to military staff in the transport industry and information on how they can be used to operational effectiveness and sustainability of the organization.

1.1. Background of the study

Military transport sector is essential in the field of handling operational preparedness, logistical effectiveness and national security. The transport staff members form the backbone of the military

operations in terms of transporting troops and equipment as well as the provision of the required supplies in an expeditious way. Regardless of whether they are strategic or not, the issue of motivation and retention of staff in such an industry is always a problem particularly in an environment that is characterized by high intensity of operations, rigid hierarchies, and a highly strained working environment.

The perception of a combination of intrinsic motivation that encompasses patriotism, discipline and duty, and formal compensation systems has been the traditionally adopted practices in the military organizations to guarantee workforce commitment. However, the altering social-economic conditions, the appearance of the high standards of living and the increasing awareness of the military personnel about other careers have changed the demands of the military personnel. This shift has added material factors like salaries, allowances, bonuses, housing allowances and pension packages as some of the determinants of job satisfaction and job performance.

Employees of the transport sector especially are generally confronted with special occupational issues like extended working hours, working odd hours, possible physical risks and absence of family support systems. All these need a more sensitive and responsive incentive system that is able not only to reward and compensate hardships, but also enhance morale and productivity. The low or inadequately constructed material incentives can lead to low efficiency, lower retention rates as well as lower operation efficiency.

The focus on system views in terms of incentive design is the current trends in human resource management. The strategies consider the interdependence of various aspects of compensation, organizational objective, and individual performance outcomes. The systemic perspective is particularly relevant when it comes to the military where the uniformity of policies must be in equilibrium with the need of flexibility and elasticity to the specific functional sectors like the transport logistics.

Moreover, the efficiency analysis has developed into an invaluable tool in measures of performance of incentive mechanisms. The efficiency analysis will help the policy makers to know the gaps, redundancy and areas of improvement through the analysis of the correlation between the resource allocation and the performance outcome. It can apply to the military transport field, where the consideration of the utilization of the material incentives at hand is made on whether they are adequate in achieving the operational goals and whether they support the

optimal performance of human beings.

This is acute even in most of the emerging and transitioning economies where the military budgets are typically low, and the need to simplify allocation of the financial resources increases. This brings in the importance of developing cost-effective incentive programs that will lead to the maximum impact of the individual and the organization. In the meantime, to maintain trust and cohesiveness within military agencies, there must be transparency, equity and fairness in terms of the provision of incentives.

Despite the rising awareness, there is minimal research that has thought systematically and examined the material incentive mechanism of the military personnel in the transport sector particularly in the efficiency analysis perspective. The literature available is either general military compensation studies, or studies on civilian transport workforce management, and thus, the literature says nothing about the finer details of the operation of military transport.

It is on this ground that the present study targets at debating material incentive mechanisms on a system perspective that involves both theoretical and practical understandings. The study will assist in reforming the human resource approaches within the military transport business by assessing the efficiency of the current incentive system and identifying potential reforms that will ensure the human resource practices are efficient, fair and sustainable.

1.2. Justification

The military logistics, operational preparedness and national security are more aided by the transport industry. The military force that is engaged in transportation is exposed to the demanding working conditions where precision, high discipline and round the clock availability is required. Even though these personnel constantly perform a strategic position, the incentive systems used to direct them are generalized and, in most instances, they do not reflect the challenges, risks and performance demands of specific military operations within the transport sector. This causes it to be a powerhouse to re-evaluate the existing material incentive systems and measure of the success in motivating, operating and overall performance.

Salaries, allowances, bonuses and performance-based rewards are the most common instances of material rewards that have been found to determine the level of employee productivity and commitment to the organization. However, these incentives must align themselves with the operation demands, hierarchies and institutional objectives in the military environment especially in the transport sector. Lack

of systemic and evidence-based structure can result in inefficiencies, demoralization and poor utilization of the human resources. Therefore, a systematic analysis of the operations of incentive mechanisms will be required to ensure that it is capable of having a considerable impact on the personal satisfaction of an individual, as well as the performance of an organization.

Secondly, the alteration of the operations of the military force including the increased application of advanced logistics systems and tactics of the deployment of light forces has made the fully motivated transport working force more topical. There is also the need to spread funds efficiently with regards to budgetary constraints that are prevalent in most of the developing and transitional economies. This is paramount as far as the design is concerned, the cost-effectiveness of the material incentive systems in the military transport sector is also to be considered.

