

A Case Study on the Effectiveness of Incentive Management for Administrative Personnel in Suzhou University

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of motivation management among Administrative Personnel at Suzhou University. With the expansion of higher education and increased societal demand for universities, enhancing motivation and management among administrators, this study focused on the Administrative Personnel in Suzhou University in Anhui Province. Through questionnaire survey, it explored key factors influencing the effectiveness of motivation management among Administrative Personnel at University. Quantitative analysis was employed in this study. Research found that in order to optimize incentive management, it was important to establish incentive content that was both attractive and met the needs of individual Administrative Personnel. Establishing common goals and a cooperative attitude between incentive recipients and motivation was also crucial. In addition, establishing an organized and sustainable incentive system will further enhance motivational effects. In summary, by understanding the content and importance of motivation, promoting cooperation, and implementing a well-structured incentive system, the level of motivation management for university Administrative Personnel can be significantly improved.

KEYWORDS: Incentive management, University administrative personnel, Effectiveness.

Introduction

With the popularization of higher education and the expansion of university scale, competition among universities is fierce. In order to achieve development and construction, universities must mobilize all controllable resources, especially human resources (Wright&McMahan, 2011), in order to achieve their development goals. Therefore, it is particularly important to adopt scientific and reasonable incentive management to fully mobilize the enthusiasm of university administrative personnel.

Although many universities and scholars have done a lot of work in incentive management, most universities focus mainly on teaching and researching, with relatively little attention and resources for administrative personnel (Bess&Dee, 2012). Enhancing the enthusiasm and creativity of administrative personnel in universities has become a challenge.

The design and implementation of incentive management for administrative personnel in universities need to comprehensively consider factors such as cultural and historical backgrounds, work

behavior inertia, and objective environment (Hofstede, 2001). However, current incentive management often takes personnel management as the design starting point, adopting a unified reward and punishment model, and paying less attention to the specific needs of university administrative personnel (Choi&Ruona, 2011). Therefore, the role of incentive management is limited, and the incentive effect is not obvious enough.

Suzhou University is a comprehensive undergraduate institution under the administration of Anhui Province. The university has approximately 19,000 full-time students and over 1,000 faculty and staff members. In recent years, significant progress has been made in education reform and research achievements. However, there are still some challenges in incentive management. The compensation structure of Suzhou University's administrative personnel is mainly composed of basic salary and performance bonuses. The basic salary is allocated by the relevant financial department of the provincial government, while the performance bonus is funded by the university. Currently, the basic salary is not directly related to the monthly work contribution level and lacks incentive mechanisms directly related to work performance. In addition, the university has not established a performance-based pay system and corresponding funding allocation, which limits the effectiveness of performance incentives for administrative personnel. The Human Resources and Social Security Department of Anhui Province has set a limit on the average performance income for faculty and staff of provincial universities to strengthen control over performance income. Therefore, overtime pay and self-funded welfare of administrative personnel are also limited. In summary, this study aims to explore the effectiveness of incentive management for administrative personnel in

Suzhou University, in order to provide some references and guidance for optimizing incentive management strategies.

Research Objectives

To explore the current state of incentive management among administrative personnel at Suzhou University.

To investigate the key factors that affect the effectiveness of incentive management among administrative personnel at Suzhou University.

To propose strategies and recommendations to optimize the incentive management of administrative personnel at Suzhou University.

Expected Benefits

This study aims to provide specific guidance on incentive management for university administrative departments and managers, exploring the effectiveness and influencing factors of incentive management, and providing motivation for improvement and innovation for university organizations to improve management efficiency and competitiveness. By optimizing incentive management strategies, shaping a positive and upward work atmosphere, promoting the professional and personal growth of Administrative Personnel, and promoting the high-quality development of the entire university.

Literature Review and Concept

This chapter will discuss the core concepts and key factors related to incentive management.

University incentive management :This refers to the strategic approach adopted by universities to incentivize their faculty, researchers, and staff members. It involves the design and implementation of reward systems, professional development programs, and performance evaluation mechanisms that align with the organization's mission and goals (Carayannis & Campbell, 2009) .

