

# EMPLOYEES' PERSPECTIVE ON THE LEVEL OF EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAM ON AWARDS AND INCENTIVES FOR SERVICE EXCELLENCE (PRAISE) IN ONE STATE UNIVERSITY IN THE PHILIPPINES

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## Abstract

Employee rewards play a crucial role in developing a successful workplace by enhancing motivation and job satisfaction. Acknowledging and appreciating employees through rewards significantly validates their hard work and accomplishments, promoting a positive work environment. The incentive effect of rewards drives better performance, motivating employees to exceed expectations and actively support the organization's objectives.

This study was conducted to assess the effectiveness level Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) program in one state university in the Philippines. This study evaluated the effectiveness of PRAISE as a mechanism for recognizing and incentivizing service excellence within the organization, specifically focusing on employee perspectives and performance levels. One hundred fifty non-teaching employees were surveyed using self-designed and administered questionnaires. Descriptive research design was used, and statistical tools such as weighted mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's correlation coefficient were used to find the relationship among variables.

Findings reveal that overall, employees perceive the PRAISE program as highly effective, indicating positive perspectives across its nomination, screening, review and evaluation, and awarding processes. Furthermore, the performance of employees in terms of attitude and commitment, interpersonal skills, work performance, and personal traits is rated highly effective in relation to PRAISE. Additionally, the study identified that demographic differences do not influence employees' performance. Moreover, a significant relationship is observed between employees' perspectives on the effectiveness of PRAISE and their performance levels.

These findings prove the significance of recognizing and rewarding service excellence in organizational settings. An effective reward and recognition system helps promote a strong organizational culture of excellence and dedication to service.

*Keywords: Reward System; Employee Motivation; Rewards; Employee Performance.*

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## Introduction

Employee motivation is universally recognized as crucial in enhancing productivity and performance. Employees must operate at their peak performance levels to attain optimal organizational success. There is widespread consensus that workers execute their duties more efficiently when they are highly motivated. This phenomenon is particularly pronounced in developing countries, where personnel exhibit a greater propensity to excel when they receive recognition and support from management (Tehseen & Hadi, 2015). Employee rewards are essential in cultivating a thriving workplace by nurturing motivation and job satisfaction. Recognition and appreciation through rewards serve as powerful affirmations of employees' hard work and achievements, fostering a positive work culture. The motivational aspect of rewards catalyzes improved performance, encouraging employees to surpass expectations and contribute meaningfully to organizational goals. Beyond individual performance, rewards contribute to employee retention, saving companies the costs associated with turnover. By aligning reward programs with organizational values and goals, companies enhance their competitive advantage and instill a culture of excellence and continuous improvement. In essence, a well-structured system of employee rewards is an investment in the organization's individual and collective success, creating a workplace where employees feel valued, motivated, and connected to the company's broader mission.

Recognizing employees' accomplishments can be converted into intrinsic rewards, encouraging and inspiring them to perform at their highest potential. Prior research has shown a positive relationship between employee motivation and job performance. For example, Kuvaas et al. (2017) examined the effects of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on performance among employees in the finance sector and store managers in Norway. Their study found that both types of rewards are crucial motivators for employees. With this objective in mind, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) implemented the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE). This initiative is tailored to promote creativity, innovativeness, efficiency, integrity, and productivity within the public service. PRAISE aims to recognize and reward officials and employees, either individually or in groups, for their contributions, such as suggestions, inventions, outstanding achievements, and other personal efforts that enhance the efficiency, economy, or overall improvement in government operations, or for extraordinary acts or services in the public interest

This study examines the relationship between the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE), the demographic profile of the respondents, and the performance of LSPU employees. It aims to understand employees' perspectives of PRAISE aiming to develop a comprehensive Incentive and Award Program. The researcher finds this topic interesting and meaningful for any organization, particularly in a university setting, as employee performance is significantly correlated with organizational success. Additionally, this research seeks to comprehend how PRAISE influences employees' perspectives of its implementation at LSPU.

## Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in the Reinforcement Theory proposed by B. F. Skinner. The Reinforcement Theory suggests that behavior can be modified through the use of reinforcement, punishment, and extinction. Rewards serve to reinforce desired behaviors, while punishments deter undesired behaviors. Extinction, on the other hand, aims to eliminate a learned behavior. These processes are technically termed "operant conditioning."

