

# Does Intrinsic Rewards Matter on Motivation? Evidence from Primary School Teachers of Bangladesh

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**Purpose-** This study investigates the impact of intrinsic rewards (Recognition, Training and Development, Work Environment, Participation in Decision Making, and Workplace Flexibility) on primary school teachers' motivation at the workplace.

**Design/Methodology-** A survey was conducted using a 5 Likert scale questionnaire among the teachers of different primary schools across Bangladesh. A total of 200 data was gathered through random sampling. SPSS 22.0 is used for analyzing the data. The study employed multiple regression and ANOVA, correlation, reliability test, and descriptive statistics to draw the findings.

**Findings-** The study revealed that intrinsic rewards have a significant effect on teachers' motivation. All the studied variables (Recognition, Training and Development, Work Environment, Participation in Decision Making, and Workplace Flexibility) have found a statistically significant relationship with Motivation. Moreover, recognition and work environment showed the most robust relationships with teachers' motivation.

**Practical Implications-** Organizations can use this study's results to comprehend the effect of intrinsic or non-financial rewards on employee motivation. Thus, the research findings could help similar institutions design an appropriate reward package with adequate intrinsic rewards to motivate their employees and ensure better performance at work.

## Introduction

In this modern world of business, human resource plays the central role of any organization. So, it is essential to fulfill the needs of human resources to ensure motivation at workplace (Korlén, Essén, Lindgren, Amer-Wahlin, & von Thiele Schwarz, 2017). Motivation encourages employees to be more productive and committed to their job (Denton, 1987). It drives an individual towards achieving both individual and organizational goals (Hughes, 2012). Motivation is significant because it urges people to perform well at their work. Lack of motivation may decrease employees' performance even they have the required skills and knowledge (Hameed, Ramzan, & Zubair, 2014). Motivation boosts the employees' morale and encourages them willingly give their best efforts to accomplish the assigned tasks (Pinto & dos Santos, 2018).

The rewarding organizational system plays an essential role in employees' level of motivation. A well organized and fair reward system positively affects employee motivation (Shafiq & Naseem, 2011). Rewards can be either extrinsic or intrinsic (Gkorezis & Kastritsi, 2017). Various forms of payment such as salary and wages and other benefits (bonuses, allowances, medical claims, insurance plan, profit or gain sharing program etc.) are extrinsic rewards that have a relationship with the monetary aspect of motivation (Pinto & dos Santos, 2018). On the other hand, intrinsic rewards are rewards where an employee does not derive any material gain or financial benefits. Such rewards have the most significant impact on employee behavior (Tausif, 2012). Intrinsic rewards include achievement, praise or recognition, advancement, autonomy or freedom, responsibility, the work itself, the working condition, involvement in decision making, ability utilization, growth or development of skills, job security, etc. (Hughes, 2012). Though monetary rewards play a significant role in employee motivation as well as non-monetary rewards cannot be ignored. Intrinsic rewards are the decisive determinant of work motivation and tend to have a longer-lasting effect than monetary rewards (Yousaf, Latif, Aslam, & Saddiqui, 2014).

Nowadays, employees are realizing the essence of intrinsic rewards to being motivated and continue their service. Thus, efforts must be required to motivate employees different from a few years ago (Gkorezis & Kastritsi, 2017). Motivation does not always depend upon money (Ahmed, Mohamed, Oyagi, & Tirimba, 2015). Employees today are looking forward to a suitable working environment that stimulates them to be motivated. Thus, organizations are focusing more on intrinsic rewards today to motivate their employees to accomplish organizational goals and compete in the global market (Yusoff & Kian, 2013). Optimal companies don't miss any opportunity to flourish their employees' motivation through non-monetary rewards (Korlén et al., 2017). Several research works related to rewards and employee motivation from different industries have been found in Bangladesh but are not focused on the primary education segment. Primary school teachers play the core role to teach children regarding their necessary foundation of knowledge. So, this research aims at ascertaining the practice of intrinsic or non-financial rewards in the primary schools of Bangladesh and its effect on the teachers' motivation at the workplace.