Incentive intensity refers to the strength and magnitude of incentives provided to employees. Reward systems, one of the key components of incentive management, can enhance employee motivation and job performance (Armstrong & Murlis 2007), suggesting that higher incentive intensity leads to increased employee satisfaction and commitment. Incentives create conditions that fulfill employee needs and enhance their enthusiasm (Frey & Osterloh, 2002), emphasizing that higher levels of incentive intensity can fuel work passion and improve overall organizational performance. Research by Locke and Latham (2002) supports this claim, showing that higher levels of incentive intensity lead to increased task performance and goal attainment (Locke & Latham, 2002).

The incentive content refers to the specific types of incentives provided to employees. Aligning the incentive content with employees' preferences and goals can increase their motivation and job satisfaction (Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Deci 2006). Support from another study provides diverse and tailored incentive content that can better meet individual needs and enhance motivation (Guay et al, 2000) emphasizing the importance of considering individual differences and diversity when selecting incentive methods. Furthermore, meaningful and challenging tasks as incentives enhance intrinsic motivation and improve performance (Deci et al., 2001). Studies examining the effects of different types of incentive content (including financial rewards, recognition, and feedback) on employee performance have found that a combination of various incentive content elements leads to improved employee performance (Cameron & Pierce, 2002).

Motivating subjects and objects refers to individuals who are responsible for implementing and participating in the

incentive reform process. Research finds that a strong sense of purpose and intrinsic motivation towards the goals of incentive reform increases active engagement contributes to effectiveness (Grant, 2012). Intrinsic motivation which stems from internal factors such as personal interests and values, when individuals are intrinsically motivated to participate in incentive reform, it can lead to higher levels of engagement and effectiveness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Research on the role of intrinsic motivation in driving employee behavior, when individuals are internally driven and have personal goals aligned with incentive reform, it enhances their motivation and positively impacts the effectiveness of incentive management (Gagné & Deci, 2005).

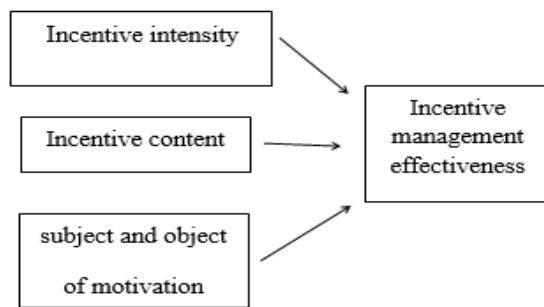
According to literature research, it is found that the motivation intensity, incentive content, and motivation of incentive subjects and objects have an impact on the effectiveness of incentive management.

Hypotheses of the study :

In the existing literature related to this study, the following assumptions were proposed:

1. Incentive intensity will have a positive impact on the effectiveness of incentive management for university administrative personnel
2. The incentive content will have a positive impact on the effectiveness of incentive management for university administrative personnel
3. The motivation for motivating subjects and objects to participate in incentive reform will have a positive impact on the effectiveness of incentive management

Conceptual Framework



Research Methods

Population and sampling method. This study adopts quantitative analysis and randomly selects 170 out of 212 administrative personnel from Suzhou University in Anhui Province to conduct a questionnaire survey.

1. Sampling method: This study used a simple random sampling method.

2. Sample size: In this study, a total of 170 questionnaires were distributed and 163 questionnaires were successfully collected, with a questionnaire recovery rate of 95.8%. There are 155 valid questionnaires, accounting for 91.2% of the total questionnaire volume.

Research method and design

The questionnaire for Administrative Personnel in this study consists of five parts:

Part one to part five are respectively: administrative personnel statistical characteristics, motivation intensity testing, motivation content testing, motivation to

participate in the subject and object of reform testing, measuring the effectiveness of incentive management.

Part, one records the basic information of the administrative personnel of Suzhou University. The scale items of the following four parts require participants to respond according to the Likert scale, ranging from 1, representing “strongly disagree,” to 5, representing “strongly agree,” depending on the degree of description in the specific item.

Statistical methods

All statistics were conducted using SPSS20.0 statistical software the survey data input, collation and statistical analysis of the basis. In terms of statistical analysis, descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression analysis methods will be used to analyze the current status and performance of incentive management for university administrative personnel, while exploring the impact of each variable on the dependent variable.

Instrument testing

Reliability evaluation: In order to evaluate the credibility of the questionnaire, we used statistical analysis method, Cronbach's α Coefficient to help determine the stability and consistency of the questionnaire. **Validity evaluation:** Statistical methods of factor analysis.