Reinforcement theory suggests that the effectiveness of organizational programs, such as PRAISE, can be evaluated based on employees' perceptions of the consequences associated with participation and

performance. Each employee's performance holds significance within an organization. This performance can be motivated by applying reinforcement theory, as conceived by B.F. Skinner. Positive reinforcement stands out among the widely employed techniques in which one's behavior is strengthened or increased based on consequences. This research seeks to assess the influence of positive reinforcement on employee performance within organizational contexts. It can be enacted through the utilization of either extrinsic or intrinsic rewards.

By grounding the study within the framework of reinforcement theory, researchers can gain valuable insights into the mechanisms through which organizational programs and practices impact employee behavior and performance at LSPU. This theoretical perspective provides a comprehensive lens to analyze the relationships between employee perceptions, program effectiveness, and performance outcomes, ultimately informing strategies for enhancing organizational effectiveness and employee engagement.

## Literature Review

Baskar (2013) discovered a direct and positive relationship between rewards, recognition, and job satisfaction and motivation. This implies that altering the rewards and recognition offered to employees would result in corresponding changes in their motivation and satisfaction. Essentially, better rewards and recognition lead to higher levels of motivation and satisfaction, which could, in turn, enhance performance and productivity. Providing rewards is a crucial element since it motivates employees to work with full dedication and adhere to the company's rules. When the company correctly recognizes and rewards their efforts, it leads to an enhancement in their performance. (Bilal et al., 2011; Siswanto et al., 2021). This statement parallels the findings of Kokubun (2018), which indicate that rewards significantly and positively impact employee performance. Meanwhile, Amalia et al. (2023) found that rewards do not directly impact work discipline or employee performance. However, work discipline significantly influences employee performance. Therefore, rewards affect employee performance indirectly by influencing work discipline. Bawa (2017) identified various factors that motivate employees, including monetary elements, such as pay, and non-financial elements, such as recognition and challenging jobs. Factors like robust pay, promotions, recognition, a supportive work environment, equity, fairness, and the effectiveness of HR management systems are pivotal in boosting employee motivation, job satisfaction, and productivity. Mohamud's (2019) study showed that reward systems directly impact employee attitudes. Motivated employees will do their best to perform their duties and responsibilities. Increased employee job performance increases the value of the organization itself and increases employee productivity. This also helps employees maintain their commitment to the organization. Commitment is the degree to which employees show dedication to their employer organization, willingness to work on its behalf, and the likelihood of sustaining their membership (Tindowen, 2019). Ahmad's (2018) study revealed that intrinsic and extrinsic rewards contribute to job satisfaction and commitment to their organization. Candelario et al. (2020) also found that employees who demonstrate a strong commitment to their work tend to experience high job satisfaction and vice versa.

Interpersonal skills have emerged as a crucial component of organizational success (Fadhil et al., 2021). Similarly, Hanson (2020) recognized the importance of interpersonal skills in achieving career success. However, employers often observe a deficiency in these skills among new graduates. This gap exists because developing interpersonal skills is an ongoing journey attainable through education and various personal and professional experiences (Cimatti, 2016). Enhancing these skills requires the active involvement of the individual, as they must initially acknowledge and comprehend their existing skills. Subsequently, the individual should formulate strategies and take necessary actions to refine and improve these interpersonal skills (Efrat, 2022). Deming's (2017) study also showed a positive relationship between interpersonal skills and salary.

Previous researchers found a positive correlation between the reward system and employee performance (Ahmad et al., 2019; Ngwa et al., 2019). According to Manzoor et al. (2021), an employee's motivation significantly mediates the association between intrinsic rewards and the employee's performance. Enhancing

employee productivity stands as a paramount objective for any organization. This is due to the significant impact highly productive employees can have on overall organizational performance. (Nda & Fard, 2013). Productivity is now a fundamental part of an organization's work culture. Generally, productivity involves transforming inputs like human resources, money, and time into outputs. Comprehending employees' attitudes in the modern, ever-changing work environment is a significant challenge for organizations. (Singh et al., 2022). Similarly, the impact of motivation on employee performance holds great significance for the organization. (Maduka & Okafor 2014).

Ethical behavior links an individual's perception and actions in their daily activities, focusing on what is right or wrong. Ethical behavior pertains to organizational decisions, rules, regulations, and policies in the workplace context. Such behaviors, which occur within a moral or ethical decision-making framework, are influenced by the decision-makers characteristics and the outcomes of those decisions and can vary in their level of commitment to the organization. (Yousef, 2017; Anwar et al., 2020). Ethical Behavior plays an essential role in the success of any organization, as it significantly shapes its interactions with a multitude of stakeholders, ultimately ensuring the business's success (Prasad & Adhikari, 2021).

