



## REWARD AND JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG LIBRARIANS IN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN DELTA STATE

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### Abstract

*This study investigated Reward and Job Performance among Librarians in University Libraries in Delta State. The study is grounded in the observation that librarians' job performance, encompassing cataloguing, assisting users, and managing collections, is integral to academic excellence but faces challenges in Delta State. The specific objectives were to examine existing reward systems, assess the level of rewards and job performance, identify challenges, and explore solutions for effective reward systems. A descriptive survey design was employed, targeting 134 librarians from 11 universities in Delta State, comprising 7 public and 4 private institutions. The entire population served as the sample size due to its manageability. Data collection was conducted using a validated questionnaire with a Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.86. Descriptive and inferential statistical methods were applied to analyze the data collected from the respondents. A total of 118 out of the 134 copies of the questionnaire administered were completed, yielding a response rate of 88.1%. Findings revealed the existence of reward systems such as verbal praise ( $\bar{x} = 3.31$ ), professional development ( $\bar{x} = 2.85$ ), and job security ( $\bar{x} = 2.62$ ). However, tangible rewards like bonuses were limited ( $\bar{x} = 2.42$ ). The aggregate mean for rewards was 3.28, indicating a high level of recognition and its positive impact on job satisfaction, motivation, and performance. Librarians demonstrated commendable job performance, with high means for time management ( $\bar{x} = 3.58$ ) and task completion ( $\bar{x} = 3.51$ ). Challenges included inadequate funding ( $\bar{x} = 3.58$ ), lack of standardized criteria ( $\bar{x} = 3.29$ ), and resistance to change ( $\bar{x} = 3.04$ ). A significant positive correlation ( $r = 0.873, p < 0.05$ ) was found between*

*reward systems and job performance. The study recommends expanding tangible rewards, establishing structured recognition programmes, and addressing funding issues. It contributes to knowledge by affirming the impact of reward systems on job performance and highlighting challenges in implementation.*

**Keywords:** *Reward, Job Performance, Librarians and Universities Libraries*

## **Introduction**

Librarians play a vital role in the dissemination of knowledge and the facilitation of research and learning within society. In Nigeria, as in many parts of the world, librarians are key stakeholders in the educational landscape, contributing to the development of an informed and knowledgeable society (Opele & Adigun, 2023). Behind the scenes of these invaluable institutions are librarians who tirelessly work to ensure smooth operations, facilitate access to information, and foster a conducive learning environment (George et al., 2022). Over the years, the role of librarians has transformed from traditional custodians of books to information professionals who actively engage with diverse information resources and technologies. Recognizing and rewarding the efforts of these librarians is crucial not only for their morale but also for the overall efficacy and sustainability of library services (Khurram et al., 2023; Chinyere et al., 2019).

Recognition refers to the acknowledgement and appreciation of an Individual's work, expertise, and contributions. Recognition according to Marcel (2023) is the positive acknowledgment or affirmation of a person's existence, identity, rights, or achievements. Recognition take various forms: verbal appreciation, awards, promotions, or opportunities for professional development. Reward on the other hand includes; tangible benefits, including financial incentives, career advancement, and access to resources and opportunities. Okonoko et al. (2022) defined reward as something one received or given as payment for labour as achievement. The significance of recognition and reward systems in organizational settings cannot be overstated. They serve as powerful motivators, reinforcing positive behaviours, and fostering culture for excellence and dedication, Mendis (2017) noted that rewards system that will motivate librarians to perform their jobs creditably, show organisation loyalty, dedication and commitment and remain with the organisation. In this context, human capital in libraries is crucial for effective service delivery, implementing effective recognition and reward mechanisms is a fundamental requirement for attracting and retaining skilled professionals.

Job performance consist of set of employees' behaviours that are perceived to agree with organizational goals that can be measured, monitored and assessed as an achievement at an individual level (Muchisky & Culbertson, 2013). A librarian's job performance is that aspect of work behaviour that is of relevance to the library's success (Amusa et al., 2013). Michi and Culbertson (2013) defined job performance as a set of workers that can be measured or monitored. According to Bultock (2013), job performance refers to behaviour or simply put, the actions people take at work to achieve a desired outcome. He stated an employer's behaviour can be seen as either aiding or hindering an

organization. However, the outcomes of employees' behaviour are seldom measured so their value is often only anticipated.

