

The Effect of Financial Rewards on Employee Work Motivation: An Experimental Study at SPD Speedometer Automotive Company

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ABSTRACT

In today's highly competitive business landscape, companies must swiftly adapt to changes and ensure that their employees remain motivated to achieve optimal productivity levels. One crucial factor in enhancing work motivation is the implementation of an effective reward system. This study aims to examine the effect of financial rewards on employee work motivation at SPD Speedometer, an automotive company. Employing a quasi-experimental design with a post-test-only control group, the research involved 60 employees divided into two groups: an experimental group receiving financial rewards and a control group receiving none. Work motivation was measured using a scale adapted from George and Jones (2012), covering three indicators: direction of behavior, level of effort, and level of persistence. The data were analyzed using the Mann-Whitney test, which revealed a significant difference in work motivation between the two groups, indicating that financial rewards substantially enhance employee motivation. These findings align with reinforcement theory and Herzberg's two-factor theory, both of which identify financial incentives as pivotal extrinsic motivators that drive positive work behavior. The practical implication suggests that a well-structured and equitable financial reward system can serve as an effective managerial strategy to boost employee motivation and productivity, particularly in the automotive industry.

KEYWORDS *Financial Reward, Work Motivation, Experiment, SPD Speedometer, Employees.*



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INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly competitive business environment, companies must be able to adapt to rapid changes and ensure that employees remain motivated to achieve optimal productivity. One of the factors that plays an important role in increasing work motivation is the system *Reward* effective. *Reward* A well-designed one not only increases morale, but also affects employee loyalty to the company as well as improves overall organizational performance. Implementation of the system *Reward* The right one can be a strategic tool for companies to retain quality employees and increase their commitment and job satisfaction. *Reward* has a significant influence on employee work motivation (Ivan Tomi Putra Ismail et al., 2020). In addition, the application of the system *Reward* that effectively improves job satisfaction and employee performance, so that organizations can compete in an increasingly dynamic industry (Pratama & Putra Prasetya, 2024).

An award is a form of appreciation for someone who has succeeded in achieving their target or completing a task and so on. Reward It can be used in various fields such as education or industry within the company. In the company, this reward is an award from the company to its employees who have good work performance (Dua Mea, 2022). Reward It can be interpreted as an award to repay services provided by the company to its employees who are outstanding or who can show optimal performance according to the company's expectations (Pratama & Putra Prasetya, 2024). The reinforcement theory put forward by Skinner explains that behavior with positive consequences or rewards tends to repeat, so in an organization it must be designed effectively and positively so that it will be able to motivate the individual (Dhutarso Aviantoro et al., 2020).

The existence of a reward system carried out in a company is one of the strategies used by companies to recruit and retain qualified employees and can encourage them to work even better in accordance with the labor regulations built in the company (Akpom & Ibegbulam, 2023). Reward is one of the forms given by the company to employees to appreciate their contribution to the level of work achievement, the giving of this award is to be able to increase work motivation and be able to develop the potential and productivity of employees (Rustandi, 2020). Apart from that, this award can also create motivation for employees to be more productive at work (Sofiati, 2021). With an award management system in a company, it can attract, retain and motivate its employees to achieve high performance achievements (Manzoor et al., 2021).

Rewards can be categorized into two namely This extrinsic award is an award that comes from outside a person, such as the real benefits that the organization offers to its employees. In this extrinsic award, it is divided into two, namely: Financial in the form of salary, allowances, incentives or bonuses. And non-financial awards are interpersonal awards and promotions, getting a feeling of respect and appreciation from superiors or other employees, gaining the trust of superiors and so on. And intrinsic appreciation is an award that comes from within a person, this award is an award that is given by oneself and felt internally. Intrinsic rewards consist of completion, achievements, and autonomy. For example, there is a feeling of pride in himself for the work that has been done, being able to do work in a fun way, learning something new, expanding the competencies that are of interest and so on (Akpom & Ibegbulam, 2023; Mardiana & Saleh, 2021; Pratama & Putra Prasetya, 2024).

Research by Lestari & Tricks, (2023) in the manufacturing industry found that the better the system Reward applied, the higher the level of employee work motivation. With the right incentives, employees are more motivated to improve their performance and be more loyal to the company. Gift *Reward* fair, based on work achievements and employee contributions, can increase employee motivation and commitment to the company. In other words, transparency and fairness in the system Reward is a crucial factor that affects employee satisfaction and loyalty (Mardiana & Saleh, 2021). Presence compensation, job enrichment and expansion, and training have a positive and significant effect on employee motivation (Tumi et al., 2022). that the variables of financial rewards and non-financial rewards are very significant in explaining changes in employee motivation (Rastegar & Sharei, 2020).