Employees are expected to act with integrity to earn the trust of customers and stakeholders. This ethical behavior aligns with stakeholder expectations and requirements. The prevailing work climate also influences employee behavior. An ethical work climate can mold the ethical behavior of both individuals and groups within the organization. Defined as the social environments consciously perceived by employees and stakeholders, an ethical work climate shapes conduct within the organization. To manage employee behavior, organizations employ various strategies, including promoting values that influence beliefs and actions and developing codes of ethics to ensure compliance. (Angonga & Florah, 2019).

Saeed and Lodhi (2013) stated that ethical behavior provides guidelines for organizational interests and employee responsibilities. It has become a crucial issue for management, potentially impacting employee performance. Therefore, it is essential to examine ethical behavior and its relationship to employee performance within the organizational context.

Shahzadi et al. (2014) found a notable and positive association between employee motivation and performance. Additionally, their study concluded that intrinsic rewards positively correlate with employee performance and motivation. Kuvaas et al. (2017) similarly observed that intrinsic motivation correlated with positive outcomes, whereas extrinsic motivation either showed a negative relationship or was unrelated to positive outcomes. Moreover, Karami et al. (2013) demonstrated a positive and significant relationship between reward management system elements and motivation and performance. They also noted a similar positive and significant correlation between the elements of the reward management system and performance.

Amabile and Pratt (2016) define individual creativity as the ability to generate new and useful ideas. Employees demonstrate creativity by creating new information, improving technology, or optimizing processes, which leads to innovations (Xu et al., 2022; Parr et al., 2013). Creativity is also characterized as workers' innovative thinking, expertise, and skills developed through experience and qualifications. Employees' creativity involves generating, developing, and implementing novel and beneficial ideas related to work practices, organizational services, or strategies (Zhou et al., 2022). Hwang and Jung's (2018) study demonstrated that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations positively influence creativity. Their findings indicated contingent rewards did not alter the positive link between intrinsic motivation and creativity. However, they observed contingent rewards significantly affected the relationship between extrinsic motivation and creativity: tangible rewards enhanced this connection, whereas intangible rewards weakened it. Additionally, Malik et al. (2015) found that extrinsic rewards enhance the creative performance of employees who perceive these incentives as significant. Moreover, Malik et al. (2019) confirmed that intrinsic motivation predicts radical creativity, whereas extrinsic rewards are linked to incremental creativity. They also discovered that intrinsic motivation's influence on radical and incremental creativity is more favorable in employees with a strong learning goal orientation. In contrast, the effect of extrinsic rewards on incremental creativity is more favorable in employees with a strong performance goal orientation.

## Methods

The descriptive research design was used in this study, it helped describe the level of effectiveness of the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) implementation as well as the level of performance of LSPU employees in various dimensions such as attitude, interpersonal skills, work performance, and personal traits. The respondents were regular non-teaching employees of the Laguna State Polytechnic University. Specifically, it included the four major campuses namely: Siniloan (Host) Campus, Sta. Cruz (Main) Campus, Los Baños Campus, and San Pablo Campus. The researcher used Slovin's formula to get the sample size. Self-administered questionnaires were used to gather data from LSPU employees. The questionnaire aims to gain the quantitative data and information required to show the relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

The questionnaire contains close-ended questions. The data collection method followed strict compliance with ethical guidelines. The questionnaire utilized a Four-Point Likert Scale to gauge respondents' answers. The rating scale is as follows: 4 - Highly effective, 3 - Effective, 2 - Less Effective, 1 - Not at all effective.

For the level of employees' perspective on PRAISE implementation, Next is the range for the level of employee performance: 4 - Highly effective, 3 - Effective, 2 - Less Effective, 1 - Not at all effective.

## Results

**Table 1. Reliability Analysis**

	<b>Cronbach's <math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>Internal Consistency</b>
<b>Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE)</b>		
1. Nomination	.975	Excellent
2. Screening	.981	Excellent
3. Review and Evaluation	.986	Excellent
4. Awarding	.974	Excellent
<b>Employee's Performance</b>		
1. Attitude and Commitment	.906	Excellent
2. Interpersonal Skills	.919	Excellent
3. Work Performance	.893	Good
4. Personal Traits	.841	Good

Alpha = reliability test

Table 1 shows the consistency reliability statistics. All dimensions within the PRAISE program and employee performance assessment demonstrate good to excellent internal consistency, with most falling into the "Excellent" category.