## Literature Review

### Motivation

Motivation is a psychological outcome (Ostroff, 1992) that occurs from the interaction between an employee and their work environment (Beardwell & Claydon, 2007). It is a combination of different processes that impact and directs employees' behavior to attain the goal. Employees who are motivated tend to work the hardest and fulfil all their responsibilities at work (Gkorezis & Kastritsi, 2017). Moreover, motivation expresses that employees are valuable in the organization (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1988). Thus, motivation is important to achieve organizational objectives and can be applied in different forms for changing employees' morale, attitude, behaviors, etc. (Hameed et al., 2014). The development and success of a company mostly depends on the level

of motivation of its workforce (Armstrong, 1999). Thus, any organization must identify what motivates its employees (Armstrong & Murlis, 2007).

### **Intrinsic Rewards**

Intrinsic rewards are such reward system where employees enjoy psychological satisfaction and are mentally rewarded (Armstrong & Brown, 2006). Intrinsic rewards, also known as non-financial or non-monetary rewards. These are kind of rewards where employees do not get any monetary benefits or gains (Wasiu & Adebajo, 2014). Intrinsic rewards are intangible in nature but could drive employees towards motivation and provide long-run benefits to the organization. Examples of intrinsic rewards include appreciation for work, development opportunities, work environment, autonomy, participation in decision-making or being involved in something (Nyandema & Were, 2014). Some researchers also found workplace flexibility, career development plans, training and development, growth prospects, and good supervisory relations as the components of intrinsic rewards (Bari, Arif, & Shoaib, 2013).

### **Recognition**

Recognition is appreciation to the employees' for their effort to accomplish the desired goal of the organization or assigned responsibilities (Baskar & Prakash Rajkumar, 2015). It acknowledges the employees for exemplary performance. The purpose of employee recognition in the workplace is to reinforce particular behaviors or practices that results in better performance. Recognition is a major element of intrinsic reward, ensuring a higher and extended-term return to the organization (Robbins, 2009). It allows employees to realize that they are valued and appreciated by the organization and feel worthy of being thankful (Board, 2007). One of the biggest motivators for employees is to be held in high esteem by their employers and peers (Flynn, 1998). Recognition makes the workforce more enthusiastic and gradually increases their level of motivation. It also improves employees' self-esteem and confidence and increases their interest in the job (Nelson, 1994).

### **Training and Development**

Training is a systematic process of developing employees' attitudes and skills to perform a task more accurately (Armstrong & Brown, 2006). Training is often referred to as imparting specific skills and education for doing a particular job (Dabale, Jagero, & Nyauchi, 2014). On the other hand, development is the overall growth of an employee to perform the present task better and increase the potential for future challenges (Kulkarni, 2013). Training and development are aimed at flourishing competencies for individual and organizational growth (Oribabor, 2000). It improves employee performances and builds the basement for career growth (Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2000). Organizations conduct training and development programs to advance quality and productivity and minimize cost and errors (Bebchuk, K, & U, 2011). So, these programs accelerate employee morale and motivation at the workplace (Naong, 2014).

### **Work Environment**

The work environment is an essential intrinsic reward for ensuring employee motivation (Wasiu & Adebajo, 2014). The work environment is generally the surroundings of an employee where he or she operates. It can consist of the physical setting as buildings, office temperature, working tools or equipment, and all other facilities as housing, transportation, medical and recreational facilities, etc. (Sila, 2014). But the working environment also includes the psychological aspects of how work is organized, such as- work processes or procedures and well-being at work (Aarabi, Subramaniam, & Akeel, 2013).

It can also involve social interactions at the workplace, including interactions with peers, subordinates, and managers (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2007). The work environment can highly influence employees' minds about their willingness to work (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). A bad working environment can kill the motivation even

the keenest staff while a sound working environment makes the employee feel good, alleviate their stress, improve performances and motivation (Aarabi et al., 2013).