Several empirical studies have proven the relationship between the systems Reward and employee work motivation. In research Aktar, (2012) The banking sector shows that both

intrinsic and extrinsic rewards have a positive influence on employee performance. The study also emphasizes that a combination of financial rewards (bonuses, salaries, incentives) and non-financial rewards (recognition, promotional opportunities) is the best strategy to increase work motivation. However, not all types of rewards have the same impact on work motivation. Research by Yousaf et al., (2014) deep Middle East Journal of Scientific Research also supports these findings, stating that financial incentives are a key factor in motivating employees in developing countries, but Reward Non-financial factors such as appreciation, recognition, and self-development opportunities also have an important role in increasing job satisfaction. Other studies conducted by Jeni et al., (2020) found that the Reward structured and fair can significantly increase employee productivity and job satisfaction. This shows that the company's success in implementing the system Reward that can have a direct impact on improving organizational performance (Okwuise & Ndudi, 2023).

In the context of the automotive industry, SPD Speedometer Facing a major challenge in maintaining employee work motivation amid increasing market competition (Szilva, 2025). The automotive industry demands high productivity standards, continuous innovation, and optimal work efficiency. Therefore, companies must adopt a reward strategy that is based on performance achievement and employee loyalty. Research deep International Journal of Business and Social Science highlighting that compensation and systems Reward Fair has a positive correlation with employee performance. The study also confirms that companies that implement the Reward transparently more able to retain high-performing employees compared to companies that do not have a clear reward system. In research Roos et al., (2021) emphasizing that the remuneration system plays an important role in shaping the company's culture and improving employee performance. The study also underscores that financial incentives can increase or hinder teamwork, depending on how the system is designed.

Based on the various studies above, it can be concluded that rewards have a strategic role in increasing employee work motivation. A well-designed reward system not only contributes to increased productivity but also creates a positive work culture as well as increases employee loyalty to the company. Therefore, this study aims to explore more deeply the influence of financial rewards on employee work motivation in the SPD Speedometer which consists of a control group and an experimental group. The findings are expected to offer valuable insights for companies in designing reward strategies that not only enhance productivity but also foster a positive work culture, leading to greater employee satisfaction and loyalty. Furthermore, this study will contribute to the broader field of human resource management by providing empirical evidence on the role of financial incentives in motivating employees.

METHOD

This study used an experimental quantitative approach, which is a quantitative approach carried out through experiments to test the influence between independent variables or variables that obtain Treatment to dependent variables under controlled conditions. The variables in this study are in the form of reward as an independent variable (X) and employee work motivation as a dependent variable (Y). (Sugiyono, 2019)

The design of this study is a post-test only quasi experiment so that measurements will be carried out after the researcher gives treatment to the experimental group and to the control group that does not receive treatment. The reason for choosing the design is because the researcher did not group or randomize the subjects. The following is an overview of the experimental design in this study.



Information:

- X : Treatment in the experimental group in the form of rewarding
O1 : Result Post-test Experimental and control groups
----- : Indicates that the subject is not randomly selected

Respondents in this study consisted of 60 employees of the SPD Speedometer Automotive Company which were divided into two groups, namely 30 employees who joined the experimental group and 30 other employees who joined the control group. In the experimental group, employees will receive treatment in the form of financial rewards while employees in the control group will not be given treatment.

This research was conducted at the SPD Speedometer Automotive Company located in the Special Region of Yogyakarta. SPD Speedometer is an automotive company that is a member of PT. Radiator Springs Indonesia provides custom, service, and restoration services for all types of car speedometers. The company was established in 2013 but was established commercially in 2015. This research is planned to last for 3 months, with the following details:

This first phase was carried out from March 2025. Some of the things that were done were:

1. Collect initial data

Initial data collection was carried out by conducting interviews with relevant parties, in this case employees who have direct knowledge of the reward policy in the company about the implementation of the reward system that has been carried out in the SPD Speedometer Automotive company. The results of interviews with IBZ employees show that the SPD Speedometer Automotive company provides financial and non-financial rewards to its employees. Financial rewards include incentives in the form of bonuses, performance allowances, or additional wages given based on the employee's achievements or work results. For example, incentives can be given to employees who successfully achieve production targets or make significant contributions to the completion of large projects. Meanwhile, non-financial rewards include awards in the form of recognition or appreciation for employee performance, such as award certificates, opportunities to participate in training or workshops and promotions.