**Table 2. Level of Effectiveness of the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) implementation as to Nomination**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
The criteria for nominating awardees help me adhere to a very satisfactory performance rating.	3.42	0.63	Highly Effective
The nomination procedure successfully seeks employees with great accomplishments and contributions to the university.	3.34	0.68	Highly Effective
The nomination process has been improved in a way that suits its purpose.	3.36	0.69	Highly Effective
Being nominated is encouraging me to perform duties to the best of my abilities.	3.55	0.60	Highly Effective
Nomination criteria, mechanics, and procedures are fair for all.	3.38	0.74	Highly Effective
The nomination committee has proven itself impartial in choosing the right employee for specific awards.	3.38	0.66	Highly Effective
Employees are well-aware of the procedure and mechanics of the nomination process.	3.27	0.76	Highly Effective
<i>Overall Mean</i>	<i>3.64</i>		<i>Highly Effective</i>

*Legend*

3.25 – 4.00 – *Highly Effective*, 2.50 – 3.24 – *Effective*, 1.75 – 2.49 – *Less Effective*, 1.00 – 1.74 – *Not at all Effective*

Table 2 presents the respondents' perspectives on the level of effectiveness of the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) in terms of nomination. The highest mean was obtained: "Being nominated is encouraging in performing duties to the best of my abilities." The mean was 3.55. The lowest mean was obtained by stating, "Employees are well aware of the procedure and mechanics of the nomination process." with a mean of 3.27. The overall mean of 3.64 indicates that the PRAISE nomination was highly effective. These results suggest that the nomination process successfully identifies deserving employees and motivates them to perform at their best.

The study of Balba (2019) believes that nominating employees for awards motivates and inspires individuals to enhance their performance toward excellence; both employees and employers reap the benefits of workplace rewards and incentives. Enhanced employee morale, job satisfaction, and engagement in organizational activities occur when outstanding performance and productivity are recognized. Consequently, employers witness heightened efficiency, sales, and production levels.

**Table 3. Level of Effectiveness of the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) implementation as to Screening**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
The screening mechanics of the system have been improved to suit its purpose.	3.40	0.72	Highly Effective
The committee's qualifications have proven to be best suited in screening the nominees.	3.37	0.72	Highly Effective
It is evident that the strictness of the screening process is credible.	3.34	0.69	Highly Effective
Screening criteria have been fair for all.	3.32	0.72	Highly Effective
The screening procedures are valuable in looking through the parameters of the nominees' achievements to come up with the finalists.	3.32	0.67	Highly Effective
<i>Overall Mean</i>	<i>3.35</i>		<i>Highly Effective</i>

*Legend*

3.25 – 4.00 – *Highly Effective*, 2.50 – 3.24 – *Effective*, 1.75 – 2.49 – *Less Effective*, 1.00 – 1.74 – *Not at all Effective*

Table 3 presents the respondents' perspectives on the Program's effectiveness on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) in terms of screening.

The highest mean was obtained: "The screening mechanics of the system have been improved to suit its purpose." with a mean of 3.40. The lowest mean was obtained by the items that stated that "Screening criteria have been fair for all" and "The screening procedures are valuable in looking through the parameters of achievements in the nominees to come up with the finalists," with a mean of 3.32. The overall mean of 3.35 indicates that the PRAISE screening was highly effective. These results suggest that the screening procedures effectively identify deserving nominees and contribute to the selection of finalists.

This can be supported by the study of Baskar and Prakash (2015), which disclosed that recognition is an expression of appreciation for employees' efforts to achieve the organization's desired goals or fulfill assigned responsibilities. Employee recognition acknowledges exemplary performance, reinforcing specific behaviors or practices that lead to improved performance in the workplace. It constitutes a significant component of intrinsic rewards, thereby ensuring greater and sustained benefits for the organization in the long term (Robbins, 2009; Anjum et al., 2021).

**Table 4. Level of Effectiveness of the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) implementation as to Review and Evaluation**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
The procedures follow stringent protocols that effectively evaluate the qualifications of screened awardees.	3.31	0.70	Highly Effective
The employees are well aware and sufficiently informed about the mechanics, procedures, criteria, and ways of evaluating PRAISE.	3.29	0.70	Highly Effective
The committee has proven to be best suited to evaluating the nominees.	3.37	0.70	Highly Effective
The committee used all possible aspects of identifying and evaluating the nominees that were just and fair for all.	3.28	0.72	Highly Effective
Review and evaluation have been just in the implementation of the procedures	3.30	0.68	Highly Effective
The evaluation procedure is valuable in looking through the finalists' achievement parameters.	3.31	0.69	Highly Effective
<i>Overall Mean</i>	<i>3.31</i>		<i>Highly Effective</i>

