Employee Motivation and It's Influence on Performance

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the relationship or the impact motivation of employees have on their overall performance in organizations and how their performance as well boost the overall output of their organizations.

The objective of this paper is to educate readers on some theories of motivation mainly the content/need theories which talks about what motivates employees with various authors and their findings, and he process theories which explains employee's levels of motivation and need satisfaction.

The study also focuses on the types of motivation and the forms they take with further literature talking about the importance of motivation and how it influences employees' performance and how this performance can be measured.

Finally, with all the findings and that of various authors the paper has concluded that the success and achievements of organizations depends on how well they motivate their employees and in every organization employees would like managers who motivate them in the workforce.

Keywords: Employees Motivation; Employees Performance; Organizational Performance.

1.1 Introduction

Organizations and businesses today wants to be successful and have goals to constantly be on top of other competitors, regardless of location, size, technology and market most organizations are facing employee retention challenges. To overcome these constraints a strong and positive relationship and bonding should be created and maintained between employees and their organizations. This can be done by how happy and motivated employees are because in every organization employee are the most central part so they need to be influenced and persuaded towards tasks fulfillment.

The focus of this study is to highlight the relationship or the impact motivation of employees has on their performance in organizations and how their performances boosts the overall output of their organizations

1.2 The Concept of Motivation

Mullins (1999) posits that the underlying concept of motivation is some driving force within individuals by which they attempt to achieve some goal in order to fulfil some need or expectation. He asserts that the concept of motivation can be distinguished between extrinsic motivation relating to tangible rewards such as money; and intrinsic motivation related to psychological rewards such as the sense of challenge and achievement. According to Heyel (1982, p.597), "Motivation refers to the degree of readiness of an organism to pursue some designated goal, and implies the determination of the nature and locus of the forces inducing the degree of readiness". Robbins and Coulter (1999 p.26) view motivation as "The willingness to exert high levels of effort to reach organizational goals as conditioned by that effort's ability to satisfy some individual need". With reference to above stated definitions, employee motivation may be defined as a force that drives the employees toward attaining specific goals and objectives of the organization. It is a reflection of the level of energy, commitment and creativity that a company's workers bring to their jobs (Shahzadi, et al., 2014).

1.3   Theories of Motivation

Motivation is not a simple concept instead; motivation pertains to various drives, desires, needs, wishes and other forces. Theories on employee motivation have existed since the 19th century, beginning with Elton Mayo's famous studies at the Hawthorne factory of the Western Electric Company in Chicago from 1924 to 1932. Mayo's research revealed that workers were not only solely driven by monetary benefits (organizational space) but were motivated by social elements as well (team space). Following Mayo's classic work, numerous long standing theories of motivation have been propounded by different scholars and researchers over the years. Notable among these theories are the content theories and the process theories. While content theories focused on the needs that all individuals share, process theories focus on the cognitive differences between individuals. Some of these theories are discussed below:

1.3.1 Content /Needs Theories

The content theories also known as the "need theories" or "psychological theories", focuses on the need of an employee and concentrates mainly on what motivates an employee. Chintalloo and Mahadeo (2013) assert that as human beings, we all have various needs, if those needs are left unsatisfied, it will disrupt us to move ahead because we feel a sense of emptiness. However, if all our needs at the workplace are satisfied, we will be productive at work. According to them, a manager must therefore distinguish the needs of his employees and devise proper plans on how to satisfy those needs. Thus, identifying and designing the effective package of needs for individuals is of utmost importance for managers. The content theories school of thought has five major pioneer contributors who developed various theories in support of it discussed as follows:

1.3.1.1 Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's theory holds that the human needs form a hierarchy ranging from the lowest-order needs (psychological needs) to the highest–order needs (the need for self actualisation). Maslow's hierarchy of human needs (1954); focuses on the inner space and posits that people are motivated by five levels of needs. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, people have physical, security, social, esteem and self-actualization needs. These five levels are treated as hierarchy where basic physiological needs are sought first, then security, social, esteem, and finally, self-actualization. He posited that people are motivated to fulfil their lower-level needs before they move on to fulfil higher-level needs, such as ego (esteem) and self-actualization. Maslow was quick to add that in the real world situation, not everyone aspires to the same level of human need or achieves self-actualization. Therefore, though these five areas may be common to everyone however, people operate at different levels, and organizations need to support their workers in satisfying their desired level of need.

