

A PERSPECTIVE ON EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION AND JOB PERFORMANCE: A CONCEPTUAL STUDY

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Introduction

Motivation is a process that starts with a physiological or psychological need that activates behavior or a drive that is aimed at a goal. Every employee is expected to show increased and qualitative productivity by the manager. To achieve this, behavior of the employee is very important. The behavior of the employees is influenced by the environment in which they find themselves. Finally, an employee's behavior will be a function of that employee's innate drives or felt needs and the opportunities he or she has to satisfy those drives or needs in the workplace.

If employees are never given opportunities to utilize all of their skills, then the employer may never have the benefit of their total performance. Work performance is also contingent upon employee abilities. If employees lack the learned skills or innate talents to do a particular job, then performance will be less than optimal.

The third dimension is work motivation of the employees. Motivation is a general term used to refer to any goal directed behavior of an individual. From the social and cultural point of view, the development of individual work place motivation helps people to lead richer and fuller lives, less bounded by tradition. Being human every individual needs motivation to do a certain task, only the motivation factors assist in stimulating a person to perform a well-defined job. Even a small child aged of 2-3 years needs motivator to do a work. For instance, if that particular child is giving compliment for doing certain task then immediately he/she will do that task without any hesitation. Similarly, teacher as a human creature required stimulator to perform his/her job.

The Work motivation added value to understanding human behavior. As insight into why people behave the way they do and what needs to be done to ensure that they behave in the way that is most beneficial to the institutions. Research on individual work motivation and work behavior in multicultural work place has been done in various professions including teaching. And some researchers identified that individual work motivation and work behavior in multicultural work place (like educational institutions) had a correlation with both negative and positive aspects of teacher's achievements. Work behavior might be influenced by human resource management practices like recruitment, training, communication, benefits, promotion and performance appraisal etc., Individual work motivation and understanding of work behavior is that phase of management which deals with effective procurement and utilization of manpower or human resources.

Work motivation and work behavior are very much related with each other. They are the two parallel sides of every job. Work motivations directly influence the individual work behavior. Without any motivation factor no one is willing to do a work. How far work motivation affects the individual behavior depends upon the particular job and individual performance on that job.

Motivation is very much needed in every field. It offers several importance's to the organization/institution and to the employees. It facilitates initiative and innovation which result in creating higher efficiency in the particular work of an individual. Presence of motivation techniques reduces absenteeism, wastages and breakages, accidents and employee turnover and also it improves

the image and morale of the organizations and institutions. Simultaneously, it creates good relation among working groups. It had a great impact on the individual job performance and its work behavior.

Literature review

The below are few literature review related to the motivation and job performance.

Herzberg (1959) observes that performance is: *let an employee do what I want him to do*. This implies that the organization's hierarchy and task distribution are also critical for a good employee performance. He argues that when intrinsic factors (motivators) are present at the job, satisfaction is likely to occur as well as an increase in employee motivation.

Vroom (1964) opines that an employee's performance is based on individual factors, viz personality, skills, knowledge, experience and abilities. Many researchers agree that job performance is divided in those five factors. According to him the relationship between employee motivation and job performance has been studied for a long period. However, earlier research could not succeed in establishing a direct relationship between the two. Yet it seems that that the factors do influence each other.

Hackman and oldham (1976) defined five job characteristics, which are based on the Two-Factor Theory from Herzberg (1959). Those characteristics are skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. The results of their study indicate that employees who work on jobs scoring high on the five characteristics, show high work motivation, satisfaction and performance (Brass, 1981). They also argue that the growth need strength of the employee has a role in the relationship; Employees who have a high need for personal growth and development will respond more positively to a job high in motivating potential than employees with a lower need for growth strength. According to them, growth need strength has a moderating effect on the relationship. They also argue that when employee satisfaction is added, a circular relationship is formed with performance, satisfaction and motivation.

Further, they conclude that employees can be motivated through the design of their work; they argue that by providing certain intrinsic and extrinsic factors an employee can be motivated to perform well. The five job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback) can bring the employee to three "critical psychological states", namely: (i) experienced meaningfulness of the work, (ii) experienced responsibility for outcomes of the work and (iii) knowledge of the actual results of the work activities. According to Hackman and Oldham, the three critical psychological states will lead to high motivation, satisfaction and performance.

Brass (1981) in his research said that because of the internal satisfaction of the employee, the employee is motivated to try to perform well in the future towards his job.