*Legend*

3.25 – 4.00 – Highly Effective, 2.50 – 3.24 – Effective, 1.75 – 2.49 – Less Effective, 1.00 – 1.74 – Not at all Effective

Table 4 presents the respondents' perspectives on the effectiveness of the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) in terms of Review and Evaluation. The highest mean was obtained by stating that "The committee has proven to be best suited in evaluating the nominees." with a mean of 3.37. The lowest mean was obtained by the item stating, "The committee has used all possible aspects of identifying and evaluating the nominees that were just and fair for all." with a mean of 3.28. The overall mean of 3.31 indicates that the PRAISE review and evaluation was highly effective. These results suggest that the evaluation procedures effectively assess the qualifications of awardees and contribute to fair and just outcomes.

**Table 5. Level of Effectiveness of the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) implementation as to Awarding**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
The awarding has encouraged us to make the best effort to follow the Civil Service Commission and LSPU Internal policies.	3.44	0.69	Highly Effective
The advantages of being conferred by any prestigious award have been very evident.	3.42	0.60	Highly Effective
The awarding proved the best practices of the unit or the individual to be recognized as such.	3.38	0.67	Highly Effective
I believe that this step potentiates in recognizing and rewarding the accomplishments and efforts of every employee.	3.40	0.64	Highly Effective
The recognition procedure encourages everyone to do better and continue doing their best in and out of the university.	3.38	0.68	Highly Effective
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.40</b>		<b>Highly Effective</b>

*Legend*

3.25 – 4.00 – *Highly Effective*, 2.50 – 3.24 – *Effective*, 1.75 – 2.49 – *Less Effective*, 1.00 – 1.74 – *Not at all Effective*

Table 5 presents the respondents' perspectives on the Program's effectiveness on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) in awarding. The highest mean was obtained by the item stating, "The awarding has been helpful in encouraging to make the best effort in following the Civil Service Commission and LSPU Internal policies." with a mean of 3.44. The lowest mean was obtained by the items that stated that "The recognition procedure is enough encouragement for everyone to do better and continue doing their best in and out of the university." and "The awarding proved the best practices of the unit or the individual to be recognized as such." with a mean of 3.38. The overall mean of 3.40 indicates that the PRAISE awarding was highly effective. These results suggest that the awarding procedures effectively motivate employees, recognize their efforts, and encourage ongoing dedication within and beyond the university.

Results parallel with the findings of Kokubun (2018) indicate that rewards significantly and positively impact employee performance. Likewise, a study by Idemobi et al. (2017) revealed that an organization's reward system significantly impacts workers' productivity and attitude toward work. Additionally, a notable relationship exists between the organization's reward system and workers' job satisfaction. These findings lead to the conclusion that reward systems have a substantial effect on workers' attitudes toward work.

**Table 6. Level of Performance of Employees concerning the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) based on Attitude and Commitment**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Employees are dedicated to fulfilling their job responsibilities	3.56	0.56	Highly Effective
Employees demonstrate good customer service skills	3.58	0.58	Highly Effective
Employees are consistently dependable and punctual in reporting to work	3.49	0.59	Highly Effective
Employees serve as role models to others	3.46	0.64	Highly Effective
Employees go above and beyond the requirements of the job.	3.56	0.57	Highly Effective
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.53</b>		<b>Highly Effective</b>

*Legend*

3.25 – 4.00 – *Highly Effective*, 2.50 – 3.24 – *Effective*, 1.75 – 2.49 – *Less Effective*, 1.00 – 1.74 – *Not at all Effective*

Table 6 presents the respondents' perspectives on the level of performance in relation to the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) in terms of attitude and commitment. The highest mean was obtained by the item stating "Employees demonstrate good customer service skills," with a mean of 3.58. The lowest mean was obtained by the item stating, "Employees serve as role models to others." with a mean of 3.46. The overall mean of 3.53 indicates that the employee performance in terms of attitude and commitment was highly effective. This indicates a strong positive correlation between employee performance and engagement with the PRAISE program, suggesting that it effectively fosters a culture of commitment and excellence within the organization.

The study by Mohamud (2019) showed that reward systems directly impact employee attitudes. Motivated employees will do their best to perform their duties and responsibilities. Increased employee job performance increases the value of the organization itself and increases employee productivity. This also helps employees maintain their commitment to the organization. Ahmad (2018) revealed that intrinsic and extrinsic rewards contribute to job satisfaction and commitment to their organization. Candelario et al. (2020) also found that employees who demonstrate a strong commitment to their work tend to experience high job satisfaction and vice versa.