2. Preparing research instruments

At this stage, the researcher searches for and selects work motivation instruments to be used in the research. The search process was carried out by reviewing books and previous research articles while the selection process was carried out by considering the validity,

reliability, and suitability of the instrument's content with the Reward. In the end, the researcher found a theoretical work motivation instrument from George & Jones, (2012) which explains that there are 3 indicators of work motivation, namely behavior (direction of behavior), level of effort (level of effort) and persistence level (Level of persistence).

3. Determining the type of reward

It is important to determine the type of reward that will be given considering that it will affect the treatment that will be given to the experimental group. In this study, the researcher chose financial rewards because of several considerations, one of which is the results of previous research that showed that financial rewards have a more direct and real impact on employee motivation and performance. Several previous studies, such as those conducted by Abdullah (2023) with research results that financial rewards include incentives that affect employee motivation, meaning that providing incentives to employees can increase work motivation. Bonuses or incentives in the form of money can increase the achievement of targets and speed up the completion of assigned tasks. This is because financial incentives are often easier for individuals to measure and appreciate. In addition, financial rewards also have a stronger appeal because they can directly improve the economic welfare of employees, provide incentives for higher achievement, and can be more flexibly accepted by various types of employees, especially in industrial sectors such as automotive which have high work demands. Taking these things into account, the researcher chose to provide financial rewards as treatment in this experiment.

The second stage carried out by the researcher included:

1. Reward employees

Financial rewards are only given to respondents who are members of the experimental group that have been given during January-March 2025. This reward has been given by the company

2. Carry out post-tests

The implementation of the post-test was carried out after the reward was given precisely in mid-April 2025 by providing questionnaires in the form of work motivation instruments to the experimental group and the control group. This post-test aims to collect work motivation data from the experimental group and the control group which will be analyzed at a later stage.

The third phase is to be carried out at the end of April to the beginning of May 2025. At this stage, the researcher analyzes the data from the post-test that has been carried out using statistical tests including descriptive statistical tests, classical assumption tests, and hypothesis tests, namely the Independent Sample T-Test. After the data analysis is completed, the researcher will compile a research report.

The research instrument uses a Likert scale that can be made in the form of Checklist or multiple choices. In this study, the respondents' attitudes or opinions towards each variable were expressed on a scale of 1-4 instruments to measure work motivation. The work motivation scale in this study refers to the work motivation indicator by George and Jones (2012) which refers to 3 aspects, namely; Behavior ((Sugiyono, 2019)Direction of Behavior), Business Level (Level of Effort), Persistence Level (Level of Persistence), and has been modified in research (Pratiwi, 2023);

Table 1. Work Motivation Blueprint

No	Aspects	Favorable	Unfavorable	Sum
1.	Direction of Behavior	1, 13, 18, 24, 28	2, 6, 10, 15, 21	10
2.	Level of Effort	3, 7, 12, 19, 22	4, 8, 17, 26, 30	10
3.	Level of Persistence	5, 9, 20, 23, 29	11, 14, 16, 25, 27	10
Total		15	15	30

source: processed data (2025)

The data analysis of this study used IBM SPSS software for Windows. With a descriptive analysis test, a prerequisite test which includes normality and homogeneity tests. And the hypothesis test used in this study is the Independent Sample T-Test. The test aims to find out whether there is a difference between the two groups by comparing the average

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Participant Characteristics

In this study, participants were divided into two groups, namely the control and experiment along with age characteristic data from the control group and the experimental group. Here is a table of age characteristics in the control group:

Table 2. Age Characteristics In The Control Group

Control Group	N	Average Age	Minimum Age	Maximum Age
	30	25,8	20	34

source: processed data (2025)

Based on the table, it can be seen that the participants in the control group amounted to 30 employees, the minimum age of employees was 20 years, the maximum age of employees was 34 years, and the average age was 25.8 years. While the following table is a table of age characteristics in the experimental group:

Table 3. Age Characteristics In The Experimental Group

Experimental Group	N	Average Age	Minimum Age	Maximum Age
	30	28,5	24	38

source: processed data (2025)

Based on the table, it can be seen that the participants in the experimental group amounted to 30 employees, the minimum age of employees was 24 years, the maximum age of employees was 38 years, and the average age was 28.5 years.