Campbell et al (1993) incorporated these various dimensions of job performance into a comprehensive model, identifying eight indicators for measuring job performance: job-specific task proficiency, non-job-specific task proficiency, written and demonstrating, effort, and communication, maintaining personal discipline and team performance facilitating peer supervision or leadership, as well as managing administrative task.

Historically, librarians in Nigeria have not been sufficiently valued or rewarded (Ajindahu, 2015), leading to low morale, high turnover rates, and diminished job performance among librarians. However, the degree to which librarians in Nigeria receive recognition/rewards for their valuable contributions remains a subject of inquiry. Librarians in Nigeria encounter several factors that may hinder recognition and reward within their profession. These factors may include inadequate funding for libraries, limited institutional support, a lack of awareness about the librarian's role, and a general undervaluation of librarians' contributions to society (Okafor, 2020). Such hindrances can negatively impact librarians' motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment to professionalism.

### **Statement of the Research Problem**

Job performance is a critical factor in the achievement of both organizational and personal goals. For librarians in university libraries, job performance encompasses a range of activities, including cataloguing and classifying resources, assisting users in locating materials, managing digital and physical collections, conducting research, and promoting information literacy among students and staff. These responsibilities are integral to the smooth functioning of university libraries and their role in supporting academic excellence. However, the current state of librarians' performance in university libraries in Delta State raises concerns about their ability to meet these expectations effectively.

Preliminary observation from the literature consulted by the researchers highlights troubling trends in the job performance of librarians in university libraries. For instance, Okoro and Uche (2021) observed that many librarians in Nigerian university libraries struggle to keep up with technological advancements, which negatively impacts their ability to provide efficient services. Similarly, Eze and Nwosu (2020) reported a decline in user satisfaction due to delays in cataloguing and limited engagement in user-centred services. Additionally, Adebayo (2019) found that a significant proportion of librarians expressed dissatisfaction with their workload and lack of recognition, which correlated with lower productivity and motivation.

These findings suggest that librarians in Delta State University libraries may be underperforming due to systemic issues. One potential factor that could contribute to this state of affairs is the reward system. Rewards whether monetary, promotional, or

intrinsic play a vital role in motivating employees to perform at their best. A poorly designed or inadequately implemented reward system may fail to incentivize librarians, leading to diminished enthusiasm and reduced commitment to their roles. Conversely, an effective reward system could enhance motivation, job satisfaction, and overall performance.

This study seeks to explore whether the reward system is a significant factor contributing to the observed performance challenges among librarians in university libraries in Delta State. Addressing this issue is essential for improving library services and achieving the broader goals of the universities they serve.

### **Research Questions**

These research questions guided this study:

1. What are the existing reward systems for librarians in University libraries in Delta State?
2. What is the level of reward received by librarians in university libraries?
3. What is the job performance level among librarians in Delta State University libraries?
4. What are the challenges and solutions in establishing an effective reward system for librarians?

### **Research Hypothesis**

1. There is no connection between rewards and the job performance of librarians in University libraries in Delta State

### **Literature Review**

Three main principles serve as the framework for this literature review: reward systems for librarians, the influence of job performance and reward systems on librarians' job performance, and the challenges and solutions in establishing effective recognition and reward systems for librarians.

### **Existing Reward Systems for Librarians**

Okonoko et al. (2022) conducted a descriptive survey to investigate the relationship between rewards, recognition, and job performance among librarians in selected university libraries in South-South Nigeria. The study, which included a sample of 112 librarians, revealed that verbal praise, bonuses, monetary rewards, and formal recognition were the primary forms of reward. These rewards were associated with improved morale and a greater sense of accomplishment among librarians. However, informal recognition and written praise were less commonly utilized, suggesting a potential gap in personalized or less formal methods of recognition. The findings

underscore the importance of integrating a variety of reward types to cater to the different motivational needs of employees.