Reliability analysis

Table 1 results of reliability test

variables	number of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Incentive intensity	4	0.837
Incentive content	5	0.867
subject and object	5	0.912
Incentive effectiveness	5	0.874

The acceptability of coefficient alpha should be at least 0.7 , The value of Cronbach's Alpha is shown in table 1, Based on Cronbach's Alpha exceeding 0.7

standard, so the questionnaire is highly reliable.

The alpha values of Incentive intensity, Incentive content, and Incentive

effectiveness are greater than 0.8, indicating a certain level of reliability. The alpha value

of subject and object is 0.912, indicating high reliability. Validity analysis.

Table 2 results of validity test

Variables	KMO	Approx. Chi-Square	Df	Sig
Incentive intensity	0.809	234.119	6	0.000
Incentive content	0.898	1621.211	171	0.000
subject and object	0.889	491.234	10	0.000
Incentive effectiveness	0.873	354.489	10	0.000

According to the test, the Cronbach's Alpha was more than 0.7, so the questionnaire was highly reliable. From Table 2, In the Validity Test, the KMO of each variable > 0.6, Bartlett spherical test P value (sig) < 0.05, indicating that the respondents can well understand the intention of the questionnaire designer, that is, the questionnaire has reached the survey. The purpose of the questionnaire is that the test results of the questionnaire can represent the real characteristics of the measured objects.

Results

The basic information of the sample

The survey targets relevant administrative personnel of Suzhou University, and a total of 155 valid questionnaires were collected, which meet the requirements of empirical statistical analysis. Through the organization and statistical analysis of the collected effective questionnaires, the basic situation data is shown in the following figure.

Table 3 Personal Basic Information

Personal factors	option	frequency	percent
gender	Male	98	63.2
	female	57	36.8
	Total	155	100
age	Under 30	29	18.7
	31-40 Years old	53	34.2
	41-50 Years old	45	29.0
	51-60 Years old	28	18.1
	Total	155	100
highest education	Bachelor	90	58.1
	Master	45	29.0
	doctor	20	12.9
	Total	155	100
Years of administrative work in university	2 Years and below	11	7.1
	2-5 Years	39	25.2
	5-10 Years	53	34.2
	10-20 Years	33	21.3
	More than 20 years	19	12.3
	Total	155	100
Knowledge of school incentives	understand	48	31.0
	Know some	93	60.
	do not understand	14	9.
	Total	155	100

From Table 3.

1. Gender ratio: 63.2% of the personnel are male, while 36.8% are female. This indicates a relatively realistic gender ratio.

2. Age distribution: Among the personnel, 18.7% are under the age of 30, influenced by educational qualifications and recruitment conditions. Those aged 31-40 make up the highest proportion (34.2%), reflecting the backbone of administrative level with rich work experience. People aged 41-50 account for 29%, bringing valuable professional knowledge and experience, 18.1% of individuals are aged 51-60, serving as senior administrative managers with accumulated experience.

3. Education distribution: The majority of administrative personnel in Suzhou University has a high level of education. 58.1% have a bachelor's degree or below, 29% have a master's degree, and 12.9% have a doctoral degree. This is related to the expansion of university enrollment and improved benefits for faculty and staff.

4. Years of employment distribution: The distribution of years of employment is relatively average. Only 7.1% of employees

have been employed for 2 years or less, indicating fewer new hires annually. The highest proportion (34.2%) has been employed for 5-10 years, representing the main force in university administrative management. 33.6% of personnel have more than 10 years of employment, indicating rich work experience and stability in the field.

5. Understanding of the school incentive system: Nearly one-third of the surveyed administrative personnel have knowledge of the incentive mechanism, while two-thirds have limited or no knowledge. This suggests that there is room for improvement in the incentive mechanism of university, and the attention of administrative personnel needs to be attracted. Therefore, university needs to increase their efforts in incentivizing personnel.

By analyzing this data, we can gain a comprehensive understanding of the basic situation of administrative personnel in Suzhou University. This information provides valuable references for further research and improvement of incentive systems in University

Analysis of the Selection of Incentive Content for University Administrative Personnel

Table 4 The degree to which incentive content is valued

Number	Incentive content	Number of people valued	Valid samples	Incentive content attention
1	Salary incentives	98	155	63.2%
2	Performance incentive	84	155	54.2%
3	Emotional motivation	75	155	48.4%
4	Promotion incentive	70	155	45.2%
5	Title incentives	62	155	40.0%
6	Vacation incentives	22	155	14.2%
7	Training incentive	20	155	12.9%
8	Competitive incentives	16	155	10.3%
9	Honor incentive	14	155	9.0%
10	Authorization incentive	12	155	7.7%

From the statistical results in Table 4, it can be seen that administrative personnel attach varying degrees of importance to these 10 incentive contents. The ranking of importance level is as follows: Salary incentives, performance incentives, emotional incentives, promotion incentives, professional title incentives, vacation incentives, training incentives, competition incentives, honor incentives, authorization incentives.