Descriptive Test

Descriptive data is used to describe the condition of the data distribution of SPD Speedometer employees. Empirical mean and hypothetical mean were obtained from the

response of the research sample through the work motivation scale. The following is a table of descriptive test results for the control group and the experimental group:

Table 4. Descriptive Test Results

Group	Mean	Middle Value	Mood	Minimum Score	Maximum Value	St.Dev	Total
Control	93.1	96.5	89	57	109	13.0	2.794
Experiment	102	103	104	87	117	8.44	3.058

source: processed data (2025)

In this study, the control group had an average score of 93.1 with a median score of 96.5 and a score that often appeared 89. The minimum score obtained is 57 while the maximum score is 109. The distribution of data shows a standard deviation of 13.0 with a total overall score of 2,794. Meanwhile, the experimental group had an average score of 102 with a middle score of 103 and a mode of 104. The minimum score obtained is 87 while the maximum score is 117. The distribution of data shows a standard deviation of 8.44 with a total overall value of 3,058. The following are the hypothetical mean and hypothetical SD in this study:

$$\text{Hypothetical Mean} = \frac{(\text{Maximum number of scoring items}) + (\text{minimum number of scoring items})}{2}$$

$$\text{Hypothetical SD} = \frac{(\text{Maximum number of scoring items}) - (\text{minimum number of scoring items})}{6}$$

Table 5. Hypothetical Mean and Hypothetical SD Calculation Results

Variable	Hypothetical Mean	Hypothetical SD
Work motivation	75	15

source: processed data (2025)

Through the table above, it is known that the data distribution in the study participants in general is available to SPD Speedometer employees. Based on the results of the measurement through the work motivation scale that has been filled, a hypothetical mean of 75 and a hypothetical elementary school score of 15 were obtained. The distribution of data frequencies for the scale is as follows:

Control Group

Table 6. Distribution Of Data Frequencies

Inclination Interval	Score	Category	F	Percentage
$x < \mu - 1. \sigma$	< 60	Low	1	3,33
$\mu - 1. \sigma \leq x < \mu + 1. \sigma$	$60 \leq x < 90$	Keep	8	26,67
$x \geq \mu + 1. \sigma$	≥ 90	Tall	21	70

source: processed data (2025)

Based on the categorization in the table, it can be seen that SPD Speedometer employees in the control group tend to have a range of work motivation scale values that are in the high

category with a score of > 90 and a frequency of 21 employees or around 70 percent. This shows that the control group has high work motivation.

Experimental Group

Table 7. Distribution Of Data Frequencies

Inclination Interval	Score	Category	F	Percentage
$x < \mu - 1. \sigma$	< 60	Low	0	0
$\mu - 1. \sigma \leq x < \mu + 1. \sigma$	$60 \leq x < 90$	Keep	5	16,67
$x \geq \mu + 1. \sigma$	≥ 90	Tall	25	83,33

source: processed data (2025)

Based on the categorization in the table, it can be seen that SPD Speedometer employees in the experimental group tend to have a range of work motivation scale values that are in the high category with a $\geq$ value of 90 and a frequency of 25 students or around 83.33 percent. This shows that the experimental group has high work motivation.

Validity Test

To determine the validity of the Work Motivation scale from George and Jones (2012), researchers conducted tests using the Aiken V formula with 5 *expert* judgements. The test results showed that the entire item on the Work Motivation scale from George and Jones (2012) had an Aiken coefficient of > 0.80 . Based on this score, it can be seen that all items are valid and suitable for data collection.

Reliability Test

Table 8. Reliability Test

Statistic	Value
Cronbach's Alpha	0.947
N of Items	30

source: processed data (2025)

The results of the calculation using SPSS obtained a Cronbach's Alpha value of $0.947 > 0.7$, so it was stated that this questionnaire was declared reliable

Normality Test

Table 9. Normality Test

Group	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Statistic	df	Sig.	Shapiro-Wilk Statistic	df	Sig.
Experiment	0.106	30	0.200	0.955	30	0.223
Control	0.179	30	0.015	0.859	30	0.001

source: processed data (2025)

This study used Shapiro Wilk because the participants per group were less than 50. Based on the results of the table above, the normally distributed experimental group and the abnormally distributed control group