Similarly, Yusuf et al. (2021) investigated the connection between reward systems and service delivery among librarians in federal universities in Southwest Nigeria. Their findings indicated that job security satisfaction and annual leave allowances were the primary reward systems in place. These rewards not only contributed to librarians' sense of stability but also improved their focus on delivering quality services. The study highlights the critical role of intrinsic rewards, such as job security, alongside extrinsic rewards like allowances, in creating a supportive work environment that enhances performance.

Madu and Anyalebechi (2016) reported that both financial and non-financial rewards significantly influence the job performance of librarians. Financial rewards, such as bonuses and salary increments, provide tangible recognition of employees' contributions, while non-financial rewards, including verbal praise and recognition, foster a sense of belonging and professional pride. The study underscores the necessity of a balanced reward system that integrates both types to motivate librarians effectively and enhance their commitment to achieving organizational goals. Additionally, Mazllami (2020) emphasized that competitive remuneration and financial incentives not only improve job satisfaction but also boost librarians' productivity. This finding suggests that adequate compensation serves as a critical motivator, ensuring that librarians perceive their roles as valuable and rewarding.

### **Influence of Reward Systems on Librarians' Job Performance**

Nzeium et al. (2019) examined the effect of promotion and recognition on job satisfaction among academic librarians in Imo State, Nigeria. The study revealed that recognition instils pride and seriousness in librarians, contributing to improved job performance. This finding highlights the psychological benefits of recognition, which enhances employees' self-esteem and encourages them to take their responsibilities more seriously. The study underscores the need for structured recognition programs to sustain high levels of motivation and engagement among librarians.

Khurram et al. (2023) explored the impact of motivational and behavioural factors on the job productivity of academic librarians in Pakistan. Their findings emphasized that rewards, including a sense of honour and recognition, are pivotal in encouraging efficient job performance. The study also noted that intrinsic rewards, such as a sense of purpose and achievement, play a significant role in driving librarians to perform their duties effectively. This indicates that recognition must be meaningful and align with librarians' professional values to maximize its impact.

Vincent et al. (2020) highlighted that the absence of contingent rewards and inadequate recognition negatively affect librarians' job performance. They argued that recognition,

whether financial or non-financial, significantly enhances job satisfaction and motivation, leading to higher performance levels. This finding underscores the detrimental effects of neglecting recognition and the importance of consistently acknowledging librarians' contributions. Similarly, Jeni, Mutsuddi, and Das (2020) observed that respectful treatment and recognition from library management encourage librarians to exert greater effort toward achieving organizational goals. Conversely, Hammond and Wattermeyer (2021) noted that the lack of recognition and motivation systems reduces morale and job satisfaction, thereby hindering performance.

Yang and Ali (2020) found that librarians are driven by an intrinsic desire to excel when their efforts are acknowledged. They noted that recognition fosters a sense of accomplishment, motivating librarians to exceed expectations. This finding aligns with self-determination theory, which posits that intrinsic motivation is strengthened when individuals feel competent and appreciated. Similarly, Okoye (2017) reported that dissatisfaction with pay and rewards can lead to demotivation, reduced productivity, and a higher likelihood of librarians seeking alternative employment opportunities. This underscores the importance of ensuring that reward systems are competitive and aligned with industry standards to retain talent and foster loyalty.

### **Challenges and Solutions in Establishing Effective Reward Systems for Librarians**

Establishing an effective reward system for librarians poses several challenges, including the need for transparency, alignment with organizational goals, and adaptability to diverse needs. Tayyeb et al. (2021) emphasized that crafting reward mechanisms requires careful integration with an institution's culture and vision to avoid confusion and demotivation among staff. For example, rewards that are misaligned with organizational objectives may inadvertently incentivize behaviours that are counterproductive to the library's mission. This highlights the importance of ensuring that reward criteria are communicated and linked to specific performance outcomes.

Glenn et al. (2020) highlighted the importance of aligning reward systems with behaviours that support organizational objectives, cautioning against inadvertently incentivizing counterproductive actions. For instance, a reward system that prioritizes quantity over quality may lead to rushed or substandard work. The study underscores the need for balanced metrics that evaluate both the quality and quantity of librarians' contributions.