1.3.1.2 Clayton Alderfer's Erg Theory

Clayton Alderfer propounded the ERG theory as a modification of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Alderfer proposed that basic human needs may be grouped under three categories namely: Existence, Relatedness, and Growth. This theory implies that the number of years one stays in an organization the more his/her needs keep on changing. It therefore recognizes the multiple needs that may be driving employees at a given point to understand their behaviour and management can properly motivate them.

1.3.1.3 David C. Mcclelland's Acquired Needs Theory

McClelland's Acquired Needs Theory is also known as the 'Three-Need Theory or Learned Need Theory' was based on the need for power, the need for affiliation and the need for achievement. According to acquired-needs theory, individuals acquire three types of needs as a result of their life experiences: Achievements – attain realistic but challenging goals and gain advancement in the job; Power – lead and have their ideas prevail; and Affiliation – Cooperative relationships with others, these three needs are not mutually exclusive (Heller, Goulet & Mohr, 2004). According to Heller, Goulet and Mohr (2004), some people may be motivated by one or two or all the three elements, others may be motivated by achievement and affiliation while others are partially motivated by all the three. They therefore recommend that an organization should try to formulate jobs and responsibilities that best fit all the individual needs of their employees.

1.3.1.4 Douglas Mcgregor's Theory X and Theory Y

McGregor, in his book the Human side of Enterprise (cited in Mullins, 2005), argued that the style of management adopted is a function of the manager's attitudes towards human nature and behaviour at work he/she puts forward to suppositions called Theory X and Theory Y, which are based on the assumption about work and people. McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y present two opposing sets of assumptions regarding the attitudes of managers and employees. Theory X assumes that workers are lazy and will avoid work if given the choice, while Theory Y assumes that workers are creative and want to do a good job. Mullins posits that if one believes that Theory X is correct, then management needs to be authoritative and motivate employees through strict control of the work environment with clear negative consequences for non performance. Hence, this will requires a task oriented, fear based system of management (top-

down, organizational space control). On the contrary, He claims that the Theory Y workers want to create, contribute and participate in work planning.

1.3.1.5 Frederick Herzberg's Motivation Hygiene

In conducting numerous studies over time to explore those things that cause workers in white-collar jobs to be satisfied or dissatisfied, Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman's (1959), developed a two-factor theory heavily based on need fulfilment because of their interest in how best to satisfy workers. They developed what came to be known as hygiene factors and motivating factors. Herzberg's dual factor theory distinguished between factors causing dissatisfaction (hygiene factors) and those causing satisfaction (motivation). The hygiene factors represent things such as salary, fringe benefits, job security, work conditions, company policy and administration, interpersonal relationship with supervisors and other factors associated with one's job content. On the other hand, the motivating factors are those factors that make workers work harder and classified them as follows: job responsibilities, position, title authority and learning opportunities, achievements, recognition, work itself, job advancement.

1.3.2 Process Theories

Proponents of the process theories changed the emphasis of motivation from needs to the goals and processes by which workers are motivated. They attempt to explain and describe how people start sustain and direct behaviour aimed at the satisfaction of needs or reduction of inner tension. Process theories also attempt to identify major variables that explain behavior, but the focus is on the dynamics of how the variables are interrelated in explaining the direction, degree and persistence of effort. The major variables in process models are incentive, drive, reinforcement, and expectancy. They place emphasis on the actual process of motivation. The Process theories place emphasis on the actual process of motivation. These theories are concerned with the relationships among the dynamic variables, which make up motivation, and with how behaviour is initiated, directed and sustained. What all process theories have in common is an emphasis on the cognitive processes in determining employee level of motivation and need satisfaction. The notable theories that support the process theories school of thought as encountered in prior literature Adam's equity theory, Vroom's expectancy theory, Porter and Lawler's model, and Handy's motivation calculus.