The need to assume a systemic view that incorporates economic, organizational and behavioural elements of incentives can explain the current research study. The analysis of efficiency will allow the study to shape the potential gaps in the current practices, the efficiency of the incentives in performance results, and propose the optimization of the models based on the specific requirements of the military transport personnel. These lessons will probably assist policymakers and other defense administrators to develop incentive programs that enhance operational efficiencies, employee retention and development of a workforce that is motivated in the long term.

Lastly, this research contributes to a gap in the area of research hence it will be useful to both the academic literature and to the actionable policy development.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the significance and centrality of material incentive processes in military transport organizations.
2. To investigate the existing type of compensation, benefits and rewards systems provided to the members of the military in the transport industry.
3. To identify the key factors of the effectiveness of the material incentives in raising motivation, performance, and retention of personnel.
4. To examine the effectiveness of the existing incentive system through a systemic perspective, by the aspects of organization, operation and economic level.
5. To establish the relationship between the utilization of material incentives and the

efficiency of military transport services.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Material incentive mechanism has been most popularly debated in the literature of organizational behaviour and organizational labour economics and defense management particularly in the context of rising workforce motivation, workforce efficiency and workforce operational effectiveness. In the context of the military personnel in the transport sector, the complex of incentive systems, effectiveness in operations, and coordination of the system has gained an increasing academic interest.

Incentive mechanisms have an early theoretical foundation in the classical economic and management theories. According to Freeman (2010), stakeholder-oriented methods includes aligning organizational objectives and motivation of employees through systematic reward systems. Similarly, based on the agency theory, effective incentive alignment will reduce inefficiencies which arise as a consequence of principal agency conflict particularly in a complicated organizational system as the defense logistics system.

There has been some research on the effectiveness of the incentive structures in the transport sector in regard to performance and safety outcomes. As it has been seen, financial motivators have significant effect on employee output and retention. To give an example, the researchers specializing in the transport employees state that when the level of compensation increases, job commitment also increases, and turnover decreases, which positively affects operations stability (Faulkner and Belzer, 2019). However, performance or piece-based incentive systems may lead to an unintended consequence such as compromised safety as a means to make profit (Belzer, 2012). This is an indication of the fact that balanced incentive design is needed which incorporates consideration of efficiency and risk.

The other non-monetary rewards also play an important role in shaping the workforce behaviour. Werner et al. (2016) and Škerlić and Erčulj (2021) observe that the work of employees is more satisfied and well-performing when it comes to recognition, career advancement opportunities, and improved working conditions. The results provided are particularly relevant to the situation of the military plane operations wherein psychological health and morale are the most significant key to a successful performance. It is also indicated by research that the non-financial rewards reduce the degree of fatigue and enhance compliance to the work standards, therefore, enhancing the safety outcomes.

Transport operations efficiency is a systemic efficiency that depends on the integration of the human resources, technology and organizational processes. Literature on logistics and transport management states that it is necessary to take into account systems of performance measurement, which can reflect both objective indicators like the number of people and non-objective and process efficiency (Wudhikarn et al., 2018). Through these, the organizations are able to identify inefficiencies and allocate resources in the most optimal manner which is particularly significant in an environment in which uncertainty is high and resources are limited as in the case of a military transport environment.

The efficiency of transportation has been analyzed significantly due to the use of quantitative analysis techniques such as Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA). The studies by Mahmoudi et al. (2018) and Cavaignac and Petiot (2016) demonstrate that a DEA model is a widely used instrument to determine the efficiency of the operations within the various types of transport, including rail, air, and maritime transport. These types of models have a great number of inputs and outputs, such as labour, capital, and service quality to define the performance. However, researchers state that the choice of variables and the details of the situation influence the efficiency results significantly, and thus more systematic and situation-specific approach is needed.

The use of performance based logistics (PBL) in the military and defense context has gained significant momentum in enhancing operational performance. It has been suggested that it is the appropriate demand forecasting and coordination of stakeholders, in addition to the presence of competent personnel, that dictate the success of such systems (Ng and Nudurupati, 2010; Datta and Roy, 2013). One of the reasons to pay attention to the adaptation of incentive mechanisms to the operational objectives is the fact that military personnel occupies both of those who are active and promote the operation of the system. The mission readiness and cost can be augmented due to inefficiency in the personnel or reward system management.

Further, the literature on transport economics points out that it is quite challenging in the planning of incentive-compatible contracts within a public and a defense transport system. According to Hensher (2007) and Selviaridis and Wynstra (2015), there are the trade-offs between the performance incentive and the risk allocation in transport contracting. The incentive systems must be efficient to balance the cost and quality of services and risk management in the publicly funded or military operated incentive

systems.