Homogeneity Test

Table 10. Homogeneity Test

Test	F	Sig.
Equal variances assumed	1.938	0.169
Equal variances not assumed	-	-

source: processed data (2025)

The result obtained is that the data meets the homogeneity assumption because $p > 0.05$ is 0.169

Hypothesis Test

Table 11. Hypothesis Test

Test Statistics	Total
Mann-Whitney U	266.500
Wilcoxon W	731.500
Z	-2.719
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.007

source: processed data (2025)

Because the control group was abnormally distributed, the hypothesis test used a nonparametric test, namely the Mann-Whitney. Based on the calculations, it can be found that the sig value < 0.05 is 0.007 so there is a significant difference between the experimental group and the control group.

Discussion

The results of statistical analysis in this study show that financial rewards have a significant effect on employee work motivation at SPD Speedometer Company. This finding was obtained through a statistical test, namely the Mann-Whitney test with a significance value of 0.007. This suggests that there is a significant difference in work motivation between the groups of employees who receive financial rewards and those who do not, thus strengthening the hypothesis that the provision of financial rewards has a positive impact on increasing work motivation.

Theoretically, these results are in line with Herzberg's (1959) two-factor motivation theory, which classifies financial rewards as extrinsic motivators capable of increasing job satisfaction. Motivation according to Maslow is the individual's desire to meet his needs gradually from basic needs to higher needs and this motivation rests on a hierarchy known as Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Prihantony, 2021). Motivation is the feeling and desire that drives individuals to act and behave with a certain goal, which is also a process that arises due to physical and psychological needs and shortcomings (Wahyudi & Bas, 2024). Therefore, work motivation is a process that arises because of an individual's motivation or desire to work optimally in order to achieve a goal and meet needs that are in accordance with Maslow's hierarchy of needs such as basic needs, recognition and self-actualization.

The award in the form of financial incentives meets the basic needs of employees such as recognition, economic security, and fairness for the performance provided. This ultimately encourages increased work morale, commitment to tasks, and involvement in the organization's

work processes. Theory *Reinforcement* Skinner supports these findings by stating that the provision of positive stimulus, in this case financial rewards, will reinforce the positive behavior that the organization expects. In other words, rewards indirectly function as reinforcements that encourages employees to maintain and even improve work performance.

This study also confirms the results of previous studies, as reported by Abdullah (2023), which found that financial rewards contribute significantly to increasing employee work motivation. Incentives in the form of money are considered more real, easy to measure, and have high attractiveness because they have a direct impact on employee welfare. In the context of the automotive industry that demands effectiveness and speed, financial rewards have been proven to be able to increase the target of achievement and completion of tasks. This finding can be further explained by using three indicators of work motivation put forward by George and Jones (2012), as follows: 1.) Direction of behavior, which is a financial reward that motivates employees to choose work behaviors that support organizational or company goals, such as discipline, timely completion of tasks, and innovation; 2.) Level of effort, namely incentives to encourage employees to work harder and focus on carrying out responsibilities; and 3.) Persistence (level of persistence), which is a reward, also plays a role in maintaining employees' perseverance to complete work despite facing obstacles (Pratiwi, 2023).

The validity of these results is further strengthened by data that meet the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance, showing that the experimental design and analysis used in this study have been consistent and reliable. Therefore, it can be concluded that providing financial rewards significantly and consistently is able to increase employee work motivation, both in terms of behavior, business level, and persistence. The practical implications of the results of this study suggest that financial rewards can be adopted as an effective managerial strategy to increase labor productivity, especially in a results-oriented work environment. Companies are advised to implement a fair, transparent, and measurable incentive system in order to have the maximum impact on employee work motivation.

CONCLUSION

The hypothesis test using the Mann-Whitney method demonstrated a statistically significant difference in work motivation between employees who received financial rewards and those who did not at SPD Speedometer, confirming that financial rewards have a substantial positive impact on employee motivation. This influence extends beyond meeting basic needs, fostering greater enthusiasm, work intensity, and persistence in achieving organizational targets, ultimately contributing to improved individual and group performance. The validity test also confirmed that all items of the George and Jones Work Motivation scale were appropriate for this research, and post-test results highlighted a higher proportion of employees in the high-motivation category within the experimental group. While these findings provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of financial rewards in the automotive sector, future research should consider broader comparative studies across different industries to explore whether sector-specific characteristics influence the efficacy of financial reward systems.

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