

Motivating Employees for Performance in the 21st Century: A Content Discuss

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ABSTRACT

Motivating an employee towards improving performance is imperative and constitutes one of the cardinal aim and goal for any organization. This should be the key objective in today's organization. However, recent recurrent challenges seem to be the issue of poor employees' performance. This study focuses on the potential performance of today employees in an organization as he/she is affected by the motivational level offered by the organization. The study is anchored on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, McClelland's Three Needs Theory, and Herzberg's Motivation Theory. The study is a content analysis. Data for the study were generated from secondary source. Such data were analysis descriptively. The study raises a host of questions and answer them through conceptual clarification and conclusion made.

Keywords: Motivation, Employee, Performance.

Introduction

An assessment of human resource in any organization shows that motivation is key or central to employees' performance. Of all the assets that an organization possesses, the human element can provide the most variability and therefore require the greatest attention. Motivation is important if any organization wishes to achieve its objective of increased performance. The workmen of an organization are key resources to that organization success. Human asset in the 21st century is considered the most important asset of any organization (Hafiza, Shah, Jamsheed & Zaman, 2011 in Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016).

Motivation is a state-of-mind, filled with energy and enthusiasm, which drives a person to work in a certain way to achieve desired goals. It is a force which pushes a person to work with high level of commitment and focus even if things are against him. Motivation translates into a certain kind of human behaviour. Anderfuhren, et al (2010), Qayyum and Sukirno (2012) in Egberi (2015) agrees with this as they posit that, motivated employees are the cornerstones of any organization. Motivation is the key to organizational effectiveness and is a predictor of performance and job satisfaction (Ghafoor, 2011; Lather and Jain, 2005; Qayyum and Sukirno, 2012 in Egberi, 2015). Kreisman (2002) in Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah (2016) observed that the most valuable and volatile asset of any organization is a well- motivated and stable workforce which is competent, dedicated and productive.

Bhattacharyya (2007) holds the view that motivation of employees in the work place still remains one of the sensitive subjects that determine the level of input that employees will put in the organization for a good performance. This means that motivation either intrinsic or extrinsic contribute to employee satisfaction and thus enhances performance and productivity. Lawler (2003) stated that in the twenty-first century, treating people right is not an option but a necessity.

Performance of an employee on the other hand is considered to be related with the concepts of ability, opportunity and motivation (Ivancevich and Matteson, 2008 in Egberi, Emenike & Chukwurah, 2021). Employees being the key element of the organisation determine the success or failure of the organisation through their performance. Today's employees are more career conscious than ever. They also make more demand from their employers in areas of fulfillment, personal growth and job satisfaction. Hence, employees are expressing a strong desire to pursue more than just a job. They are looking for employment opportunities that promise an extension of their interests, personality and abilities. They want variety of things from their jobs outside a pay cheque and a few fringe benefits. Their loyalty to the organisation depends upon the degree to which their employer satisfies these wants (Bartlett, 2012 in Dialoke & Paschal, 2017 in Egberi, et al, 2021). Caruth and Handlogten (2002) advance the opinion that reward systems most especially are considered as forerunners of employee motivation. Since employees' knowledge, skills and abilities are the most important driving force to the success of any organization, continuing commitment and support to them could be realized through looking for effective ways to reward their contributions, loyalty, dedication and efforts. Hafiza et al. (2011), collaborated the above opinion as they stated that there are several factors that can affect employee performance like training and development opportunities, working conditions, worker-employer relationship, job security and company over all policies and procedures for rewarding employees. Among the factors that affect employee performance, motivation that comes with rewards is of utmost importance (Carraher, Gibbson & Buckley, 2006).

The main thrust of the study were in twofold: first, it assess the motivational need of today employee in an organization and secondly, it meant to find out the best motivating factors for employee linked to motivation and performance.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design and employed secondary source of data as it mean source of data collection. Data gathered were analyze using content analysis.