Griffin et al., (1981) traced that Job characteristics refer to specific attributes or dimension that can be used to describe different tasks. He said that Good job performances and productivity growth are also important in stabilizing our economy; by means of improved living standards, higher wages, an increase in goods available for consumption, etc. Griffin et al. also argues that therefore research of individual employee performance is important to society in general. Employee production and employee job performance seems to be related; e.g. in the U.S. performance is in some cases measured as the number and value of goods produced.

Hunter and hunter (1984) stated that crucial in a high job performance is the ability of the employee himself. The employee must be able to deliver good results and have a high productivity. He also argues that this is something the organization can know at forehand. They can select employees with the required abilities or they can recruit those employees themselves. Of course the latter is more time consuming, but can obtain better results in the end (Hunter, 1986). However, job performance is more than the ability of the employee alone.

Vroom's (1964), Hunter & Hunter's (1984), etc. results are evident. Thus, Job performance can be divided in personality, skills, knowledge, experience and abilities. Some researchers even argue that

personality has a more specific role in job performance. However, according to Bishop (1989) and others, job performance contains a problem; i.e. the measurement of performance.

Petty et al. (1984) reviewed the 15 studies Vroom (1964) used in his research and added another 20 more recent studies. They concluded that employee motivation and performance are indeed related. The results of their research indicate that the relationship between individual, overall job satisfaction and individual job performance is more consistent than reported in previous researches (e.g. Vroom, 1964).

However, the exact relation among motivation, satisfaction and performance is not yet defined. Petty et al. (1984) argues that the relationship is circular and starts by a high performance causing satisfaction. According to them, when the employee performs well on a particular task, satisfaction will occur.

Amabile (1993) states that work performances are dependent upon the individual's level of motivation; the individual's level of motivation can be intrinsically and/or extrinsically based. Adds to this statement by arguing that it is important that managers and organisational leaders learn to understand and deal effectively with their employee's motivation; since motivated employees are necessary to let the organisation being successful in the next century. She also argues that unmotivated employees are likely to expend little effort in their jobs, avoid the workplace as much as possible, exit the organisation and produce low quality of work. In the case that employees are motivated; they help organisations survive in rapidly changing workplaces

Furnham et al. (1998) they state that personality differs in extent to how employees react to intrinsic and extrinsic values. Their research concludes that for introverts extrinsic factors are more important, and extroverts are more intrinsically motivated. Therefore introverts are less satisfied than stable individuals and perform to a lesser extent. This concludes that there presumably also a relationship between personality and performance exists (Gray, 1975).

Bruce and Pepitone (1999) propose an interesting viewpoint according to which managers cannot motivate employees; managers can only influence what employees are motivated to do.

Daniels (2000) contends that when employees are in a paradigm of "have to" instead of "want to" they are moved to perform, because of being remunerated for that performance rather than being motivated (and enjoying) to excel in what they do. There is thus a distinction between movement and motivation.

Oosthuizen (2001) argues that because motivation focuses on influences which create, direct and sustain goal-directed behaviour, any theory of work motivation must elucidate how human behaviour is guided or focussed.

Stroh (2001) argues that an organization who seeks to recruit and retain employees who want to work and continually enjoy striving to improve their work performance, needs to ensure that a model exists which not only stimulates but also predicts such behaviour. He urges managers to be aware of the circumstances under which employees would be performing exceptionally well. These include situations where:

- (i) There is a high likelihood that their efforts will lead to positive outcomes,
- (ii) The likelihood of their achievements leading to the realization of predetermined objectives,
- (iii) That the likelihood exists that their achievements will be recognized by the organization and rewarded appropriately.

Steyn (2002) further postulates that in defining motivation and morale, it emphasises the important role of the employee when applying both these concepts in the work environment. Morale is considered an extension of the concept of motivation – also including attitudes and feelings towards the organisation.

Lawler (2003) argues that employees do not just need to be motivated, but also need to possess the ability in order to enhance job performance. Hence, a highly motivated employee would still need to possess the core competencies for the job in order to deliver against the key performance areas of the job. In the same way, competent employees (those with the expertise, knowledge, skills and behavioural attributes) would not necessarily do well, while they experience demotivation or are

unmotivated. It is argued that the expectancy theory provides some grounds for why individuals are motivated to work and perform – this refers to employees expecting some form of reward for delivering on organisational expectations.

Shulze and Steyn (2003) further postulates that motivation represents the complex forces and needs which provide the energy for an individual to perform a particular task.

Armstrong (as cited in Boninelli & Meyer, 2004) defines performance management as a means of achieving improved individual outputs, within an agreed framework and which also leads to organizational achievement and rewards for employees.