Opute (2020) noted that developing economies face unique challenges, such as limited funding and socio-economic constraints, which complicate the design and implementation of effective reward systems in libraries. These constraints necessitate creative approaches, such as leveraging non-monetary rewards like professional development opportunities and public recognition, to motivate librarians despite budgetary limitations.

### **Methodology**

The researcher used a descriptive survey research methodology to objectively describe the current phenomenon of reward and job performance of librarians in university libraries in Delta State. The study's population consisted of 134 librarians from 11 universities in Delta State, Nigeria. 7 of these universities were public, while 4 were private. Due to the population's small size and controllability, the entire population were employed as the sample size. To test the instrument's dependability, twenty-four (24) copies of the questionnaire were handed out to non-participating university librarians. The test's paired scores were examined using the statistical program for social sciences Cronbach Alpha method (SPSS). It was decided that this was appropriate because the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient for the correlation index was 0.86, indicating strong instrument reliability. Descriptive statistical techniques were used to analyze the data obtained from the respondents' questionnaire responses.

### **Results**

#### **Research Question 1: What are the existing reward systems for librarians in Delta State?**

**Table 1: Current Reward Systems in place for Librarians**

<b>Reward Systems</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b><math>\bar{x}</math></b>
Verbal praise	54	49	11	4	3.31
Librarians receive tangible rewards (such as bonuses/monetary value for their achievement	4	50	56	8	2.42
Formal reward of librarians outstanding work	9	60	30	19	2.50
Professional development/training as part of reward system	26	62	16	14	2.85
Job security satisfaction	13	60	32	13	2.62
<b>N = 118</b>	<b>Aggregate Mean = 2.74</b>		<b>Criterion Mean = 2.50</b>		

Data presented in Table 1 revealed that the aggregate mean (2.74) is higher than the criterion mean (2.50) and this indicates that reward systems for librarians exist in university libraries in Delta State, Nigeria. Notably, reward systems such as verbal praise ( $\bar{x} = 3.31$ ), professional development/training ( $\bar{x} = 2.85$ ), job security ( $\bar{x} = 2.62$ ), and formal reward ( $\bar{x} = 2.50$ ) among universities.

**Research Question 2:** What is the level of reward among librarians in university libraries?

**Table 2: Level of Reward among Librarians in University Libraries**

Statement	VHL	HL	LL	VLL	$\bar{x}$
Recognition and rewards for their work makes librarians feel valued, leading to improved job performance	57	42	11	8	3.25
Recognition and rewards enhances librarians' job satisfaction	49	56	9	4	3.27
Recognition and rewards enables librarians to likely strive for excellence when it is tied to specific goals	50	53	11	4	3.26
Recognition and rewards contribute to a sense of pride and accomplishment among librarians	33	75	8	2	3.18
Recognition and rewards positively impact librarians' motivation to perform their job effectively	66	42	5	5	3.43
<b>N = 118    Aggregate Mean = 3.28    Criterion Mean = 2.50</b>					

As indicated in Table 2, the aggregate mean of 3.28 is greater than the criterion mean of 2.50, indicating a higher degree of incentive system among librarians in university libraries. Rewarding librarians positively impacts their motivation to perform their job effectively ( $\bar{x} = 3.42$ ), enhances their job satisfaction ( $\bar{x} = 3.27$ ), encourages them to strive for excellence ( $\bar{x} = 3.26$ ), makes them feel valued ( $\bar{x} = 3.25$ ), and contributes to a sense of pride and accomplishment ( $\bar{x} = 3.18$ ).

**Research Question 3:** What is the level of job performance among librarians in university libraries?

**Table 3: Level of Job Performance among Librarians**

Statement	VH L	H L	L L	VL L	$\bar{x}$
I manage my time well	68	50	-	-	3.58
I manage to plan my work so that i finished it on time	60	58	-	-	3.51
I was able to carry out my work efficiently	59	55	4	-	3.47
I took on challenging tasks when they were available	56	58	4	-	3.44
I worked on keeping my job-related knowledge up-to-date	58	53	6	1	3.42