When different administrative personnel face different incentive contents,

they will make different choices based on personal needs and incentive effects. This difference reflects the differences in preferences among administrative personnel, originating from individual needs. When formulating incentive strategies, it is necessary to consider the diverse needs of administrative personnel and design the most effective incentive methods to meet preferences.

Mean and Standard Deviation

Table 5 Mean and Standard Deviation Report

Variables	X	SD
Incentive intensity	3.7871	0.85934
Incentive content	3.7639	0.82666
subject and object	3.5355	1.02841
Incentive effectiveness	3.9832	0.86579

From Table 5, According to the principle of the five-level frequency range, through the evaluation of the average value, we found that the average value of the three independent variables of incentive content, subject and object of motivation, and incentive intensity is above 3.41, indicating that the overall level of these variables

belongs to the medium to high level. Indicating that incentive content, subject and object of motivation, and incentive intensity all have a positive impact on the effectiveness of incentive management, and are considered as important factors in research.

Result analysis

Table 6 Regression analysis table

model	R	R square	Model summary	
			Adjusted R square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.699 ^a	.488	.478	.62569

Independent variable: incentive intensity, incentive content, incentive subject and object participation motivation **Dependent variable:** the effectiveness of the incentive management.

From the above model 6 analysis, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between independent variables: incentive intensity, incentive content, incentive subject and object participation motivation

and the effectiveness of incentive management of dependent variable. The R value of the model is 0.699, meaning that about 69.9% of the variability in the effectiveness of incentive management can be explained by these independent variables. This strongly suggests a positive correlation between predictor and dependent variables, namely that these incentive factors have an impact on the effectiveness of incentive management.

Table7 ANOVA

ANOVA ^a					
model	Sum of Squares	df	mean square	F	Sig
1	56.322	3	18.774	47.956	.000b
	159.114	151	.391		
	115.436	154			

a. Dependent variable: Effectiveness of incentive management

b. Predictor variables: (constant), Incentive intensity , Incentive content , subject and object of motivation

Table 7 shows the ANOVA with the multiple linear regression equation, testing the significance of the model. That is, with the F statistic of 47.956, we confirmed the significance of the regression model, and the corresponding P-value was very small (P= 0.000 <0.05). This means that the

predictor variables in the regression model (Incentive intensity, Incentive content, subject and object of motivation) can be used to predict the dependent variable (trust), and that this effect is statistically significant.

Table 8 Coefficients

coefficient ^a						
Model	Unstandar dize	Coeffici entsStd . Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig	VIF
1 (constant)	.561	.297		1.891	.000	
X1 : Incentive intensity	.293	.064	.291	4.614	.000	1.175
X2 : Incentive content	.355	.065	.339	5.498	.000	1.123
X3 : subject and object of motivation	.275	.054	.327	5.133	.000	1.197

a. Dependent variable: Effectiveness of incentive management

From Table 8, the multicollinearity test of the model showed that the VIF

values of each independent variable were all less than 2 and within a low range, far below 10. Therefore, we can conclude that there is no serious issue of multicollinearity among these independent variables. This means that we can continue to use these independent variables to analyze the impact on the dependent variable (incentive management effectiveness) without worrying about multicollinearity significantly affecting the analysis results.

We can use the following linear regression equation to analyze the effectiveness of incentive management: incentive management effectiveness = $0.561 + 0.293 * (\text{incentive intensity}) + 0.355 * (\text{incentive content}) + 0.275 * (\text{subject and object of motivation})$

From the predictive equation, we can draw the following conclusions: incentive content (coefficient=0.355, $t=5.498$, $P=0.000<0.01$) is most related to incentive management effectiveness, followed by the subject and object of motivation (coefficient=0.275, $t=5.133$, $P=0.000<0.01$), and the correlation with incentive intensity (coefficient=0.293, $t=4.614$, $P=0.000<0.01$) is lowest.