## Participation in Decision Making

Employee participation in decision making means when employees are asked about their opinions in various organizational matters rather than just acting on orders (Wagner III, 1994). It involves decentralizing power within the organization to individual decision-makers (Wegge et al., 2011). Such participation encourages employees to have greater control and independence toward the work, which mitigate the gap between the management and the employees (Noah, 2008). When employees participate in decision-making, they become more motivated to implement the decision as it becomes their own (Smith & Brannick, 1990). Such involvement makes employees more transparent regarding their work and improves their performances. Participation in decision making makes employees more committed toward the organization and its goal (Ford & Myron, 1995).

## Workplace Flexibility

Ensuring workplace flexibility is a way to provide an intrinsic reward to the employees. It involves allowing the employees to choose their working hours, location, or even tasks (Bal & De Lange, 2014). The introduction of flexible working arrangements (FWAs) into organizations primarily acts to ensure flexibility at the workplace (Wayne, Casper, Matthews, & Allen, 2013). It enables employees to balance their work and personal life, and the employees also could get quality time to dedicate to their families and hobbies (Richman, Civian, Shannon, Jeffrey Hill, & Brennan, 2008). Workplace flexibility makes employees feel empowered and independent by giving them the chance to organize their work schedules based on their preferences (Joyce, Pabayo, Critchley, & Bambra, 2010). It increases employee motivation and helps in attracting and retaining valued employees in the long run (Zlate, 2004).

## Relationship between the Dependent and Independent Variables-

### *Motivation and Recognition*

- Recognition is significantly related to work motivation (Board, 2007).
- Recognition is one of the biggest motivators for employees (Baskar & Prakash Rajkumar, 2015).
- Recognition accelerates the level of motivation (Danish & Usman, 2010).
- The primary component of motivation is to be recognized (Robbins, 2009).

### *Motivation and Training & Development-*

- Training and development lead to work motivation (Naong, 2014).
- The employees who take part in the training programs are more motivated than those who do not participate (Bebchuk et al., 2011).
- Training and development programs boost employee motivation (Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2000).
- Training programs play a crucial role in motivating employees positively (Güllü, 2016).

### *Motivation and Work Environment-*

- Work environment leads to employee motivation (Wasiu & Adebajo, 2014).
- The work environment is interconnected with employee motivation (Chan & Drasgow, 2001)
- A pleasant working environment helps to improve motivation (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2007)
- A sound working environment motivates employees positively (Aarabi et al., 2013).

### ***Motivation and Participation in Decision Making-***

- Involvement in decision making is a useful motivational tool (Noah, 2008).
- Participation in the workplace boost employee motivation (Cotton, 1993).
- Motivation has a statistically significant relationship with employee participation in decision making (Wagner III, 1994).
- The employees become more motivated when they are involved in decision-making (Wegge et al., 2011).

### ***Motivation and Workplace Flexibility-***

- Flexible working practices make employees more motivated (Richman et al., 2008).
- Workplace flexibility increases employee motivation (Kossek & Thompson, 2016).
- Workplace flexibility acts as precisely what organizations need to motivate their employees (Joyce et al., 2010).
- Flexible working leads to increased workforce motivation (Hornung, Rousseau, & Glaser, 2008).