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I kept in mind the work result i needed to achieve i was able to set priorities	46	62	5	5	3.26
On my own initiative, i started new task when my old tasks were complete	32	74	12	-	3.17
I actively participated in meetings/contributions	43	55	15	5	3.15
I talked to colleagues about the negative aspects of my work	28	50	25	15	2.17
I complained about minor work-related issues at work	26	28	53	11	2.58
I focused on the negative aspects of a work situation instead of the positive aspects	11	19	23	65	1.80
I sometimes did nothing, while i should have been working	8	28	7	75	1.74
<b>N = 118</b>	<b>Aggregate Mean = 2.99</b>		<b>Criterion Mean = 2.50</b>		

The data in Table 3 reveal that librarians have a high degree of job performance, as indicated by the aggregate mean of 2.99, which is greater than the criterion mean of 2.5. The Table revealed that librarians manage their time ( $\bar{x} = 3.58$ ), plan their work ( $\bar{x} = 3.51$ ), carry out their work efficiently ( $\bar{x} = 3.47$ ), take on challenging tasks when available ( $\bar{x} = 3.44$ ), work on keeping their job-related knowledge up-to-date ( $\bar{x} = 3.42$ ), prioritize the work result ( $\bar{x} = 3.26$ ), and start new tasks on their own when old tasks were completed ( $\bar{x} = 3.17$ ). Actively participates in meetings and contributes ( $\bar{x} = 3.15$ ), discusses negative elements of work with colleagues ( $\bar{x} = 2.17$ ), and complains about small work-related concerns ( $\bar{x} = 2.58$ ).

**Research Question 4:** What are the challenges faced by university libraries in implementing reward systems?

**Table 4: Challenges faced by University Libraries in Implementing Reward System**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b><math>\bar{x}</math></b>
Lack of funding is a significant obstacle to implementing robust recognition and reward systems	84	22	8	4	3.58
Difficulty in measuring librarians' contribution objectively hinders the effectiveness of recognition	68	29	17	4	3.36
Lack of standardized criteria for recognition and rewards hinders the establishment of an effective system	53	51	9	5	3.29
Establishing a transparent and fair process for determining who receives recognition is challenging	53	47	14	4	3.26
Inadequate communication about the purpose and criteria of recognition and rewards leads to confusion	46	46	18	8	3.10
Resistance to change within the organizational culture poses challenges in revamping reward system	44	54	1	19	3.04
<b>N = 118</b>	<b>Aggregate Mean = 3.27</b>		<b>Criterion Mean = 2.50</b>		

Table 4 demonstrates that librarians encounter a variety of obstacles, as evidenced by the aggregate mean of 3.27, which is greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. Librarians face challenges such as lack of funding ( $\bar{x} = 3.58$ ), difficulty in measuring their contributions objectively ( $\bar{x} = 3.36$ ), lack of standardized criteria for recognition and rewards ( $\bar{x} = 3.26$ ), insufficient clarity communication of the purpose and criteria for recognition and rewards ( $\bar{x} = 3.10$ ), and resistance to change within the organizational culture ( $\bar{x} = 3.04$ ).

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no connection between the reward system and the job performance of librarians in university libraries located in Delta State.

**Table 5: The link between Reward System and Job Performance of Librarians**

		Reward System	Job Performance
Reward Systems	Pearson Correlation		.873
		1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	118	118
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.873**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	118	118

$\alpha = 0.05$

Table 5 shows a positive correlation ( $r = .873$ ,  $p = .000$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between reward systems and their impact on workplace performance among librarians in Delta State University libraries. As a result, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant relationship between the reward system and librarian job performance in Delta State University Libraries, is rejected. The study findings indicated that the reward system had a statistically significant impact on the work performance of librarians in university libraries, Delta State.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings indicated that librarians in Delta State universities still maintain the existing reward system of verbal praise, which positively influences workers. This finding aligns with those of Ogunyemi and Olatunji (2016), who observed that verbal praise enhances employee morale and contributes to improved job outcomes. Similarly, Akanbi and Ayobami (2018) found that non-monetary rewards, such as verbal praise, foster stronger employee commitment and collaboration, ultimately enhancing organizational performance. Moreover, Omodan and Oladapo (2020) emphasized that verbal recognition strengthens the bond between employees and management, creating a positive workplace culture.