1.3.2.1 John Stacy Adam's Equity Theory

John Stacy Adam's Equity Theory (1963) refers to an individual's subjective judgement about the fairness of the reward received for inputs in comparison with the rewards of others. It states the importance of fairness when managing groups of employees. The theory propose that workers seek a fair balance between what they put into their jobs (inputs) and what they get out of it (outcomes) and therefore, they want to be treated fairly and likely to compare their treatment to that of their peers. This theory recognizes the motivational force of organizational space when rewarding for performance and how favouritism and inequities in the system can lead to job dissatisfaction and demonization.

1.3.2.2 Vroom's Expectancy Theory

Vroom's Expectancy Theory of motivation suggests that people are motivated to reach a goal if they think that the goal is worthwhile and can see that their activities will help them achieve the goal (Robbins, 1998). The theory deals with the concept of effort, performance and reward thus, how the level of individual effort on a given task will translate into success and personal reward. Before committing to task, people tend to weigh the level of effort required versus probable benefits. They need to know that the job task will likely lead to better results and that the results will lead to benefit that is meaningful to the employee. Therefore, the theory proposes that motivation is an inner judgment process (personal space) and expected outcomes.

1.3.2.3 Porter And Lawler's Model

Porter and Lawler's Model of motivation depicts performance as a function of ability, the perception of task required, and effort. Effort is influenced by the value of rewards and the perceived effort-reward probability. Performance accomplishment in turn, is related to rewards and satisfaction (Robbins, 1998).

1.4 Types of Motivation

The various motivational needs and expectations of employees at the workplace can be categorised into different types. However, motivational needs of individuals are widely distinguished between two kinds of rewards namely extrinsic motivation (rewards) and intrinsic motivation (rewards) (Mullins, 1999; McCornick & Tifflin, 2007). On the other hand, they describe intrinsic motivational factors as the rewards that can be termed psychological motivations and examples are opportunity to use one's ability, a sense of challenge and achievement, receiving appreciation, positive recognition, and being treated in a caring and considerate manner. Intrinsic reward emerges in a person after the accomplishment of certain task or work (joy, satisfaction, pride etc.); while extrinsic motivation comes from outside sources or forces as salary, money or grades etc. (Scott & Bruce, 1994).

1.4.1 Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation is related to "tangible" rewards such as salary and fringe benefits, security, promotion, contract of service, the work environment and conditions of work (Mullins, 2005). He posits that such tangible rewards are often determined at the organisational level and may be largely outside the control of individual managers. These rewards according to him are part of the job situation and are given by others. Hence, they are externally mediated and are rewards that can best be thought of as satisfying lower order needs. According to McCornick and Tifflin (2007), extrinsic motivational factors are those that are external to the task of the job, such as pay, work condition, fringe benefits, job security, promotion, contract of service, the work environment and conditions of work.

1.4.2 Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation basically deals with the satisfaction of employee to his jobs emerging out of the pleasure of working that he experiences in a good organization that rewards him for his job (Shahzadi et al., 2014). It refers to the psychological rewards that can usually be determined by the actions and behaviour of individual managers and includes rewards such as opportunity to use one's ability, a sense of challenge and achievement, receiving appreciation, positive recognition, and being treated in a caring and considerate manner (Mullins, 2005). Robert and Hunt (1991) assert that these rewards involve such outcomes as feelings of accomplishment, feelings of achievement and feelings of using and developing one's skills and abilities. These type of rewards stem directly from the performance itself, are internally mediated since the individual rewards himself, and can be thought of as satisfying higher order needs such as self-esteem and self-actualization (Mullins, 1999).

However, given the complex and variable nature of needs and expectations of individual employees, Mullins (2005) developed a simple and useful threefold classification for reviewing the motivation to work outlined as follows:

  i) Economic rewards: This includes pay, fringe benefits, pension benefits, material goods and security.

  ii) Intrinsic satisfaction: This is derived from the nature of the work itself, interest in the job and personal growth and development. It involves a personal orientation to work and be concerned about oneself.

  iii) Social relationships: These involve friendships group workings, and the desire for affiliation, status and dependency. It is concerned with a relational orientation to work and the concern about other people.