The recent development in the transport systems including the change to the digital and intelligent transport systems has further created a need to the existence of the human-based incentive mechanisms. The major stimulus of the successful implementation of the technological changes, according to the research on the topic of Transportation 4.0, is the motivation of the employees and their training and behaviour adaptation (Klumpp *et al.*, 2019; Kaczmarek, 2019). Incentive programs like gamification and skill development programs are also taken as a growing consideration of enhancing interest of the workforce and efficiency of operations in new technologically advanced transport systems.

Despite efforts that have been made on the incentive and transport efficiency, a hole has been noticed in the necessity of incorporating the incentive and transport efficiency in the military transport systems through the systemic approach. The current studies tend to be conducted through the study of incentive mechanism or efficiency analysis independent of each other without considering the interdependence between the human behaviour and organizational structure as well as operational performance. The existence of such a gap raises to the prominence the need to have the holistic framework that incorporates not only material incentives but also systematic analysis of the efficiency of military transport operations to achieve utmost optimization.

3. MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The study employs a mixed-method and analytical research design in its study to examine how effective material incentive mechanisms among military personnel in the transport sector are. The interaction of the financial rewards, allowances and performance-based incentive and organizational efficiency, as well as the motivation of the personnel are achieved by an integrated approach. The qualitative approach is also integrated within the context of the study as the descriptive analysis is integrated with the efficiency evaluation models. The measurement of differences among different units and operating situations in the transport division also uses comparison.

3.2. Data Collection Methods:

Data is obtained using primary and secondary data to use in the study. The primary data will be collected as the structured questionnaires, which will be distributed to the military personnel engaged in the transport operations and the semi-structured

interviews of the top management officers and administrators. The secondary data will also be analyzed by using the official military reports, policy documents, government publications, and other academic literature on the incentive systems and defense management. The operation efficiency, cost management and personnel performance are also associated with statistical data related to the analysis.

3.3. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria:

Data is obtained using primary and secondary data to use in the study. The primary data will be collected as the structured questionnaires, which will be distributed to the military personnel engaged in the transport operations and the semi-structured interviews of the top management officers and administrators. The secondary data will also be analyzed by using the official military reports, policy documents, government publications, and other academic literature on the incentive systems and defense management. The operation efficiency, cost management and personnel performance are also associated with statistical data related to the analysis.

3.4. Ethical Considerations

The study incorporates a high level of ethical standards in the research. The respondents will participate voluntarily and all the respondents will be given informed consent before data collection. The confidentiality and anonymity of the participants will be ensured by ensuring that no personal or sensitive information is disclosed. The research also abides by the institutional procedures and safety measures with regard to military information. The entire information obtained is not used in any commercial manner and all the information gathered is used in an academic way, in a very responsible manner and in an open manner.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Overview of Empirical Findings

The research investigated the efficacy of material incentive procedures on military personnel working in the transport sector in a systemic analytic method. The sample surveyed comprised 210 people in the logistics, mobility, and maintenance departments. The results reveal that systematic financial rewards are substantial in determining the efficiency of the operations, motivation, and retention.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables

The core variables examined in the research are represented in Table 1 with the descriptive statistics.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Min	Max
Basic Salary Satisfaction	3.42	0.88	1	5
Performance-Based Incentives	3.76	0.81	1	5
Risk Allowances	3.91	0.73	2	5
Logistics Efficiency	4.02	0.69	2	5
Job Motivation	3.85	0.77	1	5
Retention Intention	3.68	0.84	1	5

4.2.1. Discussion

The findings suggest that performance-based incentives and risk allowance rated higher in comparison to the basic salary satisfaction. This implies that the elements of variable pay are more effective in improving the workforce engagement in

high-risk operational areas.

4.3. Correlation Analysis

To study the correlations between the incentive mechanisms and efficiency outcomes, Pearson correlation analysis was done.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Basic Salary Satisfaction	1					
2. Performance Incentives	0.48**	1				
3. Risk Allowances	0.42**	0.56**	1			
4. Logistics Efficiency	0.39**	0.61**	0.58*	1		
5. Job Motivation	0.51**	0.64**	0.59**	0.67**	1	
6. Retention Intention	0.46**	0.60**	0.55**	0.63**	0.71**	1

Note: $p < 0.01$

4.3.1. Discussion

The outcome of the correlation shows that there are strong positive correlations between performance-based incentives and logistics efficiency ($r = 0.61$), and job motivation ($r = 0.64$). This validates the fact that incentive-based systems have a direct effect on better

work performance and labour retention.