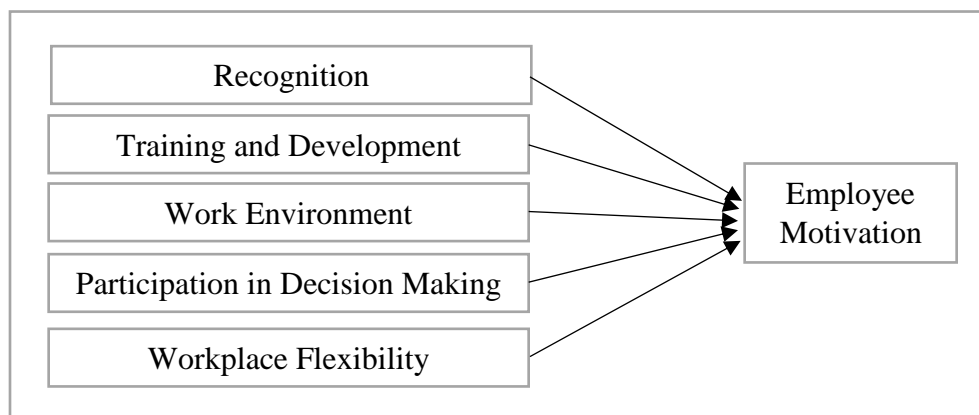
## **Methodology**

### **Sample and Data Source**

To conduct the study, a sample of 200 teachers were taken from different primary schools across Bangladesh. A survey questionnaire was used to collect preliminary data through random sampling. The questionnaire contains 5 Likert- scale questions from 1- strongly disagree to 5- strongly agree. Secondary data has been used in the study to construct the theoretical parts and to select the research variables. The secondary data was collected from several published research articles and peer-reviewed papers.

### **Analysis**

Data analysis was carried out with SPSS 22 software. Reliability analysis was done for the questionnaire. The correlation was computed to assess the research variables' internal relationships and descriptive statistics for all the study demographic questions. Finally, multiple regression was employed for measuring the effect of all independent variables on the dependent variable and ANOVA has been used to show the general significance of the studied model.



*Figure 1 - Proposed Research Model*

## Research Hypothesis

**H1:** There is a significant relationship between Recognition and Motivation

**H2:** There is a significant relationship between Training & Development and Motivation

**H3:** There is a significant relationship between Work Environment and Motivation

**H4:** There is a significant relationship between Participation in Decision Making and Motivation

**H5:** There is a significant relationship between Workplace Flexibility and Motivation

## Data Analysis and Findings

*Table 1 - Descriptive Statistics*

Demographics	Categories	Frequency	Percent
<b>Gender</b>	Male	87	43.5
	Female	113	56.5
<b>Age</b>	20-30 Years	88	44.0
	31- 40 Years	68	34.0
	41-50 Years	32	16.0
	Above 50 Years	12	6.0
	Less than five years	91	45.5
<b>Job Experience</b>	6 to 10 Years	41	20.5
	11 to 15 Years	34	17.0
	16 to 20 Years	19	9.5
	Above 20 Years	15	7.5
<b>Education</b>	HSC	57	28.5
	Graduation (Running)	46	23
	Graduation	71	35.5
	Post-graduation (Running)	06	3
	Post-graduation or Above	20	10

Table 1 represents the respondents' demographic profile of this study. In this study, Female respondents were 113 (56.5%), slightly higher than Male respondents 87 (43.5%). In age, most of the participants were from 20-30 years old, 88 (40.00%). Whereas 31-40 years were 68 (34.00%), 41- 50 years were 32 (16.00%) and above 50 years were 12 (6.00). In the respondents' experience of doing the job, most of the respondents had less than five years of job experience were 91 (45.5%). About 6 to 10 years job experiences were 41 (20.5%), 11 to 15 years were 34 (17.0%), 16 to 20 years were 19 (9.5%) and above 20 years were 15 (7.5%). Finally, in terms of the respondents' education, mostly were from Graduate level 71(35.5%) and up to HSC were 57 (28.5%), Graduation (running) were 46 (23.0%), Post-graduation (running) were 06 (3.0%) and Post-graduation or above were 20 (10.0%).

*Table 2 - Reliability Test (Summary of the Cronbach's Alpha)*

Variables	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
Recognition	4	.726
Training and Development	5	.705
Work Environment	4	.712
Participation in decision making	3	.784
Workplace Flexibility	4	.856
Motivation	3	.724

Table 2 depicts the reliability test of the study. Here, six sets of reliability tests were run and showed the Alpha value of different constructs and the number of items used for each construct to get the standard Cronbach's Alpha value ( $> 0.70$ ). The table shows Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) values for Recognition, Training, and Development, Work Environment, Participation in Decision Making, Workplace Flexibility and Motivation respectively as .726, .705, .712, .784, .856, and .724, which are ( $\alpha$ )  $> 0.70$ , which ensures that the reliability of the survey questions are acceptable for this study. The reliability test also showed that various constructs' fair values vary between 0.705 and 0.856 (Table 2).