Mullins (2005) postulate that a person's motivation, job satisfaction and work performance would be determined by the comparative strength of these sets of needs and expectation and the extent to which they are fulfilled. For example, some people may make a deliberate choice to forgo intrinsic satisfaction and social relationships (particularly in the short term or in the earlier years of their working life) in return for high economic rewards. Other people are happy to accept comparatively lower economic rewards in favour of a job which has high intrinsic satisfaction and/or social relationships (Mullins, 1999).

1.5   Forms of Motivation

Motivation is a very complex phenomenon in the sense that what motivates 'A' is different from what motivates 'B'. In this regard, there is no one universally accepted form of motivation even though many researchers and theorist base their concept of employee motivation on monetary rewards. It is worthy to note that employees expect both or either financial and non-financial rewards for their services and efforts. According to Yousaf, Latif, Aslam and Saddiqui (2014), the incentives given to employees in order to enhance their performance are categorized into two groups thus, financial and non-financial incentives. They aver that in the absence of equitable pay, training and development opportunities and recognition, employees get dissatisfied and do not perform to the standards. Therefore, dissatisfaction resulting from the unavailability of financial and non-financial rewards usually leads to high employee turnover and poor performance. This is because the benefits that employees foresee for themselves and their families motivate them to give their best (Yousaf et al., 2014).

1.5.1 Financial Incentives

Financial incentives also known as 'monetary motivational incentives or rewards' include pay, bonuses, transportation facility, medical facility, health and life insurance and benefits like vacation with pay, and meal facilities, whereas the non-financial incentives include promotions, job security, meeting new challenges, caring attitude from employers, healthy working condition, training and development, appreciation and recognition, etc. (Yousaf et al., 2014). In a study titled "Effects of employee incentives on employee performance in Private Universities in Kenya", Tumwet, (n.d.) found that financial incentives that are perceived to have significant influence on employee motivation include: salary, insurance financing, retirement benefits, performance based rewards, etc. In addition, Uzonna (2013) outlined fringe benefits, money, bonuses, pensions, profit sharing and performance pay as some of the monetary motivation variables. However, Yousaf et al. posit that once employees' pay exceeds a certain level, non-financial incentives become most important motivators.

1.5.2 Non-financial Incentives

Non-financial incentives also referred to as 'non-monetary incentives or rewards' are variables which do not necessarily involve monetary benefits either in cash or in kind. These variables rather bring psychological satisfaction of employee to his/her job. Tumwet (n.d.) found that non-financial incentives with significant influence on employee performance were: creativity at work, organizational goals, challenging tasks, opportunity for personal development, autonomy and responsibility, teamwork, job security, professionally stimulating environment, opportunity to set performance goals, predictable work life, opportunity to lead, training and development and flexible policies. In addition, Uzonna (2013) observed that non-monetary motivation techniques include: recognition, trainings, authority, freedom, job autonomy, challenging work schedules, job security, prestigious job titles and responsibility. Moreover, a positive working environment, appreciation of work in terms of the provision of incentives, organizational commitment and job involvement are important for successful organizations and key factors that enhances the motivational level of the employees (Afful-Broni & Tah, 2014).

1.5.3 How Some Major Motivational Factors Influence Employee Performance

Several studies have revealed that there are number of motivational factors that influence employee commitment and performance in the workplace (Yousaf et al., 2014; Uzonna, 2013; Afful-Broni & Tah, 2014). However, from the review of prior literature on the various motivational factors that significantly influence employee behaviour, the researcher found that the under listed motivational techniques are most widely used across different sectors and organizations:

i)   Salaries and wages: Salaries and wages is the main and very important motivational aspect that affects employees' performance in the organization (Agwu, 2012).

ii)   Bonus: It is believed that organizations can easily increase the work performance of their employees with the help of additional benefit such as bonuses. Agwu (2012) aver that bonus is an important tool for increasing the productivity of workers.

iii) Other fringe benefits: Fringe benefits are a complement to salaries and wages of workers as a form of workplace compensation. These are additional allowances like health insurance/medical allowance, vacations/leave with pay, pension benefits, travel allowance and rent and accommodation allowances etc. that organizations give to their employees to boost their morale to perform.

iv)   Job Security: Organizations increase the employee's performance or productivity by providing job security.

v)   Promotion: Organizations increase the employee productivity by promoting them.