Conclusions, Discussions, And Recommendations

Conclusion and Discussion

In this study, the effectiveness of incentive management for administrative personnel in Suzhou University. The research findings suggest that incentive content has the greatest impact on the effectiveness of incentive management, followed by the motivation of both the subjects and objects of incentives. On the other hand, incentive intensity has a relatively smaller impact.

The results indicate that the design and implementation of attractive and

motivating incentive content is crucial in promoting the active participation and response of administrative personnel. When rewards such as salary and promotion are closely aligned with work performance and management quality, they effectively improve work motivation and efficiency. So when rewarding employees, managers should consider which incentives can maximize their influence on employees' behavior. This may involve material rewards or non-material rewards, such as the recognized value, respect, and support (Ramlall, 2004). Understanding the personal needs, desires, and expectations of administrative personnel is essential as it influences their response to different incentives.

Furthermore, the common goal and cooperative attitude of both the subjects (university management) and objects (administrative personnel) of incentives significantly affect the effectiveness of incentive management. When university management sincerely aims to enhance job satisfaction and effectiveness through incentive policy reform, and administrative personnel see the benefits of the reform and are willing to participate, the likelihood of successful reform increases.

Regarding incentive intensity, while its impact on incentive management is smaller compared to other factors, it should not be disregarded. excessive incentive may cause pressure and panic among employees, which reduces their work efficiency (Deci & Ryan, 2000). It is important to establish an orderly and sustainable incentive system that provides lasting effects. This can be achieved through the balanced distribution of incentives, such as performance bonuses, job promotions, and other forms of recognition.

In conclusion, improving the effectiveness of incentive management for university administrative personnel requires the development of attractive and motivating incentive content, ensuring sufficient motivation for reform from both the subjects and objects of incentives. While incentive intensity plays a smaller role, it is essential to establish an orderly and sustainable incentive system. By implementing these recommendations, university can enhance administrative personnel motivation and satisfaction, ultimately improving their work efficiency and contributing to the overall success of the institution.

Recommendations

We propose the following suggestions to optimization the incentive management of Suzhou university administrative personnel:

Enriching the incentive content: university should further enrich the incentive content based on the needs of administrative personnel. This includes salary incentives, emotional incentives, performance appraisal incentives, promotion incentives, vacation incentives, honor and appreciation incentives, among others. Administrative personnel at different levels need to design and improve targeted incentive content to meet their needs.

Enhance the intensity of incentive management: university needs to actively strive for more incentive management permissions, including increasing financial support for incentive management and striving to expand the scope of incentive management authority. Strengthen information transparency and recording, By providing more resources and opportunities for incentive management, institutions can enhance the overall effectiveness of their incentive programs.

Active participation of university management and administrative personnel: university needs to actively promote the

reform of incentive management Effective communication between university management and administrative personnel is crucial to ensure that both parties understand the direction and goals of the reform. Administrative personnel should actively participate in incentive management, maintain effective communication with leadership, provide suggestions, and display an optimistic and positive attitude towards the reform process.

Strengthen financial security and management authority: university and governments should work together to increase the investment required for incentive management and ensure the increase and maintenance of incentive intensity. The government should authorize partial incentive management authority to universities. Suzhou university can develop own creative incentive mechanisms based on the unique characteristics and development strategies.

By implementing these recommendations, university can create a more effective and motivating environment for this administrative personnel. The enriched incentive content, improved intensity of management, active participation from both university management and administrative personnel, and strengthened financial security and management authority will contribute to enhancing the overall effectiveness of incentive management programs.

Recommendations for future research

In order to further deepen the research on the incentive management of Administrative Personnel, we propose the following suggestions for future research:

In-depth study of the causes and effects of incentive management differences between universities: future research can focus on the differences in incentive management policies and practices between different universities, analyzing the reasons behind these

differences and their impact on the performance of universities and the work motivation of Administrative Personnel. This helps to provide more specific guidance for universities to optimize their incentive management strategies.

To study the relationship between incentive management and social responsibility and sustainable development of universities: how to promote universities to better fulfill their social responsibilities

and realize sustainable management and operation through incentive management is a field worthy of in-depth study.

Application of innovation incentive tools and technologies: incentive management systems based on big data and artificial intelligence can provide universities with more accurate data analysis and prediction, and help them to formulate incentive policies and programs more effectively.

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