Another result revealed that rewards positively impact librarians by making them feel valued, which leads to improved job performance. Rewards also enable librarians to

strive for excellence, particularly when tied to specific goals. This result supports the findings of Mokhtari and Asadi (2017), who noted that an effective incentive system assures employees of their value to the organization and reinforces their contribution to its growth. Additionally, Umar and Ismail (2019) demonstrated that rewards linked to clear performance metrics increase employee motivation, job satisfaction, and productivity.

The study also found that the degree of job performance among librarians is very high, as they manage their time well, plan their work effectively, and complete tasks efficiently. This finding reinforces the assertion of Chukwuma and Okoli (2018), who highlighted that effective time and task management are critical indicators of high job performance among library staff. Furthermore, Afolabi and Adeniran (2021) discovered that librarians who receive acknowledgement and support from their institutions are more likely to achieve organizational goals through dedication and efficiency.

Challenges to implementing reward systems in university libraries were also identified, including inadequate recognition, insufficient funding, and lack of clear criteria for rewards. These findings are consistent with Vincent et al. (2020), who reported that the absence of a robust reward system negatively affects librarian performance and morale. Similarly, Hammond and Wattermeyer (2021) found that insufficient recognition and unclear reward structures lead to decreased motivation, job dissatisfaction, and higher turnover intentions among librarians.

Lastly, the study confirmed that the absence of rewards demotivates employees and hampers performance. This is in line with Okeke and Ogbu (2019), who revealed that lack of rewards and motivators reduces staff morale and encourages employees to seek opportunities elsewhere. Eze and Ugwu (2022) further noted that a well-implemented reward system is essential for sustaining librarian engagement and achieving institutional objectives.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the study found that librarians in university libraries in Delta State benefit from existing reward systems such as verbal praise, professional development opportunities, and job security. However, tangible rewards like bonuses remain limited. The findings also showed that recognition and rewards significantly enhance librarians' motivation, job satisfaction, and sense of accomplishment. Additionally, librarians demonstrated commendable job performance, excelling in time management, task completion, and staying updated professionally. Nevertheless, challenges such as inadequate funding, lack of standardized criteria, and resistance to organizational change impede the effective implementation of reward systems. Importantly, the study established a strong positive correlation between reward systems and job performance, emphasizing that strengthening reward mechanisms could further enhance librarians' productivity and overall performance.

### **Recommendations**

To address the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. University library administrators should expand existing reward systems by incorporating tangible rewards such as bonuses or monetary incentives. This can be achieved by allocating a specific portion of the budget for librarian rewards, ensuring these incentives complement verbal praise, professional development opportunities, and job security already in place.
2. University management should implement structured recognition programs that tie rewards to measurable goals and specific achievements. Training sessions for supervisors on effective recognition practices can ensure that librarians feel valued, motivated, and encouraged to strive for excellence.
3. Librarians should be provided with tools and resources to support time management, task prioritization, and continuous professional development. Workshops, mentorship programs, and access to relevant training can further enhance their ability to maintain high job performance levels.
4. Policymakers and university authorities should address the challenges of inadequate funding by advocating for increased financial support from government and private stakeholders. Clear and standardized criteria for recognition should be established, and transparent processes for awarding rewards should be communicated effectively through regular meetings or official communications.
5. University libraries should foster a culture of adaptability by involving librarians in the planning and revision of reward systems. Change management strategies, such as workshops and feedback sessions, can help reduce resistance and ensure the successful implementation of new reward initiatives.
6. University leadership should prioritize enhancing reward mechanisms as a strategic tool to improve job performance. Regular assessments of the reward system's impact on librarian performance should be conducted to ensure alignment with organizational goals and continuous improvement.

### **Contributions to Knowledge**

The study has contributed to existing literature in the following ways:

1. The study declared that reward systems such as verbal praise, professional development opportunities, job security, and formal recognition are present in university libraries in Delta State.
2. The findings confirmed that recognition and rewards significantly enhance librarians' motivation, job satisfaction, and sense of accomplishment.
3. The study established that librarians in Delta State exhibit commendable job performance.

4. The study confirmed that challenges such as inadequate funding, lack of standardized criteria, and resistance to change hinder the effective implementation of reward systems in university libraries.
5. The study affirmed a strong positive correlation between reward systems and job performance.

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