1.6   Importance of Motivation

The achievements of individual and organizational goals are independent process linked by employee work motivation. Individuals motivates themselves to satisfy their personal goals, therefore they invest and direct their efforts for the achievements of organizational objectives to meet with their personal goals also. It means that organizational goals are directly proportion to the personal goals of individuals.

Motivated employees can bring better results as compared to unsatisfied employees. Employees perform their duty efficiently when they feel satisfied from their company (Zerbe et al, 1998). Simon and DeVaro (2006) argued that investment in developing motivated employees is an expense for the firm, which will benefit the organization in the long run as it improves employee efficiency and quality of the service. Gittell, Nordenflycht and Kochan (2004) warned that it must be kept in mind that minimizing the employee cost may lead to lower employee productivity and service quality. By motivating employees towards their work companies can enhance their employee's productivity resulting as improved services and products to satisfy customer's demand (Ahmad, Wasay & Malik, 2012). Best companies achieve higher customer satisfaction by keeping their employees motivated and happier with their work, as motivated employees offer better services to the customers (Ahmad et al., 2012).

1.7   Motivation and Employee Satisfaction

Several empirical studies have shown a strong positive relationship between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction (Schneider, Ashworth, Higgs, & Carr, 1996; Johnson, 1996; Ulrich, Halbrook, Meder, Stuchlik, & Thorpe, 1991; Wiley, 1991). The findings o these studies reveal that positive changes in employee attitudes lead to positive changes in customer satisfaction. According to Naumann & Giel (1995), there is a strong correlation between employee satisfaction and both internal and external customer satisfaction. In addition, these two types of satisfaction are closely linked together; thus a satisfied employee is a reliable supplier of high quality customer service. (Naumann & Giel, 1995)

Therefore, efforts to improve employee job satisfaction can create satisfied employees with a positive effect on customer satisfaction. It was found out in prior literature that employee satisfaction affects customer satisfaction in the following ways:

i) Employees that interact with customers are in a position to develop awareness of and respond to customer goals and needs.

ii) Satisfied employees are motivated employees; that is, they have the motivational resources to deliver adequate effort and care.

iii) Satisfied employees are empowered employees; in other words, they have the resources, training, and responsibilities to understand and serve customer needs and demands.

iv) Satisfied employees have high energy and willingness to give good service: at a very minimum, they can deliver a more positive perception of the service/product provided.

v) Satisfied employees can provide customers with interpersonal sensibility and social account (i.e., adequate explanations for undesirable outcomes). According to this view, because satisfied employees experience interactional justice, they can deliver it; that is, satisfied employees have enough emotional resources to show empathy, understanding, respect and concern.

1.8   Employee Performance Measurement

Performance of the employee is considered as what an employee does and what he does not do. Employee performance involves quality and quantity of output, presence at work, accommodative and helpful nature and timeliness of output. The results of the study conducted by Yang (2008) on individual performance showed that performance of the individuals cannot be verified. Similarly, he asserts that organizations can use direct bonuses and rewards based on individual performance if employee performance is noticeable (Yang, 2008). Chen and Silverthorne (2008) identified three types of performance. One is the measure of output rates, amount of sales over a given period of time, the production of a group of employees reporting to manager, and so on. The second type of measure of performance involves ratings of individuals by someone other than the person whose performance is being considered. The third type of performance measures is self-appraisal and self-ratings. As a result, the adoption of self-appraisal and self-rating techniques are useful in encouraging employees to take an active role in setting his or her own goals. Thus, job performance measures the level of achievement of business and social objectives and responsibilities from the perspective of the judging party (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993).

Similarly, different writers in the arena of human resource management suggest the following indicators for measuring employee performance and they include: quality that can be measured by percentage of work output that must be redone or is rejected; customer satisfaction that can be measured by the number of loyal customers and customer feedback. In addition, timeliness, measured in terms of how fast work is performed by the employee when given a certain task; absenteeism/tardiness observed when employees absent themselves from work; and achievement of objectives measured when an employee has surpassed his/her set targets, are some of the widely acclaimed techniques for measuring employee performance (Njanja et al., 2013).

