

# Review of: "The Impact of Project Financial Subsidies on Project Achievement"

J.R. Roberson<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Tshwane University of Technology

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

## **Review of article:**

The article, "The Impact of Project Financial Subsidies on Project Achievement," seems to be a discussion article and not a research report or article reporting empirical work. It discusses the effects of financial allowances, specifically per diems, on project success and sustainability. It highlights the improper allocation of development resources and the emergence of social issues as a result of these financial practices. The described problem focuses on understanding the different categories of allowances and their impacts, both adverse and beneficial, on project outcomes. The authors discuss the influence of per diems on the project cycle and propose strategies to mitigate their detrimental impact, based on a theoretical and conceptual review of per diems and related literature.

Their discussion underscores a mixed impact of financial subsidies on project achievement. They reveal that while per diems and allowances can motivate participation and enhance the efficiency of task completion, they also encourage meager wages, undermine volunteerism, lead to financial mismanagement, and can adversely affect the intrinsic value of professional development. They suggest that a balance is needed between using financial incentives for motivation and addressing the negative consequences associated with their misuse.

The paper concludes by calling for collaboration between government and NGOs to address the identified gaps, such as the lack of enforcement on guidelines for allowances and the need for principles that foster efficiency and accountability.

Language improvement:

- A research project financed by DFID Malawi on public expenditure assessment of travel (Peprah and Mangani, 2010) – Should be A research project financed by
- "Financial Subsidies" in the title should not be capitalized unless following a specific style guide that mandates such capitalization. Suggestion: "Financial subsidies" if title case is not required.
- "affect of" should be "effect of". Suggestion: Change to "the effect of".
- "per diems" is sometimes incorrectly used in singular form. Suggestion: Ensure consistency in usage as per the context.
- "lead to meager wages" might be more accurately expressed as "leads to meager wages" depending on the subject's plurality. Suggestion: Consider revising the subject-verb agreement.
- Incorrect use of "its" vs. "it's". Suggestion: Replace "its" with "it's" where applicable to mean "it is".

- Missing commas in complex sentences that require them for clarity. Suggestion: Add commas after introductory phrases or clauses, and before coordinating conjunctions in compound sentences.
- "principle" used instead of "principal" in some contexts. Suggestion: Use "principal" when referring to a person with the highest authority or a primary amount of money.
- "effect" used instead of "affect" in certain contexts. Suggestion: Use "affect" as a verb when meaning to influence something and "effect" as a noun when referring to the outcome.
- "advise" used instead of "advice". Suggestion: Use "advice" when referring to guidance or recommendations.
- Overuse of passive voice, which can make sentences less clear or direct. Suggestion: Revise sentences to active voice where possible to improve clarity and engagement.
- The charges range from 2,500 to 6,000.00. – Indicate the currency.

Empirical improvement:

Here are points that could be considered as lacking empirical substantiation or where the argument could benefit from empirical evidence or clarification:

- **Generalization of Detrimental Effects:** The document broadly asserts the negative impacts of per diems without specifying the empirical basis for these claims. For a more balanced view, specific studies, data, or statistics supporting these generalizations should be cited. Suggested Correction: Include references to empirical studies or data that specifically demonstrate the claimed effects, such as the correlation between per diem practices and decreased project effectiveness or increased corruption.
- **Anecdotal Evidence:** The document occasionally relies on anecdotal evidence or singular examples to make broader claims about the effects of per diems. Suggested Correction: Supplement anecdotal references with larger-scale studies or comprehensive data analyses that confirm these observations are part of a wider trend rather than isolated incidents.
- **Lack of Comparative Analysis:** The text mentions the inefficiencies and social issues emerging from financial allowances but does not provide empirical comparisons with contexts where such allowances are not offered. Suggested Correction: Include comparative studies or data showing the differences in project outcomes, efficiency, and community impact in scenarios with and without financial allowances.
- **Assumptions on Motivation:** The document suggests that per diems undermine intrinsic motivation but does not cite empirical research that maps this effect across different contexts or cultures. Suggested Correction: Reference empirical psychological or sociological research that examines the impact of financial incentives on intrinsic motivation in the specific context of development projects.
- **Economic Impact Assertions:** Claims regarding the economic consequences of per diems, such as their role in the informal economy or tax revenue loss, are presented without direct empirical support. Suggested Correction: Provide economic data, analyses, or case studies from credible sources that illustrate how per diems contribute to the informal economy and affect government revenue.
- **Influence on Government Policy:** The document discusses the influence of per diems on government policies and

practices without citing specific policy analyses or empirical evidence of these influences. Suggested Correction: Integrate findings from policy analysis studies or governmental reports that explicitly link per diem practices to changes in policy or administrative practices.