**Table 7. Level of Performance of Employees in Relation to the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) based on Interpersonal Skills**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Employees display a helpful, cooperative, and positive attitude toward superiors and co-workers	3.48	0.59	Highly Effective
Employees are consistently friendly and available to others.	3.48	0.58	Highly Effective
Employees use effective listening skills	3.46	0.58	Highly Effective
Employees have a team player attitude	3.52	0.57	Highly Effective
Employees voluntarily assist co-workers in order to complete important department projects.	3.49	0.63	Highly Effective
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.48</b>		<b>Highly Effective</b>

*Legend*

3.25 – 4.00 – *Highly Effective*, 2.50 – 3.24 – *Effective*, 1.75 – 2.49 – *Less Effective*, 1.00 – 1.74 – *Not at all Effective*

Table 7 presents the respondents' perspectives on the level of performance in relation to the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) in terms of interpersonal skills. The highest mean was obtained by the item stating, "Employees have a team player attitude," with a mean of 3.52. The lowest mean was obtained by the item "Employees use effective listening skills." with a mean of 3.46. The overall mean of 3.48 indicates that the employee performance in interpersonal skills was highly effective. This suggests a strong positive correlation between employees' interpersonal skills and engagement with the PRAISE program, indicating its effectiveness in fostering a collaborative and supportive work environment.

The study by Hanson (2020) acknowledged that interpersonal skills are needed for career success. However, employers report that new graduates lack these abilities. Developing interpersonal skills is continuous; they can be acquired and developed through education and personal and professional experiences (Cimatti, 2016). Enhancing these skills requires the active involvement of the individual, as they must initially acknowledge and comprehend their existing skills. Subsequently, the individual should formulate strategies and take necessary actions to refine and improve these interpersonal skills (Efrat, 2022).

**Table 8. Level of Performance of Employees in Relation to the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) based on Work Performance**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Employees are knowledgeable of LSPU policy and procedures	3.45	0.56	Highly Effective
Employees accurately complete work assignments on time	3.48	0.57	Highly Effective
Employees control high-stress situations tactfully and calmly	3.46	0.58	Highly Effective
Employees take the initiative to be productive	3.55	0.55	Highly Effective
Employees require little supervision	3.52	0.56	Highly Effective
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.49</b>		<b>Highly Effective</b>

*Legend*

3.25 – 4.00 – Highly Effective, 2.50 – 3.24 – Effective, 1.75 – 2.49 – Less Effective, 1.00 – 1.74 – Not at all Effective

Table 8 presents the respondents' perspectives on the level of performance in relation to the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) to Work Performance. The highest mean was obtained by the item stating “Employees take initiative to be productive,” with a mean of 3.55. The lowest mean was obtained by the item stating, “Employees are knowledgeable of LSPU policy and procedures,” with a mean of 3.45. The overall mean of 3.49 indicates that the employee performance in terms of work performance was highly effective. Data shows a strong positive correlation between employees' work performance and their engagement with the PRAISE program, suggesting its effectiveness in promoting efficiency, initiative, and competence among employees.

Shields (2015) asserts that work performance serves as a platform for employees to fulfill their duties and responsibilities in the workplace. Among the various definitions previously proposed, job performance is the realization of an employee's work, either after or during the completion of tasks and responsibilities. This accomplishment is achieved through effort and alignment with the company's established criteria for reaching objectives. Kuvaas et al. (2017) investigated the role of employees, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and work performance in the finance trade industry and as store managers in Norway. Their research found that intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are the most important motivators for employees.

**Table 9. Level of Performance of Employees in Relation to the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) based on Personal Traits**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
Employees maintain appropriate and neat personal appearance and dress	3.54	0.61	Highly Effective
Employees have integrity, on and off the job.	3.56	0.53	Highly Effective
Employees can avoid conflict of interest.	3.48	0.62	Highly Effective
Employees always manage their personal biases.	3.46	0.64	Highly Effective
Employees balance organizational and personal needs.	3.54	0.56	Highly Effective
Rewards and recognition help me improve my ethical behavior	3.51	0.59	Highly Effective
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>3.52</b>		<b>Highly Effective</b>

*Legend*

3.25 – 4.00 – Highly Effective, 2.50 – 3.24 – Effective, 1.75 – 2.49 – Less Effective, 1.00 – 1.74 – Not at all Effective

Table 9 presents the respondents' perspectives on the level of performance in relation to the Program on

Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) and Personal Traits. The highest mean was obtained by stating that “Employees have integrity, on and off the job.” with a mean of 3.56. The lowest mean was obtained by the item stating, “Employees always manage their personal biases.” with a mean of 3.46. The overall mean of 3.52 indicates that the employee performance as to personal traits was highly effective. Data shows a strong positive correlation between employees' traits and engagement with the PRAISE program, suggesting its effectiveness in promoting ethical conduct, professionalism, and alignment with organizational values.