1.9   Work Environment and Employee Performance

The turning point in the development of the human relations movement came out with the famous Hawthorne experiments at the Western Electric Company in America (1924-1932) with Elton Mayo. In a nutshell, researchers of the Hawthorne experiments demonstrated that money is not the only factor that motivates workers, rather but the work environment, management styles and structures may also be determining factors in that they help in an informal way of communication. Therefore, if employees feel good to share their suggestion and satisfy their social needs in an organization, by this they are motivated to perform their task even better. Hence, managers should guide employees and show what kind of behaviour that is acceptable in organization. In addition, management are expected to put in initiatives to boost employee morale and lower absenteeism. (Vroom & Deci, 1992)

According to Ahmad, Wasay and Malik (2012), employee motivation is affected by both personal characteristics as well as workplace environment. They assert that to achieve higher service quality and employee productivity organizations must develop an encouraging work environment where employee contribution in problem solving and achieving organizational goals is appreciated. In addition, Heartfield (2012) argues that in order to create an environment for employee satisfaction, it is vitally important to know which factors most affect their satisfaction.

A study by Roelofsen (2002) indicates that improving the working environment reduces complaints and absenteeism while increasing productivity. Also, there is adequate empirical evidence linking workplace conditions to job satisfaction (Wells, 2000). Mokaya, Musau, Wagoki and Karanja (2013) assert that in recent years, employees comfort on the job, determined by workplace conditions and environment has been recognized as an important factor for measuring their productivity.

Similarly, Wheelhouse (1989) noted that the working environment could often be a cause of low productivity. He asserts that in the workplace, employees need adequate equipment, space, heating, lighting and ventilation because these facilities have a significant impact on the work environment. Cheng (1995) postulates that a good working environment

means employees want the same conditions in their work lives as management. They need challenge, support from superiors, a quality workplace, friendly co-workers and respect. Therefore, to have a good working environment, managers have to trust their employees, value them, listen to them and accept their workplace ideas (Cheng, 1995).

1.10 Impact of Employee Motivation on Customer Care Delivery

Employee performance is actually influenced by motivation because if employees are motivated they will do work with more effort and by which performance will ultimately improve (Azar & Shafighi, 2013). To satisfy customers, firms do much effort but do not pay attention on satisfying employees. Nevertheless, the fact is that customer would not be satisfied until and unless employees are satisfied. Because, if employees are satisfied, they will do more work therefore ultimately customers will be satisfied (Ahmad, 2012). For instance, a study conducted to find the effect of employee motivation on employee performance revealed that if employees were more motivated then their performance would increase (Asim, 2013).

Shahzadi et al. 2014) conducted a study to inquire that what kind of factors influence employ motivation in Pakistan and find out the extent to which motivation affects the employee performance using 160 teachers of Government and private schools. The regression analysis showed a significant and positive relationship exists between employee motivation and employee performance. However, the study revealed that employee perceived training effectiveness has a negative relationship with motivation. In studying the effect of motivation on job performance of state government employees in Malaysia, Salleh, Dzulkifli, Abdullah, and Yaakob (2011) found a positive relationship, between annual salary progression and performance. They concluded that management strategies particularly could be formulated according to motivation level of employees.

In assessing the effect of motivation on employee performance in Ghana Education Service using a multi-method approach, Osei (2011) found that motivation is a major factor that influence employee performance and hence increases productivity. He concluded that it was important that employees are well motivated to ensure continuous students good performance in terms of examination results.

Conclusion:

Generally, the performance of every organization depends on it's workforce in other words the performance of every employee depends on the working environment and how their employees are motivated. In reference to the various authors contributions towards this topic, it's evidently clear that well motivated employees are always happy and gives 100% to work resulting in a higher output.

Recommendation:

After a careful study of the literature I recommend that managers who want to maximise profit should constantly see to the needs of their employees as well as the work environment.

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