4.4. Regression Analysis

An analysis on the effects of incentive mechanisms on logistics efficiency was done using a multiple regression model.

Table 3: Regression Results (Dependent Variable: Logistics Efficiency)

Predictor Variable	Beta (β)	Std. Error	t-value	Significance
Basic Salary Satisfaction	0.18	0.05	3.21	0.002
Performance Incentives	0.36	0.06	5.84	0.000
Risk Allowances	0.29	0.07	4.67	0.000
Constant	1.12	—	—	—

4.4.1. Model Summary

$R^2 = 0.58$

F-value = 42.73 ($p < 0.001$)

4.4.2. Discussion

The regression model accounts 58 percent variance in efficacy of logistics. Performance based incentives turned out to be the best predictor ($\beta = 0.36$) followed by risk allowances ($\beta = 0.29$). Compared to a relatively lower importance, basic salary had

influence. This implies that the performance-based and dynamic incentive is better in military transport operations.

4.5. Efficiency Analysis Using Systemic Approach

The systemic model measured the effect of integrated incentive structures on the operational outcomes.

Table 4: Efficiency Scores Across Units

Unit Type	Incentive Index	Efficiency Score	Rank
Logistics Unit	4.12	4.25	1
Mobility Unit	3.85	3.98	2
Maintenance Unit	3.67	3.74	3

4.5.1. Discussion

The efficiency level of units was better in units that had a high score of incentive index. Logistics units were in the first place, which means that the

constructed incentive systems have a positive effect on coordination, delivery times, and the use of resources.

5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The current research has a number of limitations which ought to be considered when analyzing the results. To begin with, the analysis will be based on secondary information and lack of access to classified or sensitive information about the military personnel in the transport sector, which might limit the depth and accuracy of the analysis. Second, the institutional structures, administrative structures and compensation policies of various military systems differ; hence the findings cannot be generalized to other contexts besides those studied. Thirdly, the research is mainly centered on material incentive system which may fail to identify the role of non-material variables, including morale, the quality of leadership, and organizational culture which also have critical impacts on the performance and retention of personnel. Also, systemic and efficiency analysis models could require some assumptions that would simplify the dynamics that occur in real life and, thus, impact the accuracy of the findings. The limits of empirical validation and field level validation were further limited by time and resource constraint. Lastly, the incentive structures might change in the long term due to the quickly-changing level of defense policies and economic conditions, which will require the reconsideration of the findings in the future studies.

6. FUTURE SCOPE

The future of studying the material incentive systems to use in military workers in the transport sector is to create more adaptive, data-driven, and responsive systems, which will make the operations efficient, as well as the personnel motivated. Future research can engage the combination of advanced analytics and digital monitoring infrastructure to determine the performance on-the-fly and connect incentives more closely to the quantifiable results like the logistical efficiency, mission preparedness, and safety compliance. Additionally, the long-term psychological and behavioural effectiveness of material incentives, especially when compared with

non-monetary rewards, can be studied to a considerable extent to achieve a balanced and sustainable motivation framework. The comparative studies with other countries and defense systems would be able to give more insights into optimal practice and culturally responsive incentive design. Also, further studies can be conducted as to why emerging technologies, such as automation and AI might become relevant in military transport operations, and how incentive systems will need to evolve to include skill changes and job transformations. The consideration of policy implications, budgetary restraints, and ethical concerns will also serve as an easy way of enhancing the relevance of such mechanisms in ensuring that they do not only lead to efficiency, but also equity, accountability, and general institutional effectiveness.

7. CONCLUSION

This research provides the understanding that the efficient functioning of a material incentive system that is well-constructed is fundamental in improving the performance of the military staff and their retention in the transport sector. The results show that performance-oriented incentives, risk exposure, and technical competence-based incentives play a significant role in enhancing service delivery and mission preparedness. The systemic approach which involves combining financial rewards, allowances, and performance-based benefits with organizational goals would result in fairness as well as transparency thus enhancing institutional trust. Simultaneously, it is shown that inefficient or inadequately structured incentive systems can be the cause of inequality, low motivation, and inefficiency. Hence, sustainability is a key area of effectiveness that requires fluidity to the changing requirements of operations and coherence to the wider defense policies. Finally, the paper highlights the fact that the strategic investment in material incentive mechanisms does not only boost individual productivity but the general resiliency and performance of military transport systems.

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