**Table 10. Comparison of the Level of Performance of Employees when Grouped According to Age**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Attitude and Commitment	Between Groups	1.465	8	.183	.771	.628
	Within Groups	33.481	141	.237		
	Total	34.946	149			
Interpersonal Skills	Between Groups	1.733	8	.217	.834	.574
	Within Groups	36.630	141	.260		
	Total	38.363	149			
Work Performance	Between Groups	.650	8	.081	.376	.932
	Within Groups	30.448	141	.216		
	Total	31.098	149			
Personal Traits	Between Groups	1.060	8	.132	.570	.801
	Within Groups	32.790	141	.233		
	Total	33.850	149			

Table 10 shows the comparison of the employees' performance levels when grouped according to age. On Attitude and Commitment, Interpersonal Skills, Work Performance, and Personal Traits, the p-value was greater than 0.05 level of significance. The findings suggest that age does not significantly impact employee performance across the measured categories: Attitude and Commitment, Interpersonal Skills, Work Performance, and Personal Traits. In other words, regardless of age, employees perform similarly in these aspects.

This is opposite to the study by Kalpana and Dharmaraj (2018), which discovered that the employees have a higher level of job involvement and are influenced by various demographic variables, precisely age, gender, education, marital status, salary, and experience.

**Table 11. Comparison of the Level of Performance of Employees when Grouped According to Sex**

	SEX	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Attitude and Commitment	Male	70	3.5400	.48076	.05746
	Female	80	3.5250	.49029	.05482
Interpersonal Skills	Male	70	3.4886	.50463	.06031
	Female	80	3.4900	.51302	.05736
Work Performance	Male	70	3.5229	.48190	.05760
	Female	80	3.4725	.43545	.04868
Personal Traits	Male	70	3.5524	.48032	.05741
	Female	80	3.4937	.47471	.05307

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
										Lower	Upper
<b>Attitude and Commitment</b>	Equal variances assumed	.640	.425	.189	148	.85111	.01500	.07952	-.14214	.17214	
<b>Interpersonal Skills</b>	Equal variances assumed	.261	.611	-.017	148	.986	-.00143	.08333	-.16609	.16323	
<b>Work Performance</b>	Equal variances assumed	.092	.762	.672	148	.502	.05036	.07491	-.09767	.19838	
<b>Personal Traits</b>	Equal variances assumed	.690	.408	.751	148	.454	.05863	.07812	-.09575	.21301	

Table 11 shows the comparison of the level of performance of employees when grouped according to sex. On Attitude and Commitment, Interpersonal Skills, Work Performance, and Personal Traits, the p-value was greater than 0.05 level of significance. It can be interpreted that gender does not appear to have a significant impact on the performance of employees across these dimensions.

**Table 12. Comparison of the Level of Performance of Employees when Grouped According to Educational Attainment**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Attitude and Commitment	Between Groups	.274	3	.091	.384	.765
	Within Groups	34.673	146	.237		
	Total	34.946	149			
Interpersonal Skills	Between Groups	.616	3	.205	.794	.499
	Within Groups	37.747	146	.259		
	Total	38.363	149			
Work Performance	Between Groups	.572	3	.191	.913	.437
	Within Groups	30.525	146	.209		
	Total	31.098	149			
Personal Traits	Between Groups	.387	3	.129	.563	.641
	Within Groups	33.463	146	.229		
	Total	33.850	149			

Table 12 compares the employees' performance levels when grouped according to educational attainment. On Attitude and Commitment, Interpersonal Skills, Work Performance, and Personal Traits, the p-value was greater than 0.05 level of significance. Omori et al. (2019) asserted that higher education leads to enhanced employee performance.