Wylie (2004) on his study he propose interesting viewpoint regarding the issue in workplace according to which members of management primarily should be able to maintain the level of their own motivation at high levels in order to engage in effective motivation of their subordinates. Accordingly, to him he recommends managers to adopt a proactive approach in terms of engaging in self-motivation practices. Furthermore, he recommends concentrating on specific variations of intangible motivational tools such as celebrations of birthdays and other important dates with the participation of whole team.

Drucker as cited in Meyer & Kirsten (2005) opines that managing the performance of employee's forms an integral part of any organisation's strategy on how they deal with their human capital. This function also includes creating a conducive enabling environment for employees to achieve organisational objectives. In this conducive environment, motivating employees could be used as a strategic tool to enhance job performance.

Meyer and Kirsten (2005) maintain that performance management should be implemented in organizations to achieve, amongst others, the following objectives:

- i. Create a performance culture
- ii. Create a climate of motivation
- iii. Link remuneration with performance
- iv. Form a basis for career management.

They emphasis that said when those factors are applied correctly, most performance management systems should result in increased motivational levels of individual employees, especially if they perceive performance rewards and the system itself being applied equitably throughout the organization. Increased levels of motivation amongst employees should contribute towards increased performance and greater job satisfaction (Robbins et. al., 2003).

NEL et al. as cited in ROBERTS (2005) and it is further argued that motivation is explained as being intentional and directional. 'Intentional' is referred to as a personal choice and diligence of action, whilst 'directional' alludes to the presence of an influential force aimed at achieving a specific goal. Hence, someone who is motivated is always conscious of the goal to be achieved and directs his or her efforts at attaining that goal. .

It is also argued that certain job characteristics are necessary in establishing the relationship between employee motivation and performance (e.g. Brass, 1981; Hackman & Oldham, 1976; etc.).

Roberts (2005) maintains that although motivation influences performance, performance – if followed by rewards – also has the potential to influence motivation. Motivation is considered an important factor in initiating, guiding, sustaining and stopping the employee's ability (and will) to perform on the job (Amos et. al., 2004).

Grobler et. al (2006) argue that the existence and proper implementation of a good performance management system within an organization could assist both the organization and the individual employee. It should provide direction in terms of what level of performance is expected to achieve organizational and individual goals and how the achievement of this is linked to rewards for both the organization (that is increased profitability) and individual employees (that is performance incentives). If both the organization and individual employees within the organization have a clear understanding of performance expectations, and the ensuing rewards for achieving those performance

goals, it should lead to motivating individual employees and the organization as a collective to work towards achieving those goals.

Shields (2007) studied the role of facilitating quality subordinate-superior communication at various levels effectively employing a wide range of communication channels has been praised in terms of its positive contribution in boosting employee morale. On his study he stresses two specific advantages of such a practice that relate to offering employees a chance to raise their concerns and put across their points regarding various aspects of their jobs, as well as, supplying them with the feeling of engagement and appreciation.

Lockley (2012) opined that offering training and development programs that effectively contributes to personal and professional growth of individuals is another effective employee motivation strategy. At the same time, he warns that in order for motivational aspects of training and development initiatives to be increased, ideally they need to be devised and implemented by a third party with relevant competency and experience.

Llopis (2012) emphasised on Alternative working patterns such as job-rotating, job-sharing, and flexible working have been branded as effective motivational tools. Moreover, he argues that motivational aspects of alternative working patterns along with its other benefits are being appreciated by increasing numbers of organisations, however, at the same time; many organisations are left behind from benefiting from such opportunities. He further draws attention to the increasing relevance of the work-life balance problem for modern employees and stresses its negative impact on the level of employee motivation. Specifically, he provided reasons that unless employees achieve an adequate level of work-life balance in personal level, management investment on the level of employee motivation can be wasted. This viewpoint is based on Hierarchy of Needs theoretical framework proposed by Abraham Maslow (1943), according to which there is a certain hierarchy for individual needs, and more basic human needs need to be satisfied in order for the next level needs to serve as motivators in the work place.

Conclusion

Employee motivation is a critical factor that directly influences job performance and overall organizational success. Motivated employees tend to be more productive, engaged, and committed to their roles, which leads to higher efficiency, lower turnover, and better workplace morale. This paper has highlighted the various motivational theories and strategies that organizations can implement to enhance employee motivation, such as intrinsic and extrinsic rewards, recognition, opportunities for growth, and supportive leadership. Ultimately, by understanding what drives their workforce and fostering an environment that meets those needs, employers can significantly improve performance outcomes and create a sustainable competitive advantage.

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