Table 3 - Correlation Analysis

	MV	R	TD	WE	PDM	WF
<b>MV</b>	1					
<b>R</b>	.214**	1				
<b>TD</b>	.256**	-.004	1			
<b>WE</b>	.273**	.002	.265 **	1		
<b>PDM</b>	-.125**	-.024	.178*	.161 *	1	
<b>WF</b>	-.253**	.087	-.030	-.065	.039	1

**\*\* correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)**  
**\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)**

Table 3 represents the correlations among all the constructs of this study. The result revealed that motivation positively correlates with recognition (.214\*\*) or 21.4% at 99 percent confident interval and significant at the 0.01 level (.000). The study found that motivation was positively correlated with two other constructs: training and development (.256\*\* or 25.6%, .000) and work environment (.273 or 27.3%, .000). On the other hand, motivation has negative correlation with participation in decision making (-.125 or -12.5%, .000) and Workplace Flexibility (-.253\*\* or -25.3%, .000). In addition, recognition is positively correlated with work environment (.002 or 2%, .000) and workplace flexibility (.087 or 8.7%, .000). Consequently, recognition negatively correlated with training and development (-.004 or -.4%, .954) and participation in decision making (-.024 or -2.4 %, .000). Moreover, training and development have a positive association with work environment (.265\*\* or 26.5%, .000) and participation in decision making (.178\* or 17.8%, .000) but have a negative relationship with workplace flexibility (-.030 or -3%, .000). Moreover, the work environment has found a positive relationship with participation in decision making (.161\* or 16.1%, .000) but found a negative relationship with workplace flexibility (-.065 or -6.5%, .000). Finally, decision-making has found a tiny relation to workplace flexibility (.039 or 3.9%, .000).

Table 4 - Regression Analysis

<b>Model Summary</b>						
Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R Square	Std. The error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson	
1	.503 <sup>a</sup>	.253	.234	.38246	1.071	

**a. Predictors: (Constant) Recognition, Training, and Development, Work Environment, Participation in Decision Making, Workplace Flexibility**  
**b. Dependent Variable: Motivation**

Table 4 explains the model summary of this study. The regression model shows a good fit with F value 13.150 ( $p < .05$ ) and R Square value of .253, indicating 25.3% of the variation in the motivation can be predicted from the independent variables (Recognition, Training, and Development, Work Environment, Participation in Decision Making and Workplace Flexibility). Thus, the proposed research model is statistically significant.

Table 5 - ANOVA

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.618	5	1.924	13.150	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	28.377	194	.146		
	Total	37.995	199			

**a. Dependent Variable: Motivation**  
**b. Predictors: (Constant) Recognition, Training, and Development, Work Environment, Participation in Decision Making, Workplace Flexibility**

Table 5 demonstrates the ANOVA test of this study, which means the study's general significance (s). In this study, the p-value is denoted as (0.000), which is much smaller than 0.05 or 5% level of significance. Therefore we can say that the proposed research model is significant (F=13.150; p<.05).

Table 6 - Summary of Coefficients

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error				Beta	Tolerance
1	(Constant)	3.003	.464		6.466	.000		
	Recognition	.211	.057	.231	3.705	.000	.992	1.009
	Training and Development	.218	.063	.223	3.429	.001	.911	1.098
	Work Environment	.224	.064	.227	3.495	.001	.913	1.096
	Participation in Decision Making	-.211	.072	-.186	-2.92	.004	.951	1.052
	Workplace Flexibility	-.233	.060	-.244	-3.90	.000	.985	1.015

