MOTIVATION OF MAINTENANCE OPERATIVES THROUGH INCENTIVE SCHEMES

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Abstract
This paper identifies the most favoured means for motivating operatives on maintenance projects to be the plus bonus scheme. Eighteen maintenance sites with evidence of the use of Plus Rate Scheme were surveyed to examine the effect of motivation on the level of productivity of bricklayers. From the analyses, it was found that the bricklayers offered their maximum possible output by the time the motivating incentive equates to thirty percent of their basic pay. In addition, the relationship between increase in output and the use of financial incentive is best described using a Morgan-Mercer-Flodin model.

INTRODUCTION

Building maintenance projects are aimed at improving the condition of existing structures. Under the JCT (1980) such works are classified as ‘minor works’ irrespective of scope (alteration, extension, conversion, or rehabilitation). They, however, involve the same types of craftsmen as in new works i.e. bricklayers, carpenters, concretors, etc.

New works generally comprise of activities identical to previous projects. These may be highly iterative in nature. Activity duration previously determined through work-study and other means may, therefore, be used for subsequent projects. The estimates provide a realistic basis for rating the performance of operatives.

Maintenance operations, on the other hand, are usually non-iterative. The programming of such schemes depend on less reliable probability estimates of the various activity completion times. In most cases, the target times are not set. This thus creates an atmosphere for craftsmen to work below standard rating. There is therefore the need for some form of motivation of operatives on maintenance sites to stimulate increase in productivity. Of even greater importance, is the need to establish the extent to which such incentive scheme would be deemed optimal or economically justifiable.

This paper identifies the various incentive schemes used on maintenance sites in Nigeria and assesses their effectiveness. The fundamental working hypothesis here as derived from classical management theories, is that a motivated worker tends to put in more effort for any given task granted that other conditions remain unchanged. This increase in productivity may be measured in terms of higher output per given time or reduced activity completion times.