**Table 13. Comparison of the Level of Performance of Employees when Grouped According to Length of Service**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Attitude and Commitment	Between Groups	1.691	5	.338	1.465	.205
	Within Groups	33.255	144	.231		
	Total	34.946	149			
Interpersonal Skills	Between Groups	.579	5	.116	.441	.819
	Within Groups	37.784	144	.262		
	Total	38.363	149			
Work Performance	Between Groups	1.292	5	.258	1.249	.290
	Within Groups	29.805	144	.207		
	Total	31.098	149			
Personal Traits	Between Groups	.520	5	.104	.450	.813
	Within Groups	33.330	144	.231		
	Total	33.850	149			

Table 13 shows the comparison of the level of performance of employees when grouped according to length of service. On Attitude and Commitment, Interpersonal Skills, Work Performance, and Personal Traits, the p-value was greater than 0.05 level of significance. This suggests that employees still perform the same regardless of their length of service.

**Table 14. What is the relationship between employees' perspectives on PRAISE's effectiveness and their performance level?**

Effectiveness of PRAISE	Level of Performance			
	Attitude and Commitment	Interpersonal Skills	Work Performance	Personal Traits
<b>Nomination</b>	Pearson Correlation.514**	.371**	.461**	.547**
<b>Screening</b>	Pearson Correlation.506**	.358**	.479**	.556**
<b>Review and Evaluation</b>	Pearson Correlation.535**	.395**	.499**	.542**
<b>Awarding</b>	Pearson Correlation.612**	.541**	.477**	.638**

*Significant at p < .001*

Table 14 displays the significant relationship between employees' perspectives on the Program's effectiveness on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) and their performance levels. The results indicate a significant correlation between these variables, with computed correlation coefficient (r) values suggesting a very strong relationship. Furthermore, the p-values obtained were below the significance alpha 0.05, indicating a statistically significant result. This collective assessment suggests that LSPU employees demonstrate strong dedication, teamwork, competence, and professionalism, contributing positively to the organization's success. This emphasizes the importance of effective recognition and incentive programs in driving and maintaining high levels of employee performance within organizations.

This finding supports Balba's (2019) study, which suggests that the presentation of awards is a powerful motivator, inspiring individuals to elevate their performance towards excellence. Both employees

and employers stand to benefit from workplace rewards and incentives. Recognizing outstanding performance boosts employee morale, job satisfaction, and engagement in organizational activities and translates into heightened efficiency, sales, and production levels for employers.

## Conclusions

The employee's perspective on the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) is highly effective. Employees rated the program highly effective, including nomination, screening, review and evaluation, and awarding. This indicates that employees perceive PRAISE as an effective mechanism for recognizing and incentivizing organizational service excellence.

Furthermore, the level of performance of LSPU employees is also highly effective. Employees consistently received high ratings across dimensions such as attitude and commitment, interpersonal skills, work performance, and personal traits. This suggests that employees demonstrate dedication, teamwork, competence, professionalism, and ethical conduct, contributing positively to the organization's success.

Analyzing employees' performance across various demographic profiles reveals a consistent trend: workers continue to perform effectively, irrespective of their demographic characteristics. Whether considering factors such as age, sex, educational attainment, or length of service, the data consistently show no significant differences in performance levels among different groups of employees. This finding underscores the resilience and dedication of our workforce, highlighting that employees remain committed and capable contributors to organizational goals regardless of their demographic backgrounds. We can conclude that the null hypothesis, "There is no significant difference in the level of employees' performance when grouped according to their profile." failed to be rejected.

Lastly, results reveal a strong positive relationship between the perceived effectiveness of the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) and employees' level of performance across various dimensions. These findings highlight the importance of an effective PRAISE program in driving employee performance. When employees perceive the program's various components as efficient and fair, they are more likely to exhibit higher levels of performance across key dimensions, contributing to organizational success and excellence. With these results, we can conclude that the null hypothesis, "There is no significant relationship between employees' perspective in the effectiveness of the PRAISE and their level of performance," is rejected.

## Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study at LSPU, several recommendations can be made to improve further the effectiveness of the Program on Awards and Incentives for Service Excellence (PRAISE) and enhance employee performance:

1. While the PRAISE program has been highly effective, there is always room for improvement. Conduct Regular review and refinement of program processes to ensure transparency, fairness, and alignment with organizational goals.
2. Ensure that the criteria for nomination and selection are well-defined and transparent. Employees should understand what behaviors or achievements are rewarded and how to qualify for recognition. This clarity helps motivate employees to strive for excellence and promotes fairness in the reward system.
3. Solicit input from employees on what aspects of the reward system are working well and where improvements can be made. Use this feedback to refine and adapt the reward system to meet employees' needs and preferences better.

By implementing these strategies, LSPU can enhance its reward system to recognize and motivate employees better, increasing engagement, satisfaction, and performance across the institution.

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