Conceptual Clarification

Motivation

In the early 20th century, money was regarded as the most important input into the production of goods and services (Kreitner, 1995). However, after “Hawthorne Studies”, conducted by Elton Mayo from 1924-1932 at the Hawthorne Works of the American Western Electric Company in Chicago, it was observed that employees were not motivated solely by money but that employee behavior was linked to their attitudes (Dickson, 1973, in Lindner, 1998). The Hawthorne studies began the human relations approach to management, whereby the needs and motivation of employees became the primary focus of managers (Bedeian, 1993). This paved way for other theories and definitions on motivation and performance at the work place. Kreitner and Kinicki (1998) and Ramlall (2004), motivation is derived from the Latin word “movere” which means to move. Butkus and Green (1999) also stated that motivation is derived from the word “motivate” which also means to move, push or persuade to act to satisfy a need. However, Mol (1992) differentiated between the terms “movement” and “motivation”. Mol (1992) described movement as carrying out a task in order to be compensated or remunerated while motivation is the voluntary involvement, and decision of a person to carry out a task. Page (2008) in his article on non-monetary incentives in the workplace defined motivation as the process that accounts for an individual's intensity, direction and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal. In Cole (1996), motivation is essentially about what drives a person to work in a particular way and with a given amount of effort. Motivation has been defined as 'a decision making process through which the individual chooses desired outcomes and sets in motion the behaviours appropriate to acquiring them' (Huczynski & Buchanan, 1991, in Dartey-Baah, 2010). Lindner (2004) also sees motivation as a psychological process that gives behaviour purpose, purpose and direction. Robbins (2005) defined motivation as the “willingness to exert high levels of effort toward organisational goals, conditioned by the effort's ability

to satisfy some individual need". Robbins (2005), a need is an internal state that makes certain outcomes appears attractive and an unsatisfied need creates tension that stimulates drives within an individual. These drives generate search behaviour to find goals that if attained, will satisfy the need and lead to the reduction of tension (Robbins, 2005). Baron (1983, in Mol, 1992) also defined motivation as a set of processes concerned with a kind of force that energizes behaviour and directs it towards achieving specific goals. It further states that not only motivation can influence performance, but that performance can also influence motivation, if followed by rewards. Carraher et al. (2006) advocates that there should be an effective reward system to retain the high performers in organizations and reward should be related to their productivity. Baron (1983) therefore concludes that organizations could benefit from implementing total reward programmes that focus on formal reward policies. Shah and Shah (2010) defined motivation as inspiring people to work; individually or in groups in such a way as to produce best results. It further states that, motivation is a general term applied to the entire class of drives, desires, needs, wishes and similar forces. Shah and Shah (2010) noted that to say that managers motivate their subordinates is to say that they do those things which they hope will satisfy these drives and desires and induce the subordinates to act in a desired manner.

Types of Motivation

Cameron & Pierce (2002), Herzberg (2003) in Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah (2016) observed that work motivation is mostly categorized into two types, being intrinsic and extrinsic motivation showing that different incentives have a distinct impact on employee motivation. Whereas intrinsic motivation is concerned with rewards as the activity itself, the source of extrinsic motivation are external controlling variables as explicit rewards (e.g. money, threat). McCullagh (2005) defines intrinsic motivation as an individuals' need to feel competency and pride in something while extrinsic motivation is defined as the performance of an activity in order to attain some separate outcome and noted that, people can be both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated. Hackman and Oldham (1980) argued that strong intrinsic motivation occur when three psychological states are created, and these are: experienced meaningfulness of the work, experienced responsibility for outcomes of the work, and Knowledge of the actual results of the work activities. Hackman and Oldham (1980) urged organizations to restructure work to induce intrinsic motivation. Greater skill variety, task identity, and task significance increase the experienced meaningfulness of work, autonomy raises experienced responsibility, and feedback provides knowledge of results (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). According to the self-determination theory, intrinsic motivation is increased in more autonomous work situations and results in more positive attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Connell, 1989). Frey's (1997) work on motivation, it leads to the argument that external rewards crowd out intrinsic motivation and reduce the individual's work effort because of incentives which are in conflict with the employee's moral values and choices. Contrary to that, external rewards can help crowd in intrinsic motivation when supporting the employee's choices and values. Intrinsic motivation, captures the aspects of doing work for its own sake (Osterloh, Frost & Frey, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2000), provides psychological benefits of well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000), accomplishment (Dermer, 1975), increasing responsibility (Kohn, 1993; Herzberg, 2003), self-actualisation (Kunz & Pfaff, 2002), and is self-sustaining (Osterloh et al., 2002).

Theories of Motivation

Abraham Maslow Needs Theory

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory is one of the most widely accepted theories of behavior (one that has had considerable impact on management practice). The late Abraham H. Maslow developed the theory that human needs are affected by a priority system of physiological and psychological circumstances. He classified human needs into five categories, according to priority: Level 1. Physiological needs: food, water, air, rest, and other necessities for maintaining physical well-being Level 2. Safety needs: safety and security in both the physical and the psychological sense Level 3. Love and the need to belong: attention and social activity, affectionate relationships with people, and a

respected place in the group Level 4. Esteem needs: self-respect, strength, achievement, adequacy, and competence Level 5. Self-actualization needs: self-fulfillment and the desire to reach one full potential. The basis of Maslow's theory is that the predominance of these needs in each individual varies in an orderly, step-like fashion, depending on which needs have already been satisfied adequately. In this priority system, the most fundamental need- the physiological needs-must be satisfied before the safety needs are recognized (i.e., once the physiological needs have been met, the desire for safety predominates). Again, once those two needs have been filled adequately, love and the need to belong emerge as motivators. Maslow stated that as one need level is satisfied, the next level directs behavior until it is adequately fulfilled. In short, he believed that a satisfied need is not a motivator. However, there is some overlap of levels, in that one need does not have to be totally satisfied before the next need emerges. However, the first need must be satisfied enough so that the individual is not completely preoccupied with pursuing it. An individual concerned with filling needs on the fourth level, and someone trying to satisfy a need on the first level, will have drastically different reactions to the same stimulus. An interesting point in Maslow's theory is that people never satisfy all needs "The human being is a perpetually wanting animal"

Herzberg's Theory of Motivation

Work motivation is concerned with those attitudes that direct a person's behavior toward work-related goals, and this is of particular interest to the management. If one accepts the premise of Maslow's theory, management must concentrate on esteem and self-actualization needs as motivators, assuming that the employee's lower-level needs have been met. The research by Frederick Herzberg and his associates suggests that the needs at the top of Maslow's hierarchy are indeed the ones providing the greatest impetus for higher employee performance. He and his colleagues call it the motivation-hygiene theory of worker satisfaction. This theory revolves around two factors: the motivators and the hygiene factors.

Motivational Factors

Herzberg considered the following factors to be the key to job satisfaction and positive motivation: Achievement; Recognition for achievement; Responsibility; Nature of the work itself; and Advancement. The motivators include factors that, when present in a positive way, increase employees' satisfaction with their work and motivate them to improve performance; yet, when absent, do not lead to worker dissatisfaction. These motivators, or job contentment factors, reflect employees' need for personal growth and are directly related to the job.

Hygiene Factors

Counterbalancing these motivational factors are Herzberg's previously cited hygiene factors, the absence of which increases worker dissatisfaction proportionally to the degree that they are missing, and whose presence serves to prevent worker dissatisfaction. These factors, sometimes referred to as Job contentment factors, and reflect a need to avoid unpleasantness and are related to the work environment.

Hygiene factors include: Company policy and administration; Technical supervision; Salary; Working conditions; and Interpersonal relations. Herzberg's theory serves as useful background information for management who want to motivate employees and to improve employee job satisfaction. Motivation in the Workplace and job satisfaction is one of the key motivations in the work environment. Job satisfaction usually results, as Herzberg points out, when people feel that they are working at high capacity and are accomplishing something worthwhile. An effective manager realizes that job satisfaction is as important to the organization as it is to the individual. With this attitude, managers will diligently seek ways to match job requirements to individual needs. Motivating employees is a complicated task because individual's needs vary widely and change frequently. Over the past few decades, the position and educational orientation of employees have changed; these changes require that management's thinking and practices be redirected to accent flexibility. In general, employees are more socially aware and better educated than ever before.

McClelland's Theory of Needs

McClelland affirms that we all have three motivating drivers, and it does not depend on our gender or age. One of these drives will be dominant in our behaviour. The dominant drive depends on our life experiences.

The three motivators are:

Achievement: a need to accomplish and demonstrate own competence People with a high need for achievement prefer tasks that provide for personal responsibility and results based on their own efforts. They also prefer quick acknowledgement of their progress.

Affiliation: a need for love, belonging and social acceptance; people with a high need for affiliation are motivated by being liked and accepted by others. They tend to participate in social gatherings and may be uncomfortable with conflict.

Power: a need for control own work or the work of others People with a high need for power desire situations in which they exercise power and influence over others. They aspire for positions with status and authority and tend to be more concerned about their level of influence than about effective work performance.

Other Approaches to Motivation

It is now believed that a good plan of motivation utilizes several approaches those which reward performance and those which make the work itself more satisfying. Akbar, et al (n.d) in Egberi (2015) stated that managers of organization should:

Recognize individual differences: since every contemporary theory recognizes that all employees are not identical. They have different needs, attitudes, personality, etc., a workman should be carefully matched with the job, that is high achiever should have jobs that allow them to participate in setting challenging, specific hard goals, involve autonomy and feedback on how well they are doing in achieving those goals.

Performance level: is closely related to the goals set or accepted by an individual. If an employee and supervisor have not jointly established goals, the employee will invariably set goals that are based on his own priorities rather than those of the employer. Managers must insure that goals and job expectations are clearly understood. Specific goals improve the focus of effort and goal difficulty improves motivation. Management should ensure that goals are perceived as attainable.

Individualize rewards: every employee has different needs, what act as a reinforcer for one may not be for others. So, management should use their knowledge of employee differences to individualize the reward they control such as pay, promotion, autonomy etc. Management need to make reward associated with performance incentive. Monetary programmes are deferred by nature and most people would respond better to immediate feedback. An immediate reward firmly establishes its connection to the performance, reinforcing the relationship. It consequently has stronger, more lasting effect than does a deferred reward employee should perceive the rewards or outcomes equal to the inputs.

Recognize the power of recognition: Using recognition is a low cost means to reward employees. Despite its non-monetary nature, supervisory recognition is often cited as the most effective motivator. Employees who value the judgment and approval of their supervisor will work to meet expectations. Unlike formal monetary or non-monetary reward systems, supervisory recognition can be an immediate reward, closely tied to the desired behavior. Typical formal recognition programs like employee of the month and year awards, longevity and attendance awards and newsletter sections. These programmes are less expensive than monetary reward systems, but very effective motivating factors.

Show Care and Concern for your Employees: employee perform better for managers who care about them and when a manager or management cares, employee are motivated.

Career planning: also offers opportunity for growth and advancement which are performance incentives. Operationalizing these hidden incentives requires an organization to establish career paths, and train managers to meet employees' questions and career needs. Knowledge of the steps, education requirements and promotions necessary to reach their personal goals focuses the employee's efforts on the improvements and performance necessary for attainment. Having a specific career design program usually enables an organization to develop qualified, promotable candidates from within it by matching resources and desires with needs.

Communication- it is the central motivator. Communication of management goals and employee career goals helps assure that employee activity is directed toward mutually acceptable goals.

Values: Understanding a workman values and what drives them can be a very powerful tool to help motivate them. Some are driven by success, some by a desire to learn, some by health and well-being, some by families, and some by religion, some by money (which may not necessarily need to be linked with success), some by fun and some by equality. This can be done quite easily by aligning their work (or even what you say to them) to their core values.

Discussion

Motivation of employees in any organization still remains one of the sensitive issue that determine the level of input that a worker put in an organization to commit to good performance. This means that motivation either intrinsic or extrinsic enhances employees' performance.

Whereas, it is also a known fact that employee performance is the effect of training and development opportunities, working conditions, worker-employer relationship, job security and organizational policies and procedures for rewarding employees; among all these factors motivation that comes with rewards is of utmost importance. This is realized through effective ways to reward employees contributions, loyalty, dedication and efforts through such means as incentives, rewards and importantly, the work they do and the organization context within which they carry out that work. This helps to bring about job satisfaction which can result in minimizing costly turnover, absenteeism, tardiness, and even poor mental health of the employees.

Conclusion

Organizations in the 21st Century need to have much insight into the work lives of today employee, this is with regard to the level of motivation and performance because a good motivational procedure is essential to achieve organizations' goal. Effective motivational programmes on today employee can achieve efficiency. Flowing from the above, the 21st Century organizations further required effort gear at retaining, satisfying, and attracting qualified employees since motivation has variety of effects which may be seen in the context of an individual's physical and mental health, productivity, absenteeism and turnover. Employers of labour must be ready to have an insight into the importance of motivation and its impact on employee performance which will become a guide when motivating other employees either by using reward and recognition programmes as motivational tool to impact on performance.

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Conflict of Interest

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