**a. Dependent Variable: Motivation**

Table 6, demonstrates the summary of the coefficients of this study. Whereas model 1 depicts, the relationship between recognition and motivation is statistically significant ( $\beta = .231$ ,  $t = 3.705$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ). So, H1 is accepted. On the other hand, training and development has found statistically significant relation with motivation ( $\beta = .223$ ,  $t = 3.429$ ,  $p = .001 < 0.05$ ). So, hypothesis H2 is supported. Moreover, work environment ( $\beta = .227$ ,  $t = 3.495$ ,  $p = 0.001 < 0.05$ ) has found statistically significant with motivation. Thus, hypothesis H3 is accepted. In addition, participation in decision making ( $\beta = -.186$ ,  $t = -2.92$ ,  $p = 0.004 < 0.05$ ) and workplace flexibility ( $\beta = -.244$ ,  $t = -3.90$ ,  $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ ) have found significant inverse relationship with motivation. Hence, hypothesis H4 and H5 are supported.

## Discussion

This study aims to address the motivation of primary school teachers through intrinsic rewards in Bangladesh. To attain the objective, the study tried to measure five non-financial factors' impact on teachers' motivation. This study helps test the established hypothesis and make a clear conception over the relationships among

recognition, training and development, work environment, participation in decision-making, workplace flexibility, and employee motivation. The output showed that recognition and employee motivation are positively associated with each other and found a statistically significant relationship with employee motivation. This seems similar to previous studies' (Ali & Ahmed, 2009). This study also established that employees' training and development has a positive and significant relationship with employee motivation. Prior study also confirmed the same result (Kefay & Kero, 2019).

Additionally, the study found that the work environment and employee motivation is positively correlated and has statistically significantly affect on employee motivation. Previous studies have found similar results (Kumar, Hossain, & Nasrin, 2015). Moreover, the study confirmed a statistically significant relationship between employee motivation and their participation in the decision-making process. Same result was found in the study (Bhuiyan, 2010). Finally, the results revealed that workplace flexibility has a significant impact on employee motivation. Many previous studies have found the same findings (Setiyani, Djumarno, Riyanto, & Nawangsari, 2019). The results also confirmed that recognition and work environment significantly impact primary school teachers' motivation over other non-financial constructs of this study.

## Conclusion

Motivation plays a significant role in boosting enthusiasm and lessening the frustration and fears of work among the employees. Motivated employees are more committed and provide a better output at work. Today's organizations are more focused on employee motivational issues and are trying to give much more effort to keep their employees motivated at work. Many studies have confirmed that employees are mostly motivated when they get reward(s) from their organization. Both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards are used to draw the employees' attention and make them motivated towards their duties or work. This study establishes that intrinsic rewards have a significant effect on primary school teachers' motivation in Bangladesh. Primarily, all employees focus on monetary issues rather than other matters while working for themselves or the organization. Their focal point is to earn money to satisfy their hunger. Human beings want to recognize their work, good working environment, flexibility, participation in the organizational decision, and proper training and development facilities to enhance their work efficiencies.

In many cases, it was found that these non-monetary rewards provide greater motivation for the employee rather than financial rewards. This study showed that various intrinsic rewards (recognition, work environment, training and development, participation in decision-making, and workplace flexibility) have a significant impact on primary school teachers' motivation to continue their best effort in the organization. So, every organization should consider the issues of intrinsic rewards, especially the studied variables of this research, to motivate their employees. However, this study investigated a limited number of variables related to intrinsic rewards to measure employee motivation. Future research is required to uncover other new variables such as career advancement, job security, autonomy, supervisor support, etc., and their impact on employee motivation. Moreover, other geographical areas with different types of respondents could also be used in further studies.

### *Research contribution*

This research mainly helps the primary education sector of Bangladesh. But the output of this study could also be employed on other service sectors or organizations. The research could help any organization to design an effective intrinsic reward system to motivate their employees. Factually, primary school teachers get less training and development facility than other service employees in Bangladesh. Moreover, they get engaged most of their working time and do not have flexibility at all. Most of the primary schools also don't have a sound and well-equipped working environment, and the teachers are also not allowed to have any involvement in decision making. They work hard but often don't get recognition for the effort. So, the relevant authority should consider

these issues and make appropriate policies to flourish various intrinsic rewards to enhance the teachers' motivation and retain them for more